HLC PREPARATION FOR CRITERION 3 COLLEGE WIDE READ

Criterion 3: Teaching and Learning for Student Success

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program are consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.

3A EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The institution maintains learning goals and outcomes that reflect a level of rigor commensurate with college-level work, including by program level and the content of each of its educational programs.

PROGRAM LEARNING GOALS AND SKILLS

Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas (PCCUA) maintains **program learning goals and outcomes (PLOs)** that reflect the rigor and quality of college-level work across all programs. Each program's content and expectations align with these outcomes. The College website provides access to program student learning outcomes and **check-off sheets** for guided pathways.

Programs of Study are organized by **academic clusters** on the College website. Each cluster includes program-specific learning outcomes that describe the knowledge and skills students are expected to master upon completion. PCCUA integrates its **General Education competencies**, known as **STACC skills**, across all associate degree programs. Each program's distinct PLOs are aligned with the competencies and outcomes necessary for success in the related career field.

PROGRAM LEVELS AND CURRICULUM OVERSIGHT

PCCUA offers **associate degrees, technical certificates, and certificates of proficiency**. Not all degrees are available on every campus; however, a **uniform curriculum** ensures that degree requirements remain consistent across locations. PCCUA participates in the **Arkansas Course Transfer System (ACTS)**, a statewide articulation agreement among public colleges that guarantees the transferability of approved General Education courses. The **ACTS course listings**, **business course descriptions**, and **math guide** are accessible through the **Arkansas Division of Higher Education (ADHE)** website and the **College Catalog**, ensuring equitable treatment for course transfer across institutions.

Curriculum oversight is provided by the **Instruction and Curriculum Team (I&C)**, which manages the review and approval process for all course and program changes, including additions, modifications, and deletions. This is outlined in the **Curriculum Management Guide**. Proposed changes must first be approved by the **Curriculum Committee** of the Faculty

Senate, which is composed of faculty representatives from all divisions. The Committee's recommendations are forwarded to the I&C Team for further review. Course changes or similar academic decisions do not advance beyond the IC Team. However, new and deleted programs and programs with extensive course changes are then submitted to the **Executive Council**, followed by the **Board of Visitors (BOV)** and the **University of Arkansas System Board of Trustees (BOT)**. **New programs** and **program** d**eletions** require final approval from ADHE and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

New program proposals may be initiated with approval from the Vice Chancellor for Instruction. Each proposal must have a champion. The Vice Chancellor, division dean, and program initiator evaluate the **program proposal** based on factors such as market demand, completion time, student cost, institutional cost, available resources, facility capacity, and community support. High-demand, high-wage, short-term programs receive particular consideration. The appropriate program level such as Certificate of Proficiency (CP), Technical Certificate (TC), or Associate Degree (AAS) is determined using **Bloom's Taxonomy** to assess cognitive complexity. For example, the **Early Childhood Education** CP requires a **Child Development Associate (CDA)** credential, while the TC includes greater emphasis on theory and application, and the AAS adds practical experience. Both the CP and TC are embedded within the AAS program. Similarly, the **Cosmetology TC** includes an embedded CP in Nail Technology. The CP in Nail Technology is less difficult than the TC in Cosmetology. All nail tech graduates do not complete a TC in Cosmetology while all cosmetology graduates must complete the embedded CP in Nail Technology. PCCUA also offers numerous **stand-alone CPs** that respond to immediate workforce needs, such as a **Commercial Driver's License (CDL)** and **Emergency Medical Technology (EMT)**.

PCCUA uses a **standardized syllabus template** to ensure consistency and inclusion of all essential course information. The College plans to implement **Simple Syllabus** in Spring 2026 to further streamline this process. While syllabi contain consistent institutional information, faculty maintain flexibility in grading, attendance, participation, and assessment methods. Faculty must clearly describe their assessment strategies and provide an **early authentic assessment** by the third week of the term. Students performing below expectations receive an early intervention, the nature of which is determined by the instructor.

The College's **General Education Competencies** emphasize the development of analytical, critical thinking, and reasoning skills. Instruction is structured to move students from foundational knowledge and comprehension to application, analysis, evaluation, and creative synthesis. For instance, rubrics such as the **English Writing Rubric** are used to assess students' mastery of learning taxonomies.

PROGRAM ADMISSIONS AND STUDENT CLASSIFICATIONS

Although PCCUA maintains an **open-door admissions policy**, students must complete mandatory testing and placement to identify academic course placement and support needs. All students are required to take the **Next Generation Accuplacer (NG Accuplacer)** prior to enrolling in ACTS courses or entering a degree program. The **admission process** includes an application, submission of high school transcripts or GED scores, immunization records, and a

financial aid application. These steps are outlined in both the **College Catalog** and on the website. Additional procedures include arranging payment, obtaining a parking permit and student ID, setting up a PCCUA email account, and attending orientation. Students enrolling in online programs apply through **PCCUA Online**, where they receive detailed application instructions.

Certain programs, such as the **Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN)**, **Technical Certificate in Practical Nursing**, **Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT)**, **Technical Certificate in Phlebotomy**, and **Certificate of Proficiency in CDL/Truck Driving**, have additional admissions requirements.

The College recognizes two student classifications: freshman and sophomore. However, depending on the program, not all courses must be taken sequentially; for example, some **Criminal Justice** and **Behavioral Health** courses can be taken in any order. PCCUA also offers **cognate or embedded programs** that allow students to progress from certificates to higher-level certificates or associate degrees. Examples include embedded credentials in Construction, Graphic Communications, and Business Information Systems.

PCCUA values **external accreditation** as a mechanism for ensuring program quality and rigor. Accredited programs must demonstrate adherence to high standards and continuous improvement. These include Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing ACEN, National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences NAACLS and Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs ACBSP.

REVIEW AND VIABILITY FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND TRANSFER PROGRAMS

Every ten years, PCCUA conducts a **comprehensive program review** that includes an internal self-study and an external review. For **AA and AS programs**, one in-state and one out-of-state reviewer are required. For **AAS and certificate programs**, ADHE allows two in-state reviewers, one of whom must be an educator and the other a practitioner in the field. The **Program Review and Self-Study Guidelines** are available on the College website. Additionally, the **University of Arkansas System** mandates a **five-year review** for all new programs to assess viability and productivity.

Each year, PCCUA receives an **ADHE productivity and viability report**. Programs must average four graduates per year for certificate and AAS programs, and six graduates per year for AA/AS degrees. If a program does not meet these thresholds, the College provides a justification for non-viability. PCCUA has some non-viable programs which is acceptable practice as long as ADHE approves these programs. Usually, a low cost and high completion rate program will be approved, such as the PCCUA Graphics program which provided all course work taught by the Director of Graphics.

PCCUA maintains multiple **Associate-to-Bachelor's transfer opportunities** and provides detailed information about transfer and scholarship options in both the Catalog and on the

website. Many AAS programs are now being accepted into four year transfer programs such as nursing and MLT.

HIGH SCHOOL ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS

PCCUA has held **National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP)** accreditation and adheres to established **dual credit guidelines**. The College's concurrent enrollment program enables high school students to complete a two-year college degree while still in high school. The **University of Arkansas at Fayetteville (UAF) Transfer Achievement Scholarship** makes this pathway especially attractive, allowing students to retain the PCCUA tuition rate. Recently, the College Data Team has reviewed the **ADHE Concurrent Data Reports** and determined it is no longer feasible to belong to NACEP because we offer so few courses that fall within the NACEP guidelines. Most concurrent enrollment students come to the college campus to take classes taught by college instructors.

The College also operates a robust **Secondary Area Technical Center** with occupational programs on all three campuses. These programs undergo external review every five years by the **Arkansas Department of Commerce, Office of Skills Development (OSD)** to ensure instructional quality and up-to-date equipment. As published in the Catalog, the following Secondary Area Technical Center programs are offered on each campus: DeWitt campus has Criminal Justice, Medical Professions, Advanced Manufacturing, and Welding. It also offers Agriculture; however, this is not an SATC program but it is managed by the OSD. The Helena campus offers: Advanced Manufacturing, Computer Engineering, Medical Professions Education, Welding, and Criminal Justice. The Stuttgart campus offers: Criminal Justice, Advanced Manufacturing, Medical Professions Education, and Welding.

