Middle States Commission on Higher Education

Self-Study Design
Tompkins Cortland Community College
February 14, 2025

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I. Institutional Overview

Founded in 1968, Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3) is one of 30 community colleges within the State University of New York (SUNY) system dedicated to providing high-quality open-access postsecondary education and contributing to the development of an educated citizenry and workforce. The College, which is accredited by the New York State Education Department and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), celebrated 50 years at our main campus in rural Dryden, NY, in the Fall of 2024. We are located in the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York, where we are sponsored by Tompkins and Cortland Counties. While most of our students come from our sponsor and surrounding counties, our residential program allows us to host students from NY counties beyond our region, from outside of NY state, and from around world. TC3 continues to be an important economic engine for the Tompkins Cortland service area, with its full-time and part-time employees and student and alumni contributions to the region having an impact of approximately $57.2 million in FY 2021-22 (Tompkins Cortland, Economic Impact Study, 2021-2022).

TC3 is governed by a Board of Trustees consisting of representatives of both Tompkins and Cortland Counties, appointed by either the respective county legislature or the governor. The Board also includes a student trustee, elected by the student body. The College's administrative leadership consists of the President and an Executive Council (consisting of four Vice Presidents and three Chief Officers) that reports to the President. TC3 employs 311 staff and faculty, with 193 being full-time and 118 being part-time (Fall 2024), who are represented by four distinct labor unions. The athletic program and some student support services are supported by employees of the Faculty Student Association (35 full-time and 44 part-time). The College Senate is a key shared governance body at the campus, on which both faculty and staff serve. Both the board of the Faculty Student Association and the College Senate include student representation. In addition, students are represented through their Student Government Association (SGA).

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TC3 is financially supported through tuition and funding from New York State (NYS) and from our sponsoring counties. In New York, non-sponsor counties provide additional revenue through "charge back" for NYS students who live outside our sponsor counties. The College also receives financial support from the TC3 Foundation, an independent, non-profit charitable organization founded in 1971. The Foundation raises, invests, and administers private funds to benefit TC3's students, faculty, and staff.

Mission Statement

As a community college, we are an open access institution that—per our recently re-affirmed Mission—is dedicated to serving our community through fostering a culture of lifelong inquiry in our students that leads them to meaningful work, economic growth and brighter futures. Our vision is to be an engine of economic, personal and social vitality for our region and our students by providing innovative educational pathways.

Student Trends

At TC3, we offer our students several educational pathways and important co-curricular experiences such as internships and study abroad experiences. Credit bearing associate degree programs (associates for transfer and direct to workforce), microcredentials, and certificates form the core of the on-campus and online offerings. Our college in high school program (CollegeNow) allows students to pursue college credits while in high school, and our non-credit programs align to workforce training needs in the local area.

Like many community colleges, TC3's credit-bearing degree programs experienced enrollment challenges during the pandemic. However, we have made significant strides since then in re-invigorating our student enrollment, and we continue to focus on improving enrollment. In the Fall of 2024, the College enrolled 1,640 students in campus credit classes, which represented a third year of increasing enrollments at the College post-pandemic. In the Fall of 2024, our core credit-bearing students are a mix of full-time (59%) and part-time (41%) students. Most of our students come from our sponsoring counties (50-55%), with the second-largest population (20-25%) from surrounding counties. Another 10-12% of students

come from other counties in New York State, and the remainder come from other states in the U.S. and abroad. One of the consequences of the pandemic has been a significant decrease in student enrollment from New York City and its surrounding counties, previously a source of enrollment growth.

Our core credit-bearing population includes students aged 19-24 (60%) and those who are post-traditional (40%). A significant percentage are eligible for Pell (50% or more in most years), while first-generation students make up about a quarter of our student population. Our college students broadly represent the demographics of our area, with about 64-66% identifying as White. Hispanic and African American students represent the second- and third-largest groups respectively, at 10-13% and 9-10%. Currently about 22% of our student population lives in residential dormitories on campus.

TC3's CollegeNow program is a significant presence in our local community. Within high schools throughout the two Sponsor counties and surrounding region, there are approximately 3,353 high school students enrolled in the College's concurrent enrollment courses for college credit. The National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) has affirmed the quality of this program through accreditation. In addition, early college offerings include special cohorts developed in partnership with area school districts: a co-located and NYS funded Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) that allows students to complete their high school diploma and associate's degree within six years in specified pathways; two Smart Scholars Early College High School programs that support students in the completion of at least 24 college credits while in high school; and Early Degree, which advises students wishing to complete an associate's degree while in high school.

We offer pathways to re-training and social mobility to students through our non-credit programs, such as the Certified Nursing Assistant Program offered by the Office of Workforce Development, which had its inaugural cohort in 2021 and has since graduated 43 students. This office also serves the community in other ways—providing contract training for most major local employers, supporting apprenticeship models, and providing an array of non-

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credit workshops and trainings designed to build skills, including software, leadership, supervision, and personal growth.

Student Academic Experience and Outcomes

Our college classes have low student-to-faculty ratios, fostering a supportive and engaged learning environment. Classes are taught by a mix of 48 full-time and 118 adjunct faculty members who bring their significant academic training, teaching experience, work experience, and dedication to all our classrooms.

