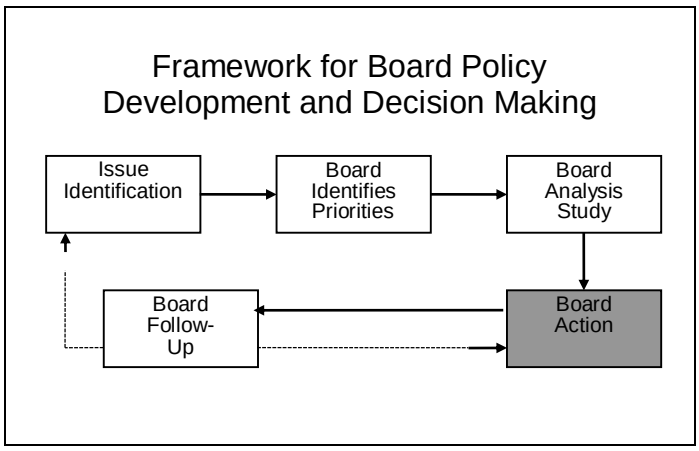
Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

August 6, 2015



Agenda Item: Eastern Iowa Community College (EICC) Interim Accreditation Report - Fiscal Year 2015

Iowa Goal: Individuals will pursue postsecondary education in order to drive economic success

State Board Role/Authority: Iowa Code section 260C.47(3) grants authority to the State Board of Education to determine whether the programs of a community college shall remain accredited.

Presenters: Jeremy Varner, Administrator
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Kent Farver, Chief
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Attachments: 1

Recommendation: It is recommended that the State Board grant continued accreditation for EICC. A state comprehensive accreditation evaluation will be conducted in fiscal year 2020.

Background: This is a report of the evaluation of EICC for continued state accreditation as an associate degree-granting institution. The Department of Education conducted the on-site portion of the evaluation on April 15-16, 2015. The findings reflect the work of the accreditation team's interim review of EICC.

EICC is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), a commission of the North Central Association. The state accreditation process reviews state requirements, but does not duplicate the HLC process. HLC documentation is reviewed during the visit to identify any follow-up that may be required. State standards are reviewed through a structured process by Department of Education staff and community college peer reviewers.

Final Accreditation Report
Interim State Evaluation

Eastern Iowa Community Colleges

April 15–16, 2015

FY 2015

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State of Iowa
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146

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Accreditation Team
Eastern Iowa Community Colleges
Interim Accreditation Evaluation
FY 2015

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Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC)
State Accreditation Evaluation
Conducted FY 2015

Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of the review was a scheduled interim accreditation evaluation of Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC) by the Iowa Department of Education (DE) as mandated by Iowa Code, Section 260C.47. The accreditation evaluation was conducted on April 15-16, 2015, at the administrative office of Eastern Iowa Community Colleges in Davenport, Iowa.

Assurance Summary State Standards

Compliance with Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Criteria

The state accreditation team reviewed the most recent report and information from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) available at the time of the evaluation. EICC's letter of accreditation by the HLC was reviewed and EICC has continuing accreditation. EICC has demonstrated that it meets HLC criteria.

Compliance with Additional State Standards

Faculty (Qualifications)

All community college-employed instructors who are under contract as of July 1, 2011, who teach in career and technical education (CTE) or arts and sciences (including adjuncts) are required to meet minimum faculty standards (Iowa Code, Section 260C.48). The DE accreditation team reviewed a random sample of faculty personnel files provided by the human resources office to ensure compliance with the standard.

> **Finding:** There were three instructors in the sample whose credentials did not meet state minimum faculty standards. The college has pledged to correct these issues and address its process for verifying faculty qualifications. The DE provided recommendations for changes to college procedures. In the spring of 2016, the DE will conduct another review of the faculty members involved and ensure that this process is functioning as required.

Faculty Teaching Load

The teaching loads of full-time instructors must not exceed the faculty load limits set forth in Iowa law. This is the case for CTE instructors, as well as for college parallel (arts and sciences) instructors (Iowa Code, Section 260C.48). The DE accreditation team reviewed the instructional loads of a random sample of full-time faculty to ensure compliance with the standard.

Finding: One instructor in the sample exceeded state faculty load limits. The college has pledged to implement corrective measures. In the spring of 2016, the DE will conduct another review to ensure the issue has been corrected.

Special Needs

Community colleges are required to maintain equal access in recruitment, enrollment, and placement activities for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities must be given access to the full range of course offerings at a college through reasonable accommodations. Accreditation team members reviewed marketing and recruitment publications, and information on the college's Americans' with Disabilities Act (ADA) policies and reports. Team members also conducted interviews with staff associated with disabilities services.

Finding: The ADA/non-discrimination statement was missing in some college publications/flyers reviewed. In others, the statement was missing required protected classes. The college pledged to address this issue and make the appropriate corrections. In the spring of 2016, the DE will conduct another review to ensure the issue has been corrected.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program Evaluations and Timelines

There are a variety of state requirements related to the offering of CTE programs. The standards are included in Iowa Code, Chapter 258, 281—IAC 46.7(4), and 281—IAC 24.5(4). Standards for CTE programs include numerous requirements related to program and award length, program content, labor market demand, articulation, advisory committees, and more. All new CTE programs and changes to existing programs must be approved by the DE. The DE maintains a database of approved programs for this purpose.

Standards for CTE programs are included in the *Program Approval: Guidelines for Iowa Community Colleges* document located on the DE website. Additionally, community colleges are required to review at least 20 percent of the institution's CTE programs annually. The DE reviews and approves institutional CTE program review processes through the state accreditation process. Standards for CTE program review are included in the guidelines for program approval on the DE website. The accreditation team members reviewed information on CTE program evaluations.

Finding: No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

Strategic Planning

Community colleges are required to update their strategic plans at least every five years as a guide for the community and its decision-making (Iowa Code section 256.31(4) (a)). Team members reviewed the college's most recent strategic plan and interviewed selected staff.

Finding: No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

Physical Plant and Facilities
Each community college must present evidence of adequate planning, including a board-approved facilities plan. The community college's facilities must meet state and federal requirements as outlined in the state accreditation guide. The team reviewed the facilities plan and met with the facility director to discuss the college's planning process and decision-making structure.

Finding: No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

Quality Faculty Plan (QFP)
Iowa law establishes the process for community colleges to plan for the hiring and professional development of full- and part-time faculty members. Institutional QFPs are required to meet the standards of 281—IAC 24.5(5). The accreditation team reviewed the college's QFP and met with faculty and administrative representatives.

Finding: No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

Senior Year Plus (SYP) Programs
There are a variety of requirements for SYP programs offered to high school students jointly enrolled in a community college. These requirements are included in Iowa Code, Chapter 261E. Currently, the DE utilizes the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnership's (NACEP) accreditation process to ensure compliance with many statutory requirements (legislated Postsecondary Course Audit Committee). The accreditation team reviewed the college's accreditation status with NACEP, interviewed selected staff, and reviewed additional documentation.

Finding: No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

Compliance with Non-Accreditation State or Federal Requirements

Finding: No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

Evaluation Team Recommendations

The state accreditation team recommends continued accreditation for Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC). Representatives from the DE will conduct a follow-up review in the spring of 2016 to confirm all findings have been addressed and corrective measures are in place. A state comprehensive accreditation evaluation is scheduled for the 2020 fiscal year.