ADULT EDUCATION

Adult Education has been a part of PCCUA's mission-driven program since its founding. The program, offered on the Helena campus through the **Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas**, supports literacy and workforce readiness in the region. Centers are located in **Helena, Marianna, and Marvell**. **Arkansas County** is in a separate Workforce Board region; therefore, PCCUA is not permitted by the State to administer Adult Education on those two campuses. We continue to work toward changing that requirement.

1500 WORDS

EVIDENCE
3A_1 **Program Learning Goals and Outcomes (PLOs)**
3A_2 **Check-off Sheets**
3A_3 **Academic Clusters**
3A_4 **General Education Competencies**
3A_5 **STACC Skills**
3A_6 **Associate Degrees**
3A_7 **Technical Certificates**
3A_8 **Certificates of Proficiency**

3A_9 **Uniform Curriculum**
3A_10 **Arkansas Course Transfer System (ACTS)**
3A_11 **ACTS Course Listing**
3A_12 **Business Course Descriptions**
3A_13 **Math Guide**
3A_14 **Arkansas Division of Higher Education (ADHE)**
3A_15 **Instruction and Curriculum Team (I&C)**,
3A_16 **Curriculum Management Guide**
3A_17 **Curriculum Committee**
3A_18 **Executive Council**
3A_19 **Board of Visitors (BOV)**
3A_20 **University of Arkansas System Board of Trustees (BOT)**.
3A_21 **New programs and program deletions**
3A_22 **Program Proposal**
3A_23 **Bloom's Taxonomy**
3A_24 **Early Childhood Education**
3A_25 **Child Development Associate (CDA)**
3A_26 **Cosmetology TC**
3A_27 **Stand-Alone CPs**
3A_28 **Commercial Driver's License (CDL)**
3A_29 **Emergency Medical Technology (EMT)**.
3A_30 **Standardized Syllabus Template**
3A_31 **Simple Syllabus**
3A_32 **Early Authentic Assessment**
3A_33 **General Education Competencies**
3A_34 **English Writing Rubric**
3A_35 **Open-Door Admissions Policy**
3A_36 **Next Generation Accuplacer (NG Accuplacer)**
ADD Admission Process
3A_37 **Financial Aid Application**
3A_39 **College Catalog**
3A_40 **PCCUA Online**.
3A_41 **Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN)**
3A_42 **Technical Certificate in Practical Nursing**
3A_43 **Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT)**
3A_44 **Technical Certificate in Phlebotomy**
3A_45 **Certificate of Proficiency in CDL/Truck Driving**
3A_46 **External Accreditation**
3A_47 **Comprehensive Program Review**
3A_48 **AA and AS Programs**
3A_49 **AAS and Certificate Programs**
3A_50 **Program Review and Self-Study Guidelines**
3A_51 **University of Arkansas System**
3A_52 **Five-Year Review**
3A_53 **ADHE Productivity and Viability Report**
3A_54

3A_55
3A_56 Associate-to-Bachelor's Transfer Opportunities
3A_57 Criminal Justice
3A_58 Behavioral Health
3A_59 Cognate Programs or Embedded Programs
3A_60 National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP)
3A-61 Dual Credit Guidelines
3A_62 University of Arkansas at Fayetteville (UAF) Transfer Achievement Scholarship
3A_63 ADHE Concurrent Data Reports
3A_64 Secondary Area Technical Center
3A_65 Arkansas Department of Commerce
3A_66 Office of Skills Development (OSD)
3A_67 Adult Education
3A_68 Workforce Development Board of Eastern Arkansas
3A_69 Helena, Marianna, and Marvell
3A_70 Arkansas County

3.B. EXERCISE OF INTELLECTUAL INQUIRY

The institution's educational programs engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in practicing modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

COLLECTING, ANALYZING, AND COMMUNICATING INFORMATION

Every academic division at PCCUA offers courses that engage students in investigation, analysis, and creative production through structured projects. **Nursing** students complete a project in which they select a topic, research it, analyze findings, and publish and present a poster. In **Composition II**, students conduct research culminating in a formal paper shared with peers. **Speech** students research and deliver informative or persuasive presentations, while students in **Human Growth and Development** complete and share research activities with classmates. **Behavioral Health** students visit service agencies, interview supervisory staff, and present findings in class. **MLT** students complete case studies, and **Construction** students design blueprints and execute community service projects.

Early Childhood Education (ECE) students develop portfolios, resumes, and competency statements demonstrating analysis and synthesis of evidence. In **Web Coding I and Web Design II**, students design company websites, while **CIS** students complete a mock project requiring them to plan a corporate meeting for 50 attendees with a $100,000 budget, encompassing logistics and resource management, such as registration, hotels, food, travel and more.

The Assessment Committee determined that assessment methods may vary across disciplines but must include **Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)** and be used for continuous course and program improvement. PCCUA's **Assessment Handbook** provides faculty with SLO-based guidelines for improving teaching and learning.

Faculty conduct an **authentic assessment** by the third week of the term. Students not meeting course expectations receive **early intervention** through tutoring, supplemental materials, additional labs, or other supports. Faculty demonstrate reflective inquiry and creative competence by completing end-of-course **assessment outcomes forms,** identifying at least three actions or observations based on student performance. This ongoing analysis strengthens instructional quality.

AAS programs use **field experience** where students investigate the occupation, apply learned information in the field and share that information with the class. Allied Health, Applied Technology and Information Systems include **practicums and clinicals** which emphasize intellectual inquiry, collecting, analyzing and communicating information. The PCCUA divisions are focused on assessing how well they teach and facilitate learning and how well they support students. They are also engaged in improvement planning. That process involves collecting, analyzing and communicating

information about the divisions and sharing it with others. One method of sharing is through a brief summary provided in the **Academic Update** addressing the past year's work and future plans. **Program assessment forms** require deans to address the current status of programming in an effort to plan for the future. **Program reviews** are the foundation of planning and document changes which will be made based on the program review outcomes. One of the main sources documenting program planning is each division's **five-year plan**, the purpose of which is improvement.

PRACTICE MODES OF INTELLECTUAL INQUIRY AND CREATIVE WORK

Each program assesses student learning through discipline-specific tools and methods. **Welding** students demonstrate skill competency through direct observation of welded projects. In **social sciences**, journals and reaction papers are common assessment tools.

Science courses employ multiple modes of inquiry confirmation, guided, open, and structured along with quantitative and critical analyses and experimental research. **History, Political Science, and World Civilization** courses use historical inquiry and reaction papers. Quantitative analysis is foundational in **algebra** and reasoning courses, and critical analysis features prominently in writing-intensive disciplines.

Cosmetology students engage in creative inquiry through hair and makeup design assignments and projects. **Construction** and **Advanced Manufacturing** students create tangible products such as 3D-printed designs. **Education** students conduct classroom observations and analyze teaching practices through case studies. Experimental research design is emphasized in **Physical Science, Sociology, Psychology, and Biology**. Online faculty integrate research and experimental methods creatively within virtual learning environments. **Internship** structures differ by division, reflecting field-specific standards, but all include documented analysis, communication, and adaptability assessments.

PCCUA promotes public **presentation of creative work** through performances and exhibitions. Dance students perform in annual recitals, and Graphic Communication students host exhibitions in the Hendrix Gallery. On the Helena campus, collaboration with Helena Little Theater allows students to participate in stage productions and technical design, while fine arts and literature classes require performance critiques.

Annually, college-wide **in-service sessions** focus on curriculum and creative development, providing faculty opportunities to discuss innovation and inquiry across disciplines. At the beginning of each academic year, deans and directors report progress and goals, which are shared in the **Academic Update** distributed during in-service and integrated into the **Strategic Plan**.

PCCUA's General Education core establishes courses which serve as the foundation for all academic programs. These courses emphasize collecting, analyzing, and communicating information while fostering intellectual inquiry and creative thinking through the College's Core Competencies called **STACC Skills**, which align with general education competencies. All associate degrees share **five common courses** which include Composition I and II, Speech, Computer Information Systems, and Mathematics (Quantitative Reasoning, College Algebra, or

Technical Math). These courses meet the **faculty-defined general education competencies** and intentionally integrate teaching these competencies in the courses and programs.