The academic offerings available to students at TC3 are a mix of transfer and applied associate degrees, certificates, and microcredentials in more than 40 academic programs. TC3 offers classes in a variety of teaching modalities—including in-person, fully remote, hybrid and asynchronous offerings. The degrees/majors offered are organized into five communities based on the Guided Pathways project, on which the College embarked in Fall 2019. The five communities are: Business and Hospitality; Social Sciences; STEM; Health, Human Services, and Recreation; and Creative Arts. Programs in these communities range from popular degrees, such as Liberal Arts & Sciences-General Studies, Business Administration, and Nursing to more niche applied programs, such as Applied Science & Technology, Culinary Arts, and Sustainable Farming & Food Systems. In addition to our associate degrees, in the last few years the College has developed 14 industry –relevant, credit-bearing microcredentials in a range of subjects—including Clinical Medical Assistant, Civil Engineering Technician, Early Childhood Assistant, and Direct Support Professional—to help upskill students for rapid re-training and placement into the workforce. This work has been supported by grants from New York State, SUNY, our sponsor counties, and agencies such as the Appalachian Regional Commission.

The College has made a concerted effort to improve the classroom infrastructure to support all our students over the last several years and has placed a focus on modernizing the curriculum, training, and spaces in some key STEM areas relevant to local workforce needs. Most notably, a 2020 SUNY Workforce Development Initiative grant allowed the College to undergo the most comprehensive overhaul of its science labs since the Dryden campus

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opened in 1974. The $3.4 million project supports state-of-the-art education and training for students in several fields, including Applied Science & Technology, Biology, Construction & Environmental Technology, Engineering Science, Environmental Studies, Civil Engineering Technician, Electrical Engineering Technician, Geotechnical Lab Technician, Surveying Technician, and Micro-Nano Fabrication Safety. This project was crucial to the ability to provide training for workers in the STEM fields. TC3 upgraded the technology and furniture in all classroom spaces; we plan to continue classroom upgrades to maintain currency with available technology through a teaching-and-learning-centered Facilities Master Planning process, initiated in 2024.

On leaving our classrooms, our students transfer to bachelor's programs and/or directly enter the workforce. Students transfer to a wide variety of colleges and universities, including nearby SUNY Cortland, Cornell University, and SUNY Binghamton with a relatively high transfer-out rate of 19% for Fall 2020 (150% cohort from IPEDS; benchmark school average = 17%) and post-transfer completion for the last 6-year cohort remain comparable to or higher than national benchmarks (post-secondary data partnership data for the 2016 cohort; 17% compared to a national average of 15%). We have been focused on assessing and improving our Fall-to-Fall retention rates for our first-time full-time and part-time cohorts, which have been below benchmarking averages for several years (2024 IPEDS comparison report: Fall 2022 cohort data TC3 First-Time Full-Time (FTFT) retention = 42% compared to benchmarking institution average = 57%). Student completion of all degree programs has been close to the benchmarking average (27% for the 150% cohort in Fall 2020 cohort in the IPEDS 2024 comparison report; benchmarking institutions = 29%), which is also an area for increased assessment and improvement.

These data represent some of the student outcomes driving the focus of the college, as well as our institutional priorities. While we have room for continuous growth, we can also highlight several recent interventions.

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Improving Student Retention: The College has improved technology and data infrastructure to track student retention and persistence, implement early alerts, and incorporate retention into the Strategic Enrollment Plan. In addition, analysis of student performance data has resulted in two important policy changes that were presenting unnecessary barriers to retention: the first is in revising the criteria used by the Committee on Academic Standards (COAS), and the second is in reviewing an academic withdrawal (AW) policy that was having adverse impacts on student retention. Early indicators suggest substantial increases in retention—with Fall 2023 to Fall 2024 retention for First-Time Full-Time (FTFT) students at 48% after the revision in the AW policy. Additional efforts in this area that are planned for 2025 include further review of advising and onboarding practices through participation in an Achieving the Dream (ATD) advising cohort, while following guided pathways pillars for onboarding and keeping students on the path.

Strengthening Student Transfer Outcomes and Career Services: To ensure clear transfer and career pathways for students, the focus of the program review process has been to study transfer and work outcomes, develop robust advisement support, and re-examine program alignment. This is also a focus of the newly completed Strategic Enrollment Plan. We are also reviewing and updating transfer agreements and aligning programs to transfer institutions.

Our alumni are employed in a wide variety of local organizations, including law enforcement and law offices, educational institutions, manufacturing companies, and hospitals. We have made significant strides in offering career programming to our students and surrounding communities through events such as an annual Manufacturing Day, which brings regional employers and students to the College. The next phase of this work is to provide more robust and visible career services at the College to support our students, graduates, and alumni. Tracking workforce outcomes for students—using Lightcast, NYS Department of Labor, and other reliable data sources—and enhanced career services are also major priorities.

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Caring Community for Students

Over the last several years, the College has expanded wraparound support services for students. The College restructured the Health and Wellness Center to better serve the physical and mental needs of students by providing integrated services and programs that encourage inclusive individual and community well-being. In addition to "traditional" services that served more than 160 students in 2021 through sessions with licensed counselors, the Center has reached even more students with the creation of a new space called the "Best Life Lounge." The Best Life Lounge provides opportunities for all students to unwind, interact, and take time to recharge their own mental health, and more than 110 students utilized the Lounge in the Spring 2022 semester. The College also created a Recovery Space to support students, staff, and their allies, recovering from alcohol and other drug (AOD) use. Recently, the College hired a LGBTQIA+ Student Support Specialist to supplement the services provided by our counselors; this position grew out of our Cross-Community LGBTQIA+ Advocacy Alliance, created to carry out AOD prevention strategies and review the College's AOD policies. In addition, the College expanded its existing campus food pantry to provide clothing for all ages, genders, and sizes. The College was able to use federal HEERF (Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds), SUNY grants, and local funding to augment these offerings. The Health Center, Best Life Lounge, Recovery Space, and Panther Pantry and Community Closet are all located in the same corridor on campus, fostering collaboration and a supportive environment. The response from students to these advances has been extremely positive.