Faculty model intellectual and creative engagement through professional achievements. Examples include a **social science instructor** who serves as president of the Arkansas Press Association and publishes widely; a **dean** recognized for DEI presentations and literary contributions; and an **anatomy and physiology instructor** who incorporates professional chiropractic experience into teaching. Other faculty serve as regional facilitators for leadership programs such as the ASPEN Young Leaders Fellowship, and technical advisors for theater productions. A **vice chancellor** is a recognized leadership development trainer. Faculty engagement in professional practice, textbook review, and open educational resource development models lifelong learning and creativity for students, and is captured in the **Professional Development Table**.

PCCUA students also demonstrate creativity and inquiry through achievement. Each division selects an **outstanding graduate** annually based on scholarship, engagement, and collegiality. The College honors graduates with a 3.5 GPA or higher at an annual Honors Reception. Notably, one student has published a book, and several have earned first-place awards at SkillsUSA competitions.

PCCUA maintains full accreditation through the **Higher Learning Commission (HLC)**, and all programs are approved accordingly. It ranks as the Number One Best College in Arkansas according to NICHE and is ranked in the top five community colleges in the nation according to ____. Many programs also maintain specialized accreditation, including ADN, PN, MLT, Phlebotomy, and Business programs. The PN program frequently ranks as the top program in Arkansas, often achieving a 100% board pass rate. These accreditations require rigorous evidence of intellectual inquiry and data-driven continuous improvement.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPING ADAPTABLE SKILLS

There are opportunities for students to learn adaptable skills. The navigation of college is examined in **Student Success I, II**, **Orientation,** and the **Virtual Technology Academy**. In these areas, students learn how to prepare a schedule, follow their guided pathway, file for financial aid, and perform numerous other college-related business and policy practices. In **extra-curricular activities**, a wide range of pursuits focus on analyzing and communicating information, such as observance of Black History or Women's History months with trivia quizzes, focused presentations and panel discussions. Intellectual inquiry is embraced in **open discussions of difficult themes** such as what to do if you are stopped by the police, how to report mandated reporter activity, or the challenges of domestic abuse. These activities are supported in the PCCUA **Results Matter Survey** of 324 students who indicated that PCCUA works to empower students through engagement with hands-on support.

Externally, the college program leaders also rely heavily on advisory committees. For example, Early Childhood Education, Behavioral Health, Business and Industry, and Nursing rely on input from their respective **advisory councils** for program improvement input**.** The format, meeting times and purposes of these committees vary. For example, Allied Health has advisory

committees for most of their technical and associate degree programs. Applied Technology has separate advisory committees for cosmetology and graphics, but only one Business and Industry Advisory Council for welding, construction, and HVAC because so many of the skills tied to industry overlap from one program to another. We use advisory committees as a resource for addressing the changing environments of the workplace, and to communicate vital work skill information that our students need.

PCCUA fosters adaptable skill development across programs and activities. College courses such as **Student Success I & II,** experiences such as **Mandatory Orientation**, and online support by the **Virtual Technology Academy** teach students how to manage schedules, follow guided pathways, apply for financial aid, and navigate institutional systems.

Extracurricular activities further promote analytical and communication skills. Observances such as Black History Month and Women's History Month feature quizzes, presentations, and panels encouraging intellectual discussion. Students engage in open forums addressing complex themes like bias, microaggression, and cultural diversity.

Survey data from **PCCUA's Results Matter** and the **CCSSE Academic Challenge** indicate that students recognize the College's emphasis on analysis, critical thinking, and the application of new information in their learning experiences.

Externally, PCCUA partners with industry representing fields such as Early Childhood Education, Behavioral Health, Business and Industry, and Nursing to provide input on evolving workforce needs. These partnerships ensure that curriculum design remains responsive and aligned with appropriate and adaptable skill development in the curriculum and applied learning environment.

1493 WORDS

EVIDENCE

3B_1 Nursing
3B_2 Composition II
3B_ Speech
3B_5 Human Growth and Development
3B_6 Behavioral Health
3B_7 MLT
3B_8 Construction
3B_9 Field Experiences
3B_10 Practicum and Clinical Experiences
3B_11 Early Childhood Education (ECE)
3B_12 Web Coding I and Web Design II
3B_13 CIS
3B_14 Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)
3B_15 Assessment Handbook

3B_16 Authentic Assessment
3B_17 Early Intervention
3B_18 assessment Outcomes Forms
3B_19 Field experience
3B_20 Practicums and clinicals
1B_21 Academic Update
3B_22 Program Assessment Forms
3B_23 Program Reviews
3B_24 Five-Year Plan
3B_25 Welding
3B_26 Social Sciences
3B_27 Science
3B_28 History
3B_29 Political Science
3B_30 World Civilization
3B_31 Algebra.
3B_32 Cosmetology
3B_33 Construction
3B_34 Advanced Manufacturing
3B_35 Education
3B_36 Physical Science
3B_37 Sociology
3B_38 Psychology
3B_39 Biology
3B_40 Presentation of Creative Work
3B_41 In-Service Sessions
3B_41 Internship
3B_42 Academic Update
3B_43 Strategic Plan.
3B_44 STACC Skills
3B_45 Five Common Courses
3B_46 Faculty-Defined General Education Competencies
3B_47 Social Science Instructor
3B_48 Dean
3B_49 Anatomy and Physiology Instructor
3B_50 Vice Chancellor
3B_51 Outstanding Graduate
3B_52 Higher Learning Commission (HLC)
3B_53 Student Success I & II
3B_54 Mandatory Orientation
3B_55 Virtual Technology Academy
3B_56 Extracurricular activities
3B_57 PCCUA's Results Matter

3B_58 CCSSE Academic Challenge
3B_59 Advisory Councils

3.C. SUFFICIENCY OF FACULTY AND STAFF

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

FACULTY AND STAFF NEEDS ARE GUIDED BY POLICIES

Board Policies (BP) and Administrative Procedures (AP) in the 300 section of the Policy Manual clearly articulate expectations for faculty and staff to maintain effectiveness and quality. **Key policies** include: BP 363: Faculty Responsibility; BP 364: Faculty Work Schedule; BP 365: Conflict of Interest; BP 366: Participation in Graduation; BP 367: Professional Growth of Faculty Members; BP 370: Salaries for Faculty and Administrative Personnel; BP 373: Reference Check of Former Employees; BP 375: Termination of Appointment for Contracted Employees; BP 377: Employee Suspension or Dismissal for Cause; BP 379: Reinstatement of Former Employees or Other Former State Employees; and BP 380: Employee Grievance Resolution. AP 363.01: Duties and Responsibilities of Faculty specifies instructional expectations.

FACULTY APPOINTMENT, QUALIFICATIONS, AND EFFECTIVENESS

PCCUA **AP 370.02: Faculty Appointment and Placement on the Salary Schedule** ensures alignment with HLC standards for instructors. Faculty teaching General Education and transfer courses are required to hold a master's degree or higher in the discipline. Occasionally, the College supports faculty in returning to school to upgrade skills, providing tuition assistance and a 7.5% base pay increase upon completion of 18 graduate hours. Degree plans are submitted to the dean and Vice Chancellor for Instruction for approval. Numerous faculty have taken advantage of this development opportunity. Faculty teaching non-transfer courses must hold a degree above the certificate or degree level of the program they teach, and administrative positions tied to instruction are similarly qualified.

As previously stated, faculty who complete a master's, specialist, or doctoral degree receive a 7.5% increase in base pay. Degrees earned outside a faculty member's teaching field result in salary advancement only if they meet a college need in another discipline. PCCUA also recognizes "assumed practice for tested experience" for candidates with exceptional expertise. The factors that the institution considers in this practice include, but are not limited to, the achievement of academic credentials, progress toward academic credentials, equivalent experience or some combination thereof. For example, our technical director has extensive experience working not only with the College's technical sets but with museums and other theater departments. A committee composed of the dean, a faculty member, and the VC for Instruction reviewed his background and completed the **Faculty Qualifications Assumed Practice for Tested Experience Form,** which documented the decision to allow him to teach a fine arts course because of his knowledge in the discipline. Similarly, two early childhood education instructors were approved to teach a sociology course entitled 'The Family'. At some colleges, the course resides in Early Childhood Education or Home and Consumer Science.