As enrollment in our residential life program decreased post-pandemic, there was a recognition that the facilities and programming needed revitalization. Significant improvements were made to the residence halls (prioritizing four of the seven buildings), including installing new flooring and carpeting, furniture, upgrading plumbing and HVAC, adding furniture and fixture updates, and upgrades to networking equipment. Another notable improvement to residential life has been a complete overhaul of the judicial and disciplinary processes to address conflict of interest concerns in the old system; disciplinary

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decisions and appeals were moved to an office outside residential life, and the College implemented a new software system (Maxient) to track all decisions and related documents.

Student Life programming has been enhanced with more opportunities for students to engage with each other and the broader campus community through programming by our Student Activities office, Residential Life, and the Office of Diversity Education and Support Services (ODESS). Achievements include the development of a peer educator program in ODESS, revamping of new student orientation (including both online and in-person formats), and implementation of Campus Groups to promote and measure students' engagement (generating a co-curricular transcript).

Institutional Strides and Challenges in a Season of Change

2019-2024: The "Connecting" Strategic Plan, Guided Pathways, and Leadership Changes

Since the last self-study, TC3 has experienced rapid change at many levels. Both the leadership and the organizational structure have undergone several significant shifts. Dr. Orinthia Montague, TC3's fourth President, served from 2017-2021. During her tenure, the College embarked on the 2019 five-year Strategic Plan that focused on connecting TC3 and its students with the wider community. After Dr. Montague's departure in 2021, the College's Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Paul Reifenheiser, served as Administrator-in-Charge. In June of 2022, Dr. Amy Kremenek began her tenure as the fifth President of the College. Dr. Kremenek reconfigured several areas, including the creation of new divisions led by executive leaders to address key priorities (e.g. Vice President of Enrollment Management and Chief Policy & Compliance Officer). Despite the pandemic and the many challenges posed by it, the College and its leadership have been able to make significant progress toward achieving the goals of the 2019-2024 Connecting Strategic Plan.

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Select highlights in the Connecting Strategic Plan include the following achievements.

Connecting Goal 1: *Ensuring student success inside and outside the classroom*
Participation in the Guided Pathways project helped the College reevaluate processes and change structures to help enhance student success. For example, in keeping with Pillar II of Guided Pathways (helping students enter the path), all developmental math courses were redesigned to a corequisite model, and all students now enter directly into college-level math. To better align practices with Pillar III of Guided Pathways (helping students stay on the path), a faculty- and Provost-led group revised advising expectations and early alert systems in 2021. These revisions codified best practices in advisement, including the usage of early alerts to identify students at risk and provide intervention; the provision of consistent and effective engagement with advisees; and tracking of engagement within Starfish. In collaboration with the faculty union, the College revamped the department chair structure to align with the Guided Pathway communities; this new structure has resulted in multiple benefits, including more regular feedback to adjunct faculty through teaching observations and more robust processes and communication for assessment and planning.

Connecting Goal 2: *Strengthening the College's relationship with the community*
The second goal of connecting the College and the community has been realized by the increased percentage of CollegeNow high school students later enrolling at TC3. Additionally, increasingly productive and collegial ties with the legislative bodies of both sponsoring counties have allowed the College to pursue important projects. For example, the College used in-kind donations from Cortland County and funding support from Tompkins County (and NY State) to address water drainage issues affecting access and egress to campus, rebuild walkways and a portion of the parking lot, and make improvements to areas near the main entrance in 2022. We plan additional renovations in 2025, with help from New York State and Sponsor Counties.

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Connecting Goal 3: *Fostering stronger partnerships with local employers and enhancing job opportunities for students*

To address the third goal of the Connecting Strategic plan, the College has built stronger relationships with local employers by holding regular industry roundtables with academic leadership and faculty to ensure a shared understanding of labor market and skills needs. These have resulted in significant curricular enhancements, such as new courses in construction, computer science, and electrical technology. This continues to be an important priority going forward, as reflected in our above-mentioned institutional priorities and student outcome priorities.

Connecting Goal 4: *Securing resources to implement strategic priorities*

The College has increasingly sought out and been awarded grant funding over the last several years to fund a wide variety of initiatives, which range from hiring new faculty in areas such as pre-healthcare to infrastructure improvement grants. The overall funding landscape for community colleges in New York remains challenging as enrollment declines and state budgets have remained flat post-pandemic, with an increasing reliance on prescriptive state-funded grants over more flexible operating aid; therefore, the strategic pursuit and fulfillment of grants remains a high priority to support innovations in both academic programming and student services.

An essential part of securing resources is to stabilize enrollment at the College. This goal of the Strategic Plan was met through crafting the College's first Strategic Enrollment Plan in 2021 and by using more quantitatively and qualitatively nuanced enrollment forecast models that have allowed us to predict and plan for enrollment with increased success.

2024 and Beyond: Challenges and Opportunities for Growth

As the Connecting Strategic Plan entered its final phase, the College embarked on several other important planning processes. These include a new Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP); revision of our Mission, Vision, and Values; reduction of the College's asset footprint to be commensurate with today's needs and resources; and the Fall 2024 launch of a new strategic planning process under the leadership of President Dr. Amy Kremenek. While setting the

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strategic priorities for the next few years, it is important for TC3 to have a robust understanding of our fiscal, demographic, and political context, as well as the competitive and technological environment in which we operate.

Fiscal Concerns and Opportunities

In the 2024-25 budget cycle, TC3's revenues derived from the following sources: 28% from the state, 30% from the two sponsor counties (Tompkins and Cortland), and 37% from student revenue. The remainder comes from other sources and the use of the College's fund balance. This proportion is different from New York Education State Law's stipulation of 1/3 of revenue coming from each source: the state, sponsor county(ies), and student tuition. This breakdown of the revenue sources presents challenges to both student and regional workforce needs.

New York State's contributions to community colleges remain a particular challenge. In recent years, the state funding for community colleges in New York has been based on a funding floor established on pre-pandemic enrollments at the colleges. In the 2024 fiscal year, the 100% funding floor was renewed without any increase to the per-FTE funding amount. Since 2020, any additional incremental funding for community colleges has come in the form of grant funding for state-specific priorities. For example, in 2023-2024, the SUNY Transformation Fund press release from the Governor's office focused on "enhancing economic mobility through education and workforce training opportunities in high demand fields such as semiconductor-related professions, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and renewable energy; increasing workforce development spots for students and adults aligned with regional needs." These funds, divided into smaller pots for each community college, are available only for a few focused projects as grants within these areas. In summary, this has meant that there have been no broad operational increases in state funding over the last several years, with all incremental increases tied to high-cost, high-demand programs. The county revenue from Tompkins and Cortland Counties has not grown significantly either, as one of our two sponsor counties navigates its own fiscal challenges. Instead, the counties have provided in-kind services or small grants to help with College initiatives.

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Demographics, Competitive Landscape, and Enrollment Concerns

In the Northeastern U.S., concerns around changing demographics have been ongoing for several years, with several colleges facing enrollment challenges. Per New York State high school enrollment projections, the number of high school graduates in New York State is projected to drop by nearly 4% (-7,595) through 2030. Locally, the number of high school graduates in Tompkins and Cortland counties is projected to be relatively flat, dropping by 5% (-55) through 2030. The number of high school graduates in the surrounding donut counties (9 counties) is projected to be relatively flat until 2029 with a decline of 4% (-418) through 2030. These changes represent challenges for TC3, as the College has relied largely upon traditional age students to make up the bulk of its enrollment and student tuition disproportionately contributes to revenue. Additionally, data analysis by the College as part of its strategic enrollment planning process indicates that a greater percent of local traditional-age students are enrolling at four-year colleges that have reduced admission standards to maintain their own enrollment levels. At the same time, our data analysis projects a 57% increase in the number of adult learners in NY needing additional education to access higher wage jobs.

There are many community college options in NYS; for example, within an hour driving distance from TC3 are four community colleges—Cayuga Community College, Broome Community College, Corning Community College, and Onondaga Community College—each of which have some common programmatic offerings and in some cases, higher levels of local sponsor and external support for operating and capital budgets. To ensure the stability of enrollment at the College, it is critical for us to evolve by distinguishing ourselves programmatically, as appropriate, and to align with the needs of our region.

Collectively, these data and factors indicate that the College needs to take a methodical approach to strategic enrollment and retention planning to prioritize limited resources and ensure a stable future for the College. The Strategic Enrollment Plan completed in Fall 2024 establishes several clear goals to address these concerns, and demographic realities remain crucial to thinking about future strategic planning.

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Technological Changes

Although these changes are not unique to TC3, it is important to mention technology as we chart our path forward. Over recent years, teaching and learning in higher education institutions has been impacted by diverse forces, including classroom modality, cybersecurity, shifting labor markets, and mental health. These changes require us to invest in technology both inside and outside the classroom, and provide training at all levels (students, faculty, and staff) for artificial intelligence and enhanced cybersecurity protections. Furthermore, as part of our program learning outcome assessment, we are examining how teaching modality impacts student success. This will inform efforts to increase modality options, particularly for programs that require some degree of in-person classes, and to bring more high-quality offerings to students who cannot or will not attend in-person classes as traditionally scheduled.

Taken together the factors described above pose significant opportunities and challenges for TC3, making them critical to our academic, enrollment, and strategic planning processes.

Our New Strategic Plan for 2025-2028

The Strategic Planning Committee identified four broad strategic priorities, or directions, that present opportunities for growth and improvement at the College. Because of the importance of the Strategic Plan in charting our College's future direction, these strategic directions inform the institutional priorities of the College's self-study. Below, we describe these strategic directions, together with some areas that the College has already identified for improvement and reflection.

Strategic Direction I: Accountability and Transparency
TC3 demonstrates its integrity by being accountable to internal and external constituencies through transparent governance and sharing of data, including institutional effectiveness and learner outcomes.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the College faced significant financial hardships related to large enrollment drops. In this period, the College invested significant human resources in

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building infrastructure for enrollment and financial planning to be more data-driven. This effort has been successful in stabilizing enrollment. Currently, the College is building on these existing processes to grow enrollment and building a deeper link between the department planning process, strategic planning, and budgeting. We are also focused on building sustainable shared governance processes as part of these efforts. Additionally, there is a focus on reinvigorating the non-academic assessment process.

The last Middle States self-study recommended that the College review and enhance the academic assessment processes at the College. TC3 has placed a significant focus on examining learner outcomes through academic assessment in the last few years. Central to that effort was the appointment of an Academic Assessment Committee, with faculty from across all academic communities, to develop processes and help build a culture of assessment. This Committee created a standardized form for reporting Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) data to aid in the assessment of program learning outcomes (PLOs); all courses must now report these data every semester. All programs have clearly mapped PLOs and map up to the institutional learning outcomes (ILOs), which were revised through our shared governance process. Beginning in Fall 2022, the College started to assess one ILO per year on a rotating 5-year cycle and required that Department Chairs annually assess a PLO that aligns with the ILO being assessed that year. To facilitate this reporting, the Assessment Committee also developed the first iteration of the Department Assessment Report, revised in spring 2023 to improve the process and involve more department faculty in conversations around assessment.

Academic assessment is a crucial part of the College's revised comprehensive program review process, carried out by the Department Chairs with help from the Provost's Office and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Since the refinements to the program review processes are still relatively new, there are continuous improvements occurring to the process, reflections around the quality of the data (including how to enhance data disaggregation), and training to foster a broader shared understanding amongst faculty of how to use the results to improve teaching and assessment of student learning.