The overall student-to-faculty ratio is 11:1, as documented in the **Factbook**. Online faculty-to-student ratios are higher than face-to-face ratios. Although the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) prefers higher ratios, PCCUA prioritizes maintaining low ratios as a key recruitment feature. **Program viability and efficiency** are evaluated based on both cost and community need. Programs such as Advanced Manufacturing and Graphics have small enrollments but achieve high completion and job placement rates.

QUALIFIED STAFF AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Attracting and retaining master's-prepared administrative staff and advisors is challenging. While a master's degree is preferred, a bachelor's degree is required. The advising program consists of three full-time advisors, one per campus, supported by **faculty program advisors listed in the Catalog** to assist students, ensuring each student has a dedicated advisor with program-specific expertise. The College supports upward mobility

In 2024-25, the position of VC of Student Services was divided into two units. The implementation of Workday and changes in job functions made it important to divide the Student Services workload into a VC for Student Services and Campus Life and a VC for Admissions and Records. This action was taken to ensure students received the best support possible. The VC of Admissions and Records has oversight of academic advising, student success, admission and records, and financial aid. The college is committed to helping PCCUA employees desiring advancement to have an opportunity to do this. On rare occasions, a person with extensive experience in a field may be hired in a position while pursuing a bachelor's degree.

SEARCH AND HIRING PRACTICE

The **PCCUA Search, Interview, Hiring, Employment, and Separation Guidelines** govern the selection of qualified faculty and staff. These guidelines outline steps from candidate selection through hiring, including the use of a **Personnel Action Request (PAR)** and advertising minimum requirements. Faculty are assessed, assigned teaching disciplines, and appointed to the appropriate division. If a faculty member is eligible to teach in more than one academic area, that is noted. New staff are assigned to functional areas.

In 2024–25, the Vice Chancellor (VC) of Student Services' role was divided into two positions: **VC for Student Services and Campus Life**, and **VC for Admissions and Records**. This restructuring, along with the implementation of Workday, was designed to improve student support and strengthen registration and records operations. The VC of Admissions and Records oversees academic advising, student success, admissions and records, and financial aid. These changes allowed the VC for Student Services and Campus Life to focus on student support and engagement.

Serving **a rural, economically depressed region** makes it difficult to recruit highly qualified staff. However, all employees at PCCUA are qualified for the positions they hold. Custodians, maintenance workers, and supervisors have the experience and skills needed for their positions. Support staff must meet job qualifications before hire to ensure the "best fit" for placement. Some professional staff positions are filled with bachelor's-prepared candidates whose

experience aligns with the position. Administrative staff on the Executive Council hold a master's degree or higher with the exception of the director of IT. Because of the serious difficulty the college has competing with industry paying higher salaries, we sometimes fill positions based on experience and skill rather than degree. Before hiring for a staff position, the committee reviews the experience of a candidate to ensure it aligns with the position needs. A well-qualified, internal candidate is sometimes hired in support areas.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

PCCUA provides **professional development for faculty and staff**. The **Professional Development Committee of Faculty Senate** organizes at least six workshops annually, supplemented by workshops from distance learning, the **Center for Excellence in Educational Development (CEED)**, and other college initiatives. Faculty participate in four annual in-service days, three of which are dedicated to professional development and one to institutional updates. **BP 367: Professional Growth of Faculty Members and AP 367.01: Professional Growth of Faculty Members** establish expectations for ongoing growth through in-service programs, discipline-specific experiences, research, community service, and other activities. Faculty submit annual professional development reports and document professional development in their annual evaluation. The Workday platform provides **mandated state, federal, and UA system professional development** and documents employee completion of that requirement.

Faculty and advisors rely on comprehensive handbooks outlining roles, responsibilities, and expectations. The **Faculty Handbook** serves full- and part-time instructors; the **Advisor Handbook** assures best advising practices; and the **Employee Handbook** details policies and procedures for effective job performance. Staff evaluations incorporate both personal and supervisory input.

SUSTAINING QUALITY THROUGH EVALUATION

All faculty undergo annual evaluations per **AP 370.05: Faculty Evaluation**, which are based on student evaluations of course delivery and design, teaching portfolios, and dean assessments of course management. The VC of Instruction submits an **Annual Review of Faculty Performance** summarizing faculty engagement, student feedback, and administrator involvement. Evaluation outcomes guide professional development and inform instructional improvements. An important part of the evaluation is how the findings are used. Data about the outcome of student evaluation and comments made by students in this process are important because they inform development needs for the next year. All staff receive annual evaluations, which are used for quality improvement within functional areas. Executive staff are evaluated by the Chancellor.

ENSURING QUALITY THROUGH TRAINING

New faculty receive onboarding through the dean using the **New Employee Orientation Supervisor Checklist** and **Supervisor's Guide for New Employee Onboarding**. An informal mentoring process pairs new instructors with experienced faculty. PCCUA has introduced **"New-ish" Employee Orientation** for new employees, emphasizing compliance, culture, and

connection across all three campuses. All employees navigate processes through **Workday**, the PCCUA platform used by all UofA colleges to optimize business practices and connect all employees.is used to facilitate administrative processes for all employees.

The **400 section of the Policy Manual** focuses on instruction and provides faculty with detailed guidelines on scholastic status, grading, withdrawal, grade assignments, academic integrity, prior learning assessments, and graduation requirements. These policies and procedures serve as a framework for faculty.

1412 WORDS

EVIDENCE
Key policies
AP 370.02: Faculty Appointment and Placement on the Salary Schedule
Faculty Qualifications Assumed Practice for Tested Experience Form
Factbook.
Program viability and efficiency
Faculty program advisors listed in the Catalog
PCCUA Search, Interview, Hiring, Employment, and Separation Guidelines
Personnel Action Request (PAR)
VC for Student Services and Campus Life
VC for Admissions and Records.
professional development for faculty and staff
Professional Development Committee of Faculty Senate
Center for Excellence in Educational Development (CEED)
BP 367: Professional Growth of Faculty Members
AP 367.01: Professional Growth of Faculty Members
Mandated state, federal, and UA system professional development
Faculty Handbook
Advisor Handbook
Employee Handbook
AP 370.05: Faculty Evaluation
Annual Review of Faculty Performance
New Employee Orientation Supervisor Checklist
Supervisor's Guide for New Employee Onboarding
"New-ish" Employee Orientation
Workday
400 Section of the Policy Manual

3.D. SUPPORT FOR STUDENT LEARNING AND RESOURCES FOR TEACHING

The institution provides student support services that address the needs of its student populations, as well as the teaching resources and infrastructure necessary for student success.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENT LEARNING AND RESOURCES FOR TEACHING

PCCUA provides teaching resources and the infrastructure needed to support student success. **Remedial courses** in math, writing, and reading are provided for under-prepared students. An **early intervention process** developed by faculty helps identify and address extra support needs, such as **tutoring**, **learning labs**, and **smart classrooms**. **Clinical and internship sites provide** students with hands-on practical experiences, and science laboratories are equipped for experimentation. Student input from the **Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)** and **Results Matter** assists with identifying student needs. A comprehensive inventory of resources nurtures students' success.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Admissions and Registration - Students may register for classes on any campus or online from semester to semester when pre-registration begins for the fall and spring or anytime during the summer.

Testing and Placement – Mandatory NG ACCUPLACER testing is free and available for students.

Financial Aid - Students seeking financial aid and other kinds of scholarships are assisted with preparing the application, the FAFSA, and given information and guidance about the process of receiving aid of any kind (PELL, scholarships, grants, and other).

Advising - Each campus has full-time advisors and program faculty advisors. Advisors assist students with selecting majors, career exploration, schedule building, and a variety of other support activities.

Program Check Sheet/Guided Pathway – This is the academic guided pathway, which allows advisors to help students identify and select courses required for their major to provide a more direct pathway to completion.

Students with Disabilities Support – Each campus has a disability advisor designated to help determine support services needed based on individual needs. Students are to identify and provide documentation of the disability from an authorized provider.

Veterans – Veterans' facilitators on each campus ensure these students receive the financial, academic, and social support needed.

Complaints - Students are always encouraged to seek informal resolutions to issues or problems. However, information and assistance for filing a formal resolution are provided on the Web.

Academic Appeal – Students have full access to the academic appeal process information and forms on the Web.