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The focus on academic assessment is also part of a broader effort to deepen the culture of institutional effectiveness at the College. Supporting this effort, the President appointed a new Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness whose core responsibilities include increasing the emphasis on non-academic assessment and an integrated planning framework. The College is also braiding additional learner outcomes into its institutional effectiveness at all levels, including retention, completion, and post-completion outcomes for students, as these are key to accountability to our students and our community and a part of our College's Mission and Vision.

Strategic Direction II: Innovation and Excellence
TC3 invests in the infrastructure that supports academic excellence, including professional development and scholarship, technology, and the physical resources that enhance teaching, learning, and student success.

As the College faced fiscal challenges during the pandemic, we were limited to using grant funds for infrastructure improvements and reduced funding for vital areas such as professional development. Therefore, we will be prioritizing the review and reinvigoration of these efforts. Despite the limitations mentioned, there have already been notable examples of work in this area, such as through the College's Teaching Center. In addition, faculty releases have enabled the pursuit of opportunities such as the American Association of Community College's Mentor Links program, which helps faculty pursue National Science Foundation (NSF) Advanced Technological Education funding.

Since teaching and learning are at the core of all the College does, it is crucial that we review our human and physical resources to ensure we provide our faculty and students high quality opportunities for growth in a very rapidly changing labor and technology context. Although, as mentioned above, there have been significant strides in improving College infrastructure (in classrooms and student support spaces), there are still substantial technological and physical plant upgrades that are needed to stay current with the needs of more

technologically connected classrooms. Currently, we are developing a Facilities Master Plan, which will allow us to take a more strategic and coordinated approach to building excellent infrastructure, while leveraging funds from diverse sources in a fiscally challenging environment. The College has also made rapid recent improvements is in the area of cybersecurity, including enhanced protections (e.g. multi-factor authentication) and training.

Strategic Direction III: Transfer and Career
TC3 enhances its connection to the greater community by aligning its programs to assure the social and economic mobility of our learners through relevant programs and transfer pathways.

The COVID-19 pandemic, demographic shifts, and increased competition have led to the College having fewer core students. Therefore, it is vital for the College to review its academic offerings for fiscal stability while still serving the students in the community. Over the last several years, the College has reconfigured its program review process to analyze the strength and stability of these programs. The program review process is now more data-driven, with labor market and student outcomes considerations built into it. The next step in the maturation of this process is to add program cost and "closing the loop" mechanisms that allow meaningful changes to occur. An example of closing the loop includes the current review and reconfiguration of our communications pathways in response to student outcomes and labor market data that indicated we were not serving our students well with the existing program configuration. Another key to improving student outcomes is having clearer pathways for transfer and career success; creating these pathways is also a major priority for the College and aligns with ongoing implementation of the Guided Pathways pillar of "Clarifying the Path" to student end goals.

Strong advising models are also key to a related Guided Pathways pillar – Help Students Stay on the Path. Although, as outlined above, we made strides in creating clearer advising expectations in the Fall 2022. There is broad recognition that challenges remain in the current

advising model. Further examination and alignment of our models with best practices will help us provide more robust academic advising to all our students.

Strategic Direction IV: Identity and Belonging
TC3 builds a culture of inclusion and belonging by creating a strong identity for the college community of learners, faculty, and staff, as well as a strong identity for the college with the communities we serve.

The College focuses on providing an equitable and engaged environment for all our learners and our campus community. Since the pandemic, we have seen a significant increase in student organizations including Active Minds, African Caribbean Association, a Book Club, Fashion Club, Hotel Restaurant Association, Outdoor Adventures, Robotics, and the Sustainability Club. To engage non-traditional-aged students on campus, we have opened, and are working to expand, a new Non-Traditional Student Lounge to provide these students with a space to connect with each other. We also connect students with the wider community through a variety of initiatives, including a voter registration drive, career carnivals (career exploration events), an annual manufacturing day, and various employment fairs for job seekers.

TC3 has undertaken several initiatives to support the new student transition to college. The College strengthened student onboarding, including a new Panther Welcome Center, streamlining of entering student advisement and registration processes as part of Accepted Panther Days, placing students into credit-bearing English and Math courses (with corequisite support), and offering both online and in-person new student orientation activities that begin before the start of the semester and extend through the first few weeks of classes. To help connect students in our largest program (Liberal Arts & Sciences: General Studies) to campus resources, we have implemented a new freshman success seminar in the program.

Using grant funding, we have improved our programming for underrepresented student groups. For example, TC3 was awarded funding by SUNY to offer an Equal Opportunity Program (EOP) to assist economically and academically disadvantaged students who show

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promise to succeed in college; the program provides mentorship, financial support, and academic support counseling. The College received NSF funding from the Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation (LSAMP) to support students in STEM majors with mentorship, a stipend, and access to internships.

In the last few years, faculty and staff engagement has been somewhat limited, as the College has navigated financially challenging times. During this period, the College continued to have all-campus professional development days (Fall and Mid-Winter Days) and supported leadership development through a regional program called PEAKS. More recently, the College put together a supervisor training course (SPOT). The College also continued to support faculty professional development in teaching and learning. For example, recognizing the specific needs of our -adjuncts, the College initiated a professional development fund and an Adjunct Faculty Convocation. In addition, more staff and funding support was provided to the College Teaching Center, through which faculty can engage in open forums and team up for mentorships with other faculty. However, this is an opportunity for growth: Both Human Resources and the newly developed Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Professional Development are placing a strategic emphasis on outreach efforts to enhance employee engagement and development.

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II. Institutional Priorities to be Addressed in the Self-Study

TC3's institutional priorities advance our Mission and align with our new Strategic Plan. All four institutional priorities interconnect and align with MSCHE standards (Table 1).

- Cultivate excellence in teaching, learning, and academic programs
- Advance successful student outcomes to strengthen student mobility
- Create a caring, equitable, and engaged campus community for students, faculty, staff and community members
- Enhance institutional effectiveness, accountability, and transparency for responsible stewardship of resources

Table 1. Alignment of institutional priorities and MSCHE standards

Institutional Priority	Standard 1	Standard 2	Standard 3	Standard 4	Standard 5	Standard 6	Standard 7
Academic Excellence	X		X	X	X		
Successful Student Outcomes	X		X	X	X		
Caring, Equitable, & Engaged Campus	X	X	X	X			
Responsible Stewardship	X	X				X	X

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III. Intended Outcomes of the Self-Study

Through the Self-Study process, TC3 seeks to:

1. Demonstrate how the College meets the MSCHE's Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation.
2. Focus on continuous improvement and innovation to ensure levels of quality for constituents and the attainment of the institution's priorities, mission, and goals.
3. Engage the College community in an inclusive and transparent self-appraisal process to ensure students student goals are addressed and institutional mission and goals are met.
4. Inform the College's current and future strategic planning efforts.
5. Identify institutional strengths and opportunities for improvement in the Middle States standards of affiliation and institutional priorities identified.

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IV. Organizational Structure of the Steering Committee and Working Groups

Team Design and Composition

1. *Self-Study Leads: This three-member team consists of the ALO and two Co-Chairs.*
   a. *Co-chairs:* Dr. Kelly Wessell (Prof. Biology and Environmental Studies) and Ms. Victoria Zeppelin (Director of CollegeNow)
   b. *ALO:* Dr. Malvika Talwar (VP of Institutional Effectiveness)
2. *Steering Committee Composition:* ALO, Middle States Co-chairs, Working Group Co-chairs for each standard, and Institutional Effectiveness team representative.
3. *Working Groups*: We will have separate working groups for each standard. Working Groups will be co-chaired by a member of the teaching faculty and an administrator (AVP or Director), based on their area of expertise. The Working Groups are affiliated with related committees on campus, providing regular updates to, and soliciting feedback from these committees. Each Self-Study Lead supports at least two Working Groups.
4. *Evidence Repository Support:* The Institutional Effectiveness and Research team will provide support for the data repository, including the collection and preparation of data files, supporting working group requests for evidence, and uploading of files to the accreditation platform. We have developed a Microsoft Form for groups to use to request evidence, whether data or narrative files.
5. *College Leadership and Shared Governance Support:* Through the Self-Study Leads, the College's Executive Council, Presidents Cabinet, Board of Trustees, and Senate will be apprised of Self-Study progress and have opportunities to provide feedback. The Executive Council will have the additional responsibility of vetting Working Group recommendations prior to inclusion in the final Self-Study.

Responsibilities of Team Members

1. *Self-Study Leads (ALO and Co-Chairs):*

   a. Create a detailed timeline for the self-study process with clear deadlines and task management.

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b. Work together to develop the lines of inquiry and ensure engagement with appropriate stakeholders to share and vet the lines of inquiry. Responsible for Self-Study design.

c. Ensure Working Groups understand the context of the lines of inquiry and shepherd them through the process while ensuring that they meet all requisite timelines.

d. Create a robust communication strategy for all parts of the self-study process, with a focus on making the process alive and relevant for the campus. Be the key ambassadors for the self-study process.

e. Coordinate with Working Groups to ensure that the committee's work is on track and help clear impediments for them. Assist with the discovery and editing process. Attend assigned Working Group meetings.

f. Support the repository for evidence for each standard before the Self-Study kickoff.

g. Assemble and edit the drafts submitted by each Working Group to prepare the final Self-Study Report and related documents in order to create a cohesive narrative.

h. The ALO is separately responsible for all the regular ALO functions related to accreditation and will function as overall project manager.

2. *Steering Committee:*

a. Identify/ provide input into the Institutional Priorities for the Self-Study draft ideas developed by the Middle States co-chairs and ALO.

b. Identify/provide input into the drafted Intended Outcomes of the Self-Study.

c. Provide input and ideas to create a comprehensive communication strategy for the Self-Study throughout its duration.

d. Keep the Working Groups on track with shared timelines and help to find resources/documents/data for Working Groups.

e. Analyze interim reports from Working Groups to determine that the standards and institutional priorities are addressed, evidence complies with MSCHE's evidence

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expectations, data demonstrate institutional performance, statistics are appropriately interpreted and discussed, and analysis and opportunities for improvement are included.

f. Provide input into the drafts submitted by each Working Group to prepare the final Self-Study Report and related documents in order to create a cohesive narrative.

g. Organize site visit activities. Members of the Steering Committee may be called upon to meet with the MSCHE review team during the site visit.

h. Participate as needed in forums to communicate the findings/work of the Self-Study Working Groups as appropriate.

i. The Steering Committee will have a designated liaison who will be reporting all activities to the Executive Council, the Board of Trustees, Student Government, and the College Senate.

3. *Working Groups:*

a. Identify and analyze evidence that demonstrates how the College is meeting the criteria for the Standard.

b. Using the lines of inquiry as a guide, prepare content for a chapter that addresses how the College meets the criteria that define the Standard, citing evidence that clearly supports our efforts to meet the criteria. Outline gaps in standards and commendations for areas in which substantial progress has been made.

c. Upload the evidence to the College's designated Middle States evidence repository.

d. Provide regular updates to Affiliated Committees and participate in campus-wide updates as outlined in the Middle States Self Study Communication Plan.

e. Present a draft of the chapter to the Steering Committee by August 2025.

f. Make revisions and/or provide additional information by March 2026.

g. Meet with the MSCHE review team during the Site Visit in Fall 2026 as needed.