Mandatory Orientation – All new and returning students must participate in orientation. This includes college onboarding and navigation, support for learning resources, and online support.

Student Success – Students placing in Composition I are assigned to Student Success. This course provides career exploration, financial literacy, academic support strategies, and more.

Financial and Career Coaching - Coaches provide career and financial coaching. All coaches are trained and present the same curricular activities.

Tutoring - Tutoring is available to students on each campus and that service can be accessible by contacting the Learning Center Coordinator or Student Support Services.

Student Engagement Calendar - Each campus offers a wide range of engagement activities focusing on enrichment, current issues, holidays celebrations, and stress release activities.

Athletics - PCCUA has a basketball program on the Helena Campus which is in its second year. Plans are in place to select and implement organized cheer on the DeWitt campus and baseball on the Stuttgart campus.

Rowdy Rents – The book rental program located in each campus library and can provide not only textbooks but also software support designed with text materials.

Roost - This store has classroom supplies, college apparel, and gift items.

Food Pantry - Food pantries are available on all campuses and are open twice a month for students to shop.

Career Closets – Clothing closets are available on all campuses.

CEED - The Center for Excellence for Educational Development - CEED promotes excellence in teaching and learning, and workforce development offering high-impact professional development opportunities for educators, staff, and students.

INITIATIVES SUPPORTING LEARNING

Student Support Services (SSS) - SSS serves low-income, first-generation college students, and individuals with disabilities evidencing academic need.

Career Pathways - The Arkansas Career Pathways (ICP) initiative is a comprehensive project designed to improve the earnings, post-secondary education attainment, and job placement of Arkansas's low–income residents.

Transitional Training Opportunity Program – This is a program designed to assist post-incarcerated, system-impacted students with industry training and job placement.

GearUp – Gear Up is a federally funded program designed to help secondary students with post-secondary enrollment after high school.

Virtual Technology Academy- This is available to all students to assist with online and technical support. It has been funded through Title III and is available to all students.

Adult Education – Only the Helena campus has Adult Education (a 50+ year old program) with oversight from the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services. It provides literacy and GED preparation and serves as a platform for advancement into college for many. Stuttgart and DeWitt campuses are in a different workforce region; therefore, the College does not administer their program.

LEARNING AND INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

Professional Development – Scheduling is provided by the College, the Faculty Senate Professional Development Committee, and the Distance Learning and Technology Committee.

Learning and Instruction Spaces - PCCUA has an adequate, accessible, and available resource infrastructure that facilitates quality learning: Helena campus has 8 buildings, 3 warehouses, and a garage; Stuttgart has 2 buildings, a War Memorial Training Center, a welding shop, and a construction shop/garage. The DeWitt campus has one building, the Secondary Area Technical Center, and a garage.

Classrooms and Smart-rooms – Most classrooms are equipped with smartboards, whiteboards, and bulletin boards; the schedule is tied to classroom seating. Smart classrooms are available on each campus – these have internet and technology capabilities and are designed to encourage collaboration.

Health and Science Labs - Each campus has health and science labs with state-of-the-art equipment designed for lab experimentation, multi-dimensional lab experiences, and research. The two nursing programs, MLT and phlebotomy labs, are designed to allow students to participate in simulations and hands-on experiences.

Workforce and Technical Training Labs – All three campuses have workforce training laboratories designed to allow students to practice the skills they are learning, such as welding, manufacturing, and construction. All have updated, state-of-the-art equipment designed to promote learning, collaboration, and experience. Helena and Stuttgart have truck driving ranges; Helena has a simulator.

Student Support Labs – All campuses have multi-purpose learning centers open for students to acquire technology assistance; these are open to day students and have limited hours for evening students. Students can receive tutoring, testing, and content review.

Student Center - Each campus has a student center, the largest being the Bonner Center, which has food services. These centers are used for numerous student engagement activities.

Gym -The Helena campus has had a gymnasium for many years, which has been newly renovated to accommodate the Ridgerunner basketball players.

Libraries - A library is located on each campus, and full internet, loans, and other support and student research resources are available. It has a staff of four, with two on the Helena campus, and one each on the Stuttgart and DeWitt campuses. The Library Director travels from campus to campus. The majority of the library's budget goes to paying for subscriptions to electronic databases. Some of the databases are field-specific, with a number devoted to the school's two nursing programs. These databases include, but are not limited to, EBSCOhost, Gale Group, ProQuest SIRS Discoverer, ProQuest SIRS Issues Researcher, WorldCat, and Alexander Street.

Business Office – The central business office is on the Helena campus; however, each campus has its own business office. Practices are student-friendly, and Bank Mobile access information and schedules for PELL disbursement are shared with students.

RESOURCES FOR THE COMMUNITY

Performing Arts and Meeting Centers – The Helena Campus **Hendrix Fine Arts Center** includes the Lily Peter Auditorium, a community room, classrooms, and the Hendrix Gallery. In Stuttgart, the **Grand Prairie Center** is a fully equipped arts center with classrooms and a performing arts auditorium. The **Ferguson Community Room** in DeWitt is used for numerous community and college events.

Fitness Centers – The Helena and DeWitt campuses have centers that can be used by employees, students, and the community. These are equipped with weights, tracks, ellipticals, and various other exercise equipment.

Pillow-Thompson House – This is a historic home given to the College and restored by community and grant funds. It is used for community and College activities

INFRASTRUCTURE

Technology Infrastructure – The IT department provides access, support and security for a learning environment enhanced by technology use and online instruction, employee communication and record keeping, and much more. The department has a 3-year rotation for computers and smart rooms. Other IT equipment is replaced as needed.

Institutional Research – This office serves all three campuses and is the repository of data related to college enrollment, student retention and completion, key performance indicators and program effectiveness.

Copy Services- The copy service is centralized and located on the Helena campus. All faculty and staff use this center for large copy orders or reports, and publicity.

Operational Support Areas – Each campus has offices which conduct on-gong operations for students and employees such as: Admissions, Testing, Advising, Financial Aid and Business.

Maintenance and Custodial – Each campus has fully equipped maintenance and custodial centers and staff to provide buildings and grounds maintenance and custodial support.

In conclusion, support for student learning and resources for teaching are a priority at PCCUA.

1532 WORDS

EVIDENCE FILE

Remedial courses
Early intervention process
Tutoring
Learning labs
Smart classrooms
Clinical and internship sites
Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)
Results Matter
Admissions and Registration
Testing and Placement
Financial Aid
Advising
Program Check Sheet/Guided Pathway
Students with Disabilities Support
Veterans
Complaints
Academic Appeal
Mandatory Orientation
Student Success
Financial and Career Coaching
Tutoring
Student Engagement Calendar
Athletics
Rowdy Rents
Roost
Food Pantry
Career Closets
CEED - The Center for Excellence for Educational Development
Student Support Services (SSS)
Career Pathways
Transitional Training Opportunity Program
GearUp
Virtual Technology Academy
Adult Education
Learning and Instructional Support
Professional Development
Learning and Instruction Spaces
Classrooms and Smart-rooms
Health and Science Labs
Workforce and Technical Training Labs
Student Support Labs

Student Center
Gym
Libraries
Performing Arts and Meeting Centers
Hendrix Fine Arts Center
Grand Prairie Center
Ferguson Community Room
Fitness Centers
Business Office
Pillow-Thompson House
Infrastructure
Technology Infrastructure
Institutional Research
Copy Services
Operational Support Areas
Maintenance and Custodial

3.E. ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

The institution improves the quality of educational programs based on its assessment of student learning.

ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

PCCUA continuously works to improve the quality of its educational programs using assessment outcomes to improve student learning.

In the **2015 HLC Comprehensive Site Visit**, PCCUA met the standard related to assessment, but the report noted inconsistencies among academic divisions. During the **2020 Mid-Cycle Open Pathways Virtual Review**, the Team required an **HLC Interim Report on Assessment**. While faculty were initially disappointed, they recognized that external reviewers reacted to PCCUA assessment differently than we did. This realization motivated a renewed effort to strengthen assessment practices across the institution.

In the summer of 2021, the College re-established an assessment committee of faculty and staff and applied to participate in the **HLC Assessment Academy**, completing the program in Fall 2025. Participation in the Academy proved instrumental in guiding the College toward a sustainable, mission-aligned assessment program.