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4. *Working Group Chairs:*

   a. Serve on the Steering Committee.

   b. Keep their Working Group on an appropriate timetable.

   c. Convey any needs for additional documentation or evidence that should be included in the evidence repository for the Standard.

   d. Communicate any challenges or concerns to the Steering Committee.

   e. Write a chapter for the assigned Standard that outlines to what extent the College meets each element of the standard and the relevant institutional priorities, per the Self-Study Design calendar and lines of inquiry.

5. *Affiliated Committees:*

   a. Provide timely and constructive feedback to Working Groups, as requested.

Lines of Inquiry for Each Working Group

To guide the Working Groups in their analysis and reflection of evidence and ensure that the Self-Study process supports our Institutional Priorities and Intended Outcomes, we propose the following Lines of Inquiry. These questions are written broadly to be applicable to all standards.

- How effectively does the College meet the criteria outlined in this standard using an evidence-based and data-informed approach for analysis?

- How successfully is TC3 meeting institutional priorities relevant to this standard?

- Using peer benchmarking and AIU indicators what areas of strength and opportunity for TC3 are revealed in meeting the expectations of this standard?

- Is the College demonstrating a culture of continuous improvement and shared governance in meeting the expectations of this standard?

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Working Group Membership

Working Group Co-Chairs will select members who have expertise directly relevant to the assigned standard, with an effort to select people representing different perspectives and roles at the College. Each working group will be affiliated with at least one committee at the College whose charge relates to the standard. To the extent possible, Working Group Chairs and members will have experience with one of the affiliated shared-governance committees (e.g. Senate, Curriculum Committee, Academic Assessment Committee etc.). Each Working Group's membership is identified on the following pages.

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Standard 1 Working Group: Mission and Goals

a. Co-chairs: Faculty and Administrative members from the PEAKS Leadership and Strategic Planning groups. (The PEAKS Leadership group consists of alumni of a community college leadership consortium, which facilitated the College's yearlong Mission/Vision/Values drafting process.)

b. Members:

   i) Past or current member of the College Senate to address the use of Mission, Vision and Values in self-governance.

   ii) Member of the Diversity, Equity, and Action Committee (DEAC) committee to address the diversity, equity and inclusion principles in Standard I.

c. This standard will be affiliated with the following committees: DEAC and Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

Standard 1: Mission and Goals Group Membership		
Role	*Name*	*Title*
Co-Chair	Virginia Shank	Assistant Professor of English
Co-Chair	Carrie Whitmore	Director of Continuing Education and Workforce Development
Member	Kevin Caveney	Purchasing Agent
Member	Merryn Clay	Coordinator of Global Partnerships
Member	Rhonda Kowalski	Concurrent Enrollment Coordinator
Affiliated Committees: DEAC, Strategic Planning Steering Committee		

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Standard 2 Working Group: Ethics and Integrity

    a. Co-chair: Chief Policy Officer, as this role connects to many areas relevant to the key ethics and integrity compliance issues in this standard.

    b. Co-chair: Faculty member to help address academic freedom and intellectual property rights

    c. Members:

        i) Representation from the Financial Aid Office to address criteria 7 a. and b.

        ii) Representation from Marketing or Admissions to ensure the required disclosures are being appropriately shared with students and other stakeholders.

        iii) Representation from Student Affairs to address grievance policies.

    d. This standard will be affiliated with the following committee: College Senate.

Standard 2: Ethics and Integrity Working Group Membership		
Role	*Name*	*Title*
Co-Chair	Carolyn Boone	Chief Policy & Compliance Officer
Co-Chair	Virginia Shank	Assistant Professor of English
Member	Sarah Dockstater	Interim Director of Financial Aid
Member	Zachery Snyder	Director of Strategic Marketing
Member	Barbara Thayer	Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs
Affiliated Committees: College Senate		

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Standard 3 Working Group: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

a. Co-chair: Faculty member with significant prior experience in curriculum development, applied learning, and program accreditation.

b. Co-chair: The Associate Provost, as this role includes supervising College adjuncts and serving as the Provost Office liaison to the General Studies Advisory Committee and College Teaching Center.

c. Members:

   i) Faculty with significant teaching experience in teaching important gateway general education courses and/or significant online teaching experience.

   ii) Representation from any of the following areas: Access and Equity, Library, Tutoring, Instructional Technology, College Teaching Center

d. This standard will be affiliated with the following committees: Curriculum Committee, Academic Assessment Committee, College Teaching Center (CTC), and General Education Committee.

Standard 3: Design & Delivery of the Student Learning Experience Working Group Membership		
Role	*Name*	*Title*
Co-Chair	Fares Jnaid	Associate Professor of Engineering and Construction
Co-Chair	Anndrea Mathers	Associate Provost
Member	Breton Bienvenue	Instructional Designer
Member	Amber Gilewski	Professor of Psychology
Member	Karen Rachetta	Coordinator of Access & Equity Services
Affiliated Committees: Curriculum Committee, Academic Assessment Committee, CTC, General Education Committee		

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Standard 4 Working Group: Support of the Student Experience

a. Co-chair: AVP for Student Affairs, as this role oversees many aspects that are covered in this standard, including athletics, health services, counseling, and student organizations.

b. Co-chair: Faculty member with significant experience with advising and with multiple measures placement.

c. Members: Representation from Academic Records, Career Services, Financial Aid, and Student Success.

d. This standard will be affiliated with the following committees: Student Government Association (SGA); Faculty Student Association (FSA) Board; Diversity, Equity, and Action Council (DEAC).