The College began its assessment revitalization by establishing a formal structure for assessment activities and tools, including co-curricular assessment, while ensuring that assessment at the course and program levels was consistently conducted. Key outcomes of this effort include:

- Development of a shared assessment vocabulary for faculty
- Identification and dissemination of good assessment practices
- Implementation of an assessment model for academic divisions
- Compilation of all information into an Assessment Handbook

Prior to the HLC virtual visit, processes such as program review and assessment were not consistently shared with all faculty, particularly new faculty. The Assessment Committee addressed this by ensuring handbooks and written procedures were accessible, supporting program reviews, budgeting, and assessment practices, and thereby increasing sustainability. The Committee also developed an **Assessment Framework** defining departmental practices and sharing outcomes. Participation in the Assessment Academy resulted in notes kept and shared in the **HLC SparQ notes**. While it was determined that divisions do not need to assess identically, consistency in assessment tools, curriculum maps, rubrics, and data use was emphasized.

ASSESSMENT MODEL

Through in-service activities and assessment meetings, faculty engaged in discussions to establish specific learning goals. A major shift resulting from the assessment cycle has been a

focus on improving teaching and learning. Faculty are asked, when assessing courses, to identify three improvement practices on the **Assessment for Student Learning Form**, describing how assessment will enhance student learning. Questions posed to faculty include whether program outcomes are appropriately assessed and whether the program meets industry demands or prepares students for advanced study. Using **Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs),** faculty and program directors evaluate how well students perform in their program based on assessment outcomes. Findings are used to identify strengths, weaknesses, curricular concerns, interdisciplinary opportunities, and areas for improvement.

Assessment outcomes are also linked to program reviews and budgeting. For example, if assessment indicates a need for resources such as equipment or materials, these needs are addressed through the annual budget request process. Assessment findings are posted on the College website for transparency.

PCCUA's assessment model follows a structured cycle:

1. Establish or revise course and program student learning outcomes
2. Map outcomes at course, program, and general education/institutional levels
3. Select and design assessment methods and tools
4. Develop an assessment implementation strategy
5. Conduct assessments and collect data
6. Analyze and interpret findings
7. Use data to make informed improvements

In 2021-22, the Assessment Committee implemented a three-year assessment cycle beginning in 2022-23. During this period, the College reviewed and updated its general education core competencies, aligning them with federal and state diversity, equity, and inclusion mandates. In Spring 2025, the Division of Arts and Sciences formally adopted the **College Core Competencies**/STACC Skills as the **General Education Core Competencies**. These competencies are embedded in five courses shared across all associate degree programs: Composition I and II, Speech, Computer Information Systems, and college-level math (College Algebra, Quantitative Literacy, or Technical Math).

ASSESSMENT SUPPORT

Certain aspects related to assessment are changing as the college has added new platforms to gather and collect data, which will make it easier to assess. For example, **Simple Syllabus** will be used to facilitate syllabi preparation using a template in 2026. It will also help with the evaluation of syllabi before being distributed to students. The syllabus plays a critical role for both instructors and students, and the **syllabus template** assists faculty to ensure certain information related to college, state, and federal regulations is included. It contains general college information, but it also contains course guidelines, assignments, evaluations, and time parameters for work. It aids in assessment by ensuring that student learning outcomes are identified. It provides clear expectations for the student and provides a level of transparency with grading, improves communication, and helps the student assume responsibility for work.

Additionally, **tools** like curriculum maps, rubrics, and posting goals/outcomes and test/assignment schedules are an important part of aiding assessment.

One of the most important changes the college is implementing is the use of **Watermark**. This online assessment tool helps with overall assessment, course and program assessment, course and faculty evaluations, and the graduation evaluation. Additional pieces of Watermark will help with determining student success, curriculum strategies, and the educational impact of the assessment on learning. The training for this began in the summer of 2025 and will continue throughout the 2025-26 academic year. It is a powerful tool for course evaluations, but it also captures information about how effectively faculty are reaching students. It can be used for a variety of assignments, test preparation, projects, demonstrations, and other faculty-driven activities. The early alert portion of Watermark will be especially useful.

The College has used **Respondus** for online and face-to-face exam proctoring. This has been important in nursing and other programs using lockdown browsers to prevent cheating which is important for accurate assessment. The college is also investing in **Edsights**. It will be helpful in providing the student voice. The **Chatbot** offers around-the-clock AI-powered support, and students can access it whenever they need it. This platform, while not directly tied to assessment, will be important in identifying student risks and uncovering student needs.

ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE WORK

The Assessment Committee emphasizes that assessment is intended to inform faculty and improve teaching. Faculty are encouraged to understand the purpose of assessment, interpret findings, and apply results to enhance course and program quality. Committee discussions have led to the development of **assessment guidelines**, including:

- Institutional GenEd goals for assessment
- Defined learning outcomes
- Appropriate assessment instruments or methods
- Conducting assessment activities
- Analyzing findings
- Implementing improvements to teaching and learning

The College maintains a reporting deadline requiring divisions to share findings for each program, ensuring documentation, review, and collaboration across departments. **Assessment outcomes** are publicly available on the PCCUA website, along with **Key Performance Indicators**, **program review** information, **co-curricular assessment**, and **budget guidelines**.

Participation in the HLC Assessment Academy has been transformative. Faculty, staff, and administrators gained access to assessment experts, engaged in virtual and face-to-face sessions, completed projects to enhance the College's assessment, and shared knowledge across the institution. The **SparQ notes** have been valuable for tracking and sharing assessment planning and outcomes. The final **Assessment Academy** work was demonstrated through a **PCCUA poster presentation.**

The PCCUA college website has an assessment webpage that lists the mission, which is central to college teaching and learning; it also includes the vision, values, and core competencies. To provide transparency, assessment outcomes and key performance indicators are provided. In addition, institutional changes resulting from assessment provide information about the assessment process. Program reviews are an important part of the assessment process and are listed on the **Assessment Webpage Page**. More details about program reviews are provided in Criterion 3F. The annual assessment results and co-curricular assessment are listed on the page along with the budget guidelines, which are used to ensure that needs are identified and included in annual budget requests.

Through these efforts, PCCUA has built a sustainable, transparent, and meaningful assessment process that informs instructional improvement, supports institutional decision-making, and ultimately enhances student learning.

1297 WORDS

EVIDENCE FILE

HLC Interim Report on Assessment.
HLC Assessment Academy
Assessment activities and tools
Assessment vocabulary
Assessment practices
Assessment model
Assessment Handbook
Assessment Committee
Assessment Framework
HLC Sparq platform
In-service activities
Assessment meetings
Assessment for Student Learning Form
Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)
Assessment outcomes
Assessment model
College Core Competencies
Five courses
Syllabus
Curriculum maps
Rubrics
Watermark
Respondus
Edsights
Chatbot
Assessment Committee
Assessment guidelines
Poster presentation.Assessment webpage

3.F. PROGRAM REVIEW

The institution improves its curriculum based on periodic program review.

PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS

Program review is a critical component of ongoing program assessment at PCCUA. The College adheres to the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board's 2008 ***Policy for the Review of Existing Academic Programs***, which requires all academic programs to undergo review every 7–10 years. PCCUA's **Program Review Guidelines** outline a process that includes an internally led self-study and an external peer review. For career and technical education programs, external reviewers must be practitioners in the relevant occupation.

At the beginning of each academic year, PCCUA distributes the **Program Review Schedule**. Faculty whose programs are slated for review receive notice and a copy of the Program Review Guidelines. These guidelines describe the purpose of the review, timelines, and expectations for examining program goals, student learning outcomes, curriculum, faculty qualifications, program resources, distance delivery, declared majors, assessment results, and program strengths and weaknesses. The Institutional Review Team, composed of faculty and supported by the dean and the Vice Chancellor for Instruction, facilitates the process. Programs are required to meet minimum standards for quality and enrollment. External reviewers complete and sign the **ADHE Program Review Form**, which is submitted to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE).

A year prior to the date of the submission of the program review, the faculty members meet with the dean and the VC for Instruction and are given a copy of the guidelines. The self-study process is extensive and led by faculty. In all self-studies, those faculty discover strengths and weaknesses in their programs. Often the strengths highlight best practices, and the weaknesses identify inconsistencies, gaps, or potential challenges in technology and labor/workforce market trends.

The **program self-study** must address the following program elements: goals, student learning outcomes, objectives and activities, curriculum, program faculty (full-time/adjunct/part-time), program resources, instruction via distance technology, majors declared by students, programs, assessment, program effectiveness, strengths and opportunities, and the **Institutional Review Team**. When the self-study is completed, the team submits this extensive document to external reviewers to examine and respond to specific questions listed on the Program Review Form. The external reviewers must sign and date their review.

The self-study also evaluates student support services, such as advising, registration, financial aid, library access, help desk services, and other supports, to ensure students enrolled in the program have equitable access (see Criterion 3.D). **Advisory boards** contribute to program review, and meeting frequency varies by program. For example, the **Allied Health Advisory Council** meets annually, while the **Workforce Industrial Council** meets more often.

PROGRAM REVIEW INSURING VIABILITY AND PRODUCTIVITY

Program viability and productivity are central to PCCUA's review. **ADHE standards** require an average of four graduates per year over a three-year period for AAS and stand-alone certificate programs. Some programs, such as **Graphics**, may have fewer than four graduates annually but remain approved due to low costs and high completion rates. Many certificate programs at PCCUA function as **embedded credentials** within associate degree pathways. The U.S. Department of Education also recognizes several stand-alone certificate programs, such as EMT, welding, truck driving, and cosmetology, for Pell Grant eligibility because they address high-demand, high-wage workforce needs.

Annually, the Vice Chancellor for Instruction meets with the deans to review **program viability and productivity**. Annually, the VC for Instruction discusses productivity and viability information with the deans. Programs not meeting viability and productivity standards are examined to determine if that program has the potential to become viable. When a program does not meet standards, faculty and deans assess whether improvements are feasible. If not, the program may be recommended for deletion. In such cases, the department submits a **Curriculum Change Form** to the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee. After review, if approved, the Committee forwards a recommendation to the Instruction and Curriculum (IC) Committee, which documents its discussion and completes the **Curriculum Change Form**. The Vice Chancellor for Instruction then presents the recommendation to the Executive Council, and subsequently to the Board of Visitors. These bodies record their decisions in their official minutes. If approved, the recommendation proceeds to the UA Board of Trustees for action and, if accepted, is then submitted to ADHE for approval by the Higher Education Coordinating Board. HLC is notified after ADHE approval. The same governance pathway applies to the introduction of new programs or the modification of existing programs. The process for this is described in the **Curriculum Management Guide**.

PROGRAM REVIEW INFORMING CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

PCCUA links assessment, program review, student learning outcomes, and budgeting to strengthen programs. These **interconnected processes** inform decisions related to equipment purchases, faculty teaching needs, and program improvements. **New program proposals** must include start-up budgets and three-year projected enrollment, costs for the program, and income from tuition, fees grants or other financial support.

The **Arkansas Course Transfer System (ACTS)** ensures that students earning an associate degree at PCCUA have a minimum set of transferable general education credits for the coursework. PCCUA has numerous general education **ACTS courses**; all associate degrees share **five specific content courses**. These include Composition I and II, a mathematics course (College Algebra, Quantitative Literacy, or Technical Math), Speech, and Computer Information Systems. Composition I includes a required student success component. ACTS courses carry guaranteed transferability among Arkansas institutions and have statewide, **faculty-developed learning outcomes.** PCCUA's Catalog and website provide access to ACTS information and a **Transfer Credit Equivalency Guide**. Program reviews also examine policies and

documentation such as committee minutes, transfer equivalency guides, prior learning assessment practices, advanced placement and dual credit processes, and transfer resources.

A Program Review includes analysis of transfer agreements, transfer scholarships, and special initiatives such as the **Arkansas Transfer Achievement Scholarship**, which allows PCCUA graduates to attend the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville at PCCUA's tuition rate.

The College's **General Education Core Competencies (STACC skills)** are listed in the Catalog, Student Handbook, Faculty Handbook, course syllabi, and on the College website. These competencies are reviewed periodically and are essential for all associate degree programs. These are included in the Program Review process because teaching these competencies is integrated into the program curriculum.

PCCUA deans and faculty complete a **5-year program review** for every new program. The abbreviated program review identifies Full Time Equivalency (FTE's), student enrollment based on productivity outcomes, and annual completions. This review also includes program costs, income from tuition and fees (3-year collection), mission, history of the program, and other data.

The Program Review will include alternative credit options for the program, are outlined in **AP 414.02: Procedures for Earning Credit(s) Through the College Level Examination Program (CLEP)** and **AP 414.03 Prior Learning Assessment** for each program. This process identifies the ways the College awards credits for **prior learning experiences,** such as criminal justice or early childhood education. The college recognizes multiple measures to review prior learning appropriate for awarding credit within a program, which include:

- NLN exam
- Observation of demonstrated competencies
- Product evaluation portfolio requires Prior Learning Assessment Form (**Criminal Justice**)
- Oral interview
- Written exam - standard or departmental (**AP/CLEP**)
- Performance tests - standard or departmental (**Computer Information Systems**)

The maximum number of hours a student may attain for prior learning is 15 semester credit hours for a technical certificate and 30 semester credit hours toward a degree; however, awarding the full number of allowable hours is rare. These practices are noted in a review and demonstrate that a program respects alternative learning options.

As mentioned in other sections of the Assurance Argument, PCCUA encourages **external accreditation** because it validates program rigor, ensures quality assurance, promotes best practices, and enhances program reputation, particularly for students transferring or entering licensure-based fields. Programs with accreditation through agencies such as the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ASCEN), the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS), the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP), and formerly the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP).

ADHE accepts a letter of accreditation in lieu of a program review for the programs with external accreditations. Faculty and staff recognize the value of external accreditation for strengthening academic quality and supporting student success.

1329 WORDS

EVIDENCE

Policy for the Review of Existing Academic Programs
 Program Review Guidelines
Program Review Schedule
ADHE Program Review Form
Program self-study
Institutional Review Team
Allied Health Advisory Council
Workforce Industrial Council
ADHE standards
Graphics
Embedded credentials
Program viability and productivity.
Program deletion process
Program Deletion Form Curriculum Management Guide.
Interconnected processes
New program proposals
Arkansas Course Transfer System (ACTS)
ACTS courses
Five specific content courses
Faculty-developed learning outcomes
Transfer Credit Equivalency Guide.
Arkansas Transfer Achievement Scholarship
General Education Core Competencies (STACC skills)
5-year program review
AP 414.02: Procedures for Earning Credit(s) Through the College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
AP 414.03 Prior Learning Assessment
Prior learning experiences
(**Criminal Justice**)
(**AP/CLEP**)
(**Computer Information Systems**)
external accreditation
1478

3.G. STUDENT SUCCESS OUTCOMES

The institution's student success outcomes demonstrate continuous improvement, taking into account the student populations it serves and benchmarks that reference peer institutions.

STUDENT SUCCESS DEMOGRAPHICS

PCCUA serves a **high-minority, high-risk student population**. Many of our students face **barriers** such as poverty, high unemployment, first-generation college status, and the need for remedial education. Despite these challenges, the **2024 Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)** revealed strong student perceptions of support and belonging: 82% believed their instructors cared about their success, 78% believed instructors cared about them personally, and 80% felt they belonged at the College. Clearly, self-efficacy plays a critical role in student success at PCCUA.

STUDENT SUCCESS OUTCOMES AND BENCHMARKS

The College's student success outcomes demonstrate continuous improvement. PCCUA benchmarks productivity outcomes against all twenty-two two-year colleges in Arkansas, while more detailed comparisons use UA System two-year colleges as reference peers. Comparative performance data is drawn from similar small colleges, and the entire College reviews **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** and disaggregated comparative performance data, ensuring all employees understand outcomes reflecting student success.

PCCUA uses **Comparative Performance Data** to help with student success. This disaggregated data is important because it informs decision-making and is used to gauge retention and completion rates and identify performance gaps based on gender, ethnicity, or financial need. This allows us to develop strategies that are helpful to all students, such as Food Pantries and Career Closets in our wrap-around services, ensuring that focused advising entails a holistic approach to student performance. We examine our performance using a comparative group of colleges to gauge how successful we are and identify directions where we need to improve our efforts.

The use of **Enrollment Reports (ER)** has assisted in planning recruitment, identifying potential applicants by campus location and high-interest programs. Additionally, this has helped ensure that students are placed in an appropriate program; however, one of the most important aspects of these reports has been for planning our outreach strategies for students who have started a program but have not completed the degree. Through the use of emails, phone calls, and publicity, we have been able to encourage students to return and finish their degree program. One other feature of the ER report identifies top-feeder cities which allows us to focus efforts in those areas.

STUDENT SUCCESS AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Arkansas is a productivity-focused state, using the **Arkansas Productivity Model** to evaluate colleges based on affordability and flexibility. Effectiveness accounts for 90% of the formula and

measures credentials, progression, transfer success, and gateway course completion. Affordability comprises 10%, considering the time to complete a degree and the credits at completion. The model also incorporates diseconomies of scale adjustments for college size. Weighted points are given for degree or certificate level, STEM fields, and student demographics such as race/ethnicity, income, academic preparedness, and age. A portion of the formula reflects transfers to two- or four-year institutions with at least 30 earned Arkansas course credits. PCCUA initially focused on retention and maintaining certificate and degree awards, but added progression strategies to increase completion rates. Focusing on these strategies allowed PCCUA to capture 65% of the points needed for the funding model. However, COVID-19 negatively impacted enrollment and graduation numbers for two years because fewer students were completing.

Key strategies to improve productivity include:

- Retaining students through multiple supports
- Expanding short-term certificate programs to maintain awards
- Reducing developmental/remedial time to the degree to improve progression
- Increasing completion rates through enhanced curriculum improvements, advising, financial aid, and holistic supports
- Targeting specialized student populations such as **Transitional Training Opportunities Program (TTOP)** participants (post-incarceration) and **basketball athletes**

At the **April 2025 Higher Education Coordinating Board meeting**, PCCUA's strategies were validated. Data showed a 13.6% increase in timely graduation from the Fall 2021 to Fall 2022 entering cohorts and a 3.9% increase in 150% time-to-degree. PCCUA achieved the **highest retention rate** among Arkansas public institutions while continuing to serve a high proportion of students requiring remediation.

STUDENT SUCCESS IN DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

Recognizing that developmental courses hinder student progression, PCCUA implemented several Academic Success and High-Impact strategies through a **Strong Start to Finish Initiative** which included the following actions:

- Expanded co-requisite course options
- Established and expanded math pathways
- Eliminated reliance on single placement test scores for course placement
- Reduced remedial courses in English and math (three courses removed)

Annual **Academic Updates** highlight divisional accomplishments and challenges, establishing goals to foster collective responsibility for student success. Retention rates are carefully examined alongside enrollment, semester credit hours, and **IPEDS completion rates** at 100% and 150%, which are published in the Catalog.

Faculty data discussions are vital as PCCUA faces declining enrollment, which is evident in our KPI data. Declining enrollment makes retention critical. To address this, PCCUA has expanded

recruitment through short-term certificate programs, added the recruitment of targeted groups such as TTOP, athletics, enhanced dual enrollment, and expanded outreach to former students. For example, the athletic program added twenty full-time students, many from out of state. All employees are engaged in recruitment and retention efforts and in identifying new target populations.

STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVES AND STRATEGIES

As an **Achieving the Dream (AtD) Leader College of Distinction**, PCCUA gains valuable insights into performance relative to peer institutions. Additionally, AtD has encouraged intercollege conversations related to sharing best practices and innovative ways of addressing student needs. Annual Reflections inform strategic planning, capacity building, and student success priorities. The **Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)** results have been extremely helpful in identifying student perceptions about college engagement and have helped us focus on areas for improvement while highlighting best practices.

The **Strong Start to Finish (SStF) Initiative,** offered through UT-Austin's Dana Center, focused on math and writing, engaging 100% of faculty in these disciplines. It focused on the following actions:

- Using multiple measures for student placement
- Placing students in appropriate English and math pathways for their program of study
- Scaling co-requisite support for under-prepared students.

Strategies used for change in **math** included the following actions:

- Making sure advisors assigned Technical Math to students taking technical and career courses
- Adding Quantitative Reasoning/Literacy
- Reorganizing by removing two courses from the requirement (pre-algebra and intermediate algebra)
- Establishing co-requisite remediation labs

Strategies used for change in **English** included:

- Eliminating Basic Writing I
- Basic Writing II provided with co-requisite writing labs for enrollment in Composition I

PCCUA implemented these strategies and accomplished the elimination of two remedial math courses and one English course, accelerating student progression and contributing to the 13% improvement in time-to-degree rates reflected in the **April 2025 ADHE Report shared at the Higher Education Coordinating Board Meeting.** We have celebrated this accomplishment, which we worked so hard to achieve.

The College's evolving **assessment practices** and participation in the **Assessment Academy** have resulted in significant improvements in assessing student learning and improving student

success It is likely that our renewed assessment efforts have resulted in a stronger culture of assessment and enhanced student success.

Certain programs require **licensure or certification** (e.g., RN, PN, EMT, Early Childhood, CDL/truck driving), while students in other programs, such as MLT, pursue national certification to enhance employment prospects, but it is not required. Programs provide **gainful employment** information, track job placement, and collect graduate outcome data, including through alum surveys when feasible.

STUDENT SUCCESS AND ECONOMIC FACTORS

PCCUA also relies on regional workforce and economic information, including data from **Perkins Lightcast** and the **Winthrop Rockefeller Alice Report**. Consortium efforts through the **Arkansas Delta Training and Education Consortium (ADTEC)** have been instrumental in facilitating access to millions of dollars of grant funding. ADTEC is composed of five small, poor, rural community colleges in Eastern Arkansas that serve the diverse needs of students in the Arkansas Delta. We target occupations and focus on race, poverty, income, and wage information, developing collaborative partnerships related to work programs and funding opportunities. Each college's vocational programs track job placement. The shared information is critical when applying for grants such as the Department of Labor, which none of the colleges would receive individually.

STUDENT SUCCESS THROUGH STRATEGIC PLANNING

The **PCCUA Strategic Plan 2025–2030** provides a framework for organizational improvement and student success. Employees, students and others engage in strategic planning, identifying actions to support instruction, learning, recruitment, retention, and graduation.

Our history of strategic planning has resulted in increased recruitment, retention and graduation results through focused advising designed to assist students through the PCCUA experience. Social and academic supports are widely available. **Stakeholder contributions**, including students and the Board of Visitors, contributed to goal setting through college-wide conversations and a **SWOT analysis**, which identified student success, academic programming, and community engagement as strengths supported by a dedicated and caring faculty and staff who are committed to that student success. Additionally, the SWOT analysis indicated that opportunities included enhanced community involvement, high school connections, technology and online options, stronger partnerships and more community education opportunities would improve the College's position.

Through carefully planned mission **initiative alignment** such as SStF, AtD, Bridge Arkansas, Carl Perkins V, ADTEC, and other persistence- and retention-focused efforts, PCCUA has improved student outcomes despite declining population, enrollment challenges, and a high proportion of underprepared students. Continued monitoring of Strategic **Key Performance Indicators** ensures ongoing progress in alignment with the Arkansas Department of Higher Education requirements.

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EVIDENCE FILE

High-minority, high-risk student population
Barriers
2024 Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Comparative Performance Data
Enrollment Reports (ER)
Arkansas Productivity Model
Key strategies
Transitional Training Opportunities Program (TTOP)
 Basketball athletes
April 2025 Higher Education Coordinating Board meeting
Highest retention rate
Strong Start to Finish Initiative
Academic Updates IPEDS completion rates
Recruitment and retention reports.
Student Success Initiatives and Strategies
Achieving the Dream (AtD) Leader College of Distinction,
CCSSE
Strong Start to Finish (SStF)
Math
English
April 2025 ADHE Report
Assessment practices
Assessment Academy
Licensure or certification
Gainful employment
Perkins Lightcast
Winthrop Rockefeller Alice Report
Arkansas Delta Training and Education Consortium (ADTEC)
PCCUA Strategic Plan 2025–2030
Stakeholder contributions
SWOT analysis,
Initiative alignment
Key Performance Indicators