Standard 4: Support of the Student Experience Working Group Membership		
Role	*Name*	*Title*
Co-Chair	Darese Doskal	Associate Vice President of Student Affairs
Co-Chair	Angela Palumbo	Associate Professor of Global ESL and English
Member	Glenda Gross	Interim Director of Student Success Services
Member	Jim Janke	Assistant Director of Financial Aid – Veterans Benefits Certifying Officer
Member	April Myles	Assistant Registrar
Member	Dara Riegel	Assistant Director for Employer Relations and Experiential Learning
Affiliated Committees: SGA, FSA Board, DEAC		

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Standard 5 Working Group: Educational Effectiveness Assessment

a) Co-chair: Faculty member with significant experience working on the College's Assessment Committee

b) Co-chair: Provost/VP of Academic Affairs, as this role provides experiences with a significant part of the academic affairs operations at the College.

c) Members:

   i) Staff involved with data analysis or technical set-up of the academic assessment process.

   ii) Faculty from a discipline that has discipline-specific accreditation requirements or with prior experience with discipline specific requirements OR Department Chairs with significant experience with program assessment.

d) This Standard will be affiliated with the following committees: Academic Assessment Committee and Curriculum Committee.

Standard 5: Educational Effectiveness Assessment Working Group Membership		
Role	*Name*	*Title*
Co-Chair	Kerry Curran	Professor of English
Co-Chair	Aaron Tolbert	Provost & VP of Academic Affairs
Member	Christopher Farrell	Instructor of English
Member	Kelly Murray	Instructor of Biology
Member	Eric Sambolec	Professor of Psychology
Affiliated Committees: Academic Assessment Committee, Curriculum Committee		

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Standard 6 Working Group: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

a) Co-chair: Faculty member with significant experience in assessment and program accreditation.)

b) Co-chair: Comptroller, as this role oversees department budgeting processes.

c) Members:

    i) Representation from the College Senate, Strategic Planning, or Institutional Effectiveness committees

d) This Standard will be affiliated with the following committees: College Senate and Institutional Effectiveness Committee.

Standard 6: Planning, Resources, & Institutional Improvement Working Group Membership		
Role	*Name*	*Title*
Co-Chair	Sue Mueller	Associate Professor of Nursing
Co-Chair	Kori Post	Comptroller
Member	Sierra Brock	Administrative Assistant in Academic Affairs
Member	Michelle Nightingale	Dean of Organizational Development and Institutional Effectiveness
Affiliated Committees: Institutional Effectiveness Committee, College Senate		

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Standard 7 Working Group: Governance, Leadership, and Administration

    a) Co-chairs: Faculty and administrative member with experience in the College's shared governance committees

    b) Members:

        i)   Secretary to the Board of Trustees (BOT)

        ii) Staff or Faculty with experience on any of the shared governance committees, including the College Senate or Curriculum Committee

    c) This Standard will be affiliated with the following committees: College Senate, Curriculum Committee, Board of Trustees, and Student Government Association (SGA).

Standard 7: Governance, Leadership and Administration Working Group Membership		
Role	*Name*	*Title*
Co-Chair	Travis Vande Berg	Professor of Sociology
Co-Chair	Jonathan Walz-Koeppel	Lead Data Architect
Member	Aaron Decker	Associate Professor of English
Member	Amy Faben-Wade	Assistant Professor of Chemical Dependency Counseling and Chair of College Senate
Member	Nancy Murphy	Assistant to the President and Secretary to the BOT
Affiliated Committees: Board of Trustees, College Senate, Curriculum Committee, SGA		

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V. Guidelines for Reporting

The Co-Chairs of each Working Group, in consultation with the Working Group members as applicable, will be responsible for:

1. Creating a schedule of meetings that allows for the maximum participation of Working Group members

2. Creating a plan for achieving the Working Group's specific charges

3. Providing progress reports to the Steering Committee, which include:

    a. Meeting dates (since last update)

    b. Tasks accomplished

    c. Tasks delegated

    d. Tasks needing completion

    e. Challenges

    f. Questions for Steering Committee

    g. Resource documents reviewed and/or identified for review

4. Deadlines:

    a. Progress Reports – provided day before Steering Committee meetings

    b. Working Group Reports:

    i) First draft – August 2025

    ii) Second draft – March 2026

Working Group Report Format

1. Introduction: Provide a general overview of how the working group addressed criteria in light of the institutional priorities considered. This section can be rather brief.

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2. Evidence and Analysis: Describe the compiled and analyzed data; address each item of the evidence expected by standard. Identify appropriate quantitative and qualitative evidence. Outline the sources, rationale and method of analysis in each case. Using the lines of inquiry as a guide, provide narrative on how the College adheres to each criterion for the Standard and the institutional priorities where appropriate. This narrative constitutes the largest component of the report.

3. Strengths: Enumerate concisely the strengths of the College, as explained in the analysis.

4. Areas for Improvement: Briefly list the issues that the College needs to address.

5. Recommendations: Identify major suggestions for how the College could address the areas for improvement listed above. Keep in mind that not every recommendation will be included in the final version of the Self-Study, but all recommendations will be compiled as an outcome of the Self-Study process and referred to affiliated committees and governance bodies for appropriate consideration.

Each report should be succinct but contain relevant details. A typical report will be approximately 10-15 pages in length, following the editorial style and format described below.

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VI. Organization of the Final Self-Study Report

Chapter 1: Executive Summary and Certification Statement

Chapter 2: Introduction to Tompkins Cortland Community College

Chapter 3: The Self-Study Process

Chapter 4: Standard I – Mission and Goals

Chapter 5: Standard II – Ethics and Integrity

Chapter 6: Standard III – Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

Chapter 7: Standard IV – Support of the Student Experience

Chapter 8: Standard V – Educational Effectiveness Assessment

Chapter 9: Standard VI – Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

Chapter 10: Standard VII – Governance, Leadership, and Administration

Chapter 11: Conclusion

Appendices

Glossary of Terms

Charts and Tables

Editorial Style and Format

Each Working Group will produce a written report of its findings regarding its Standard. The Self-Study Co-Chairs will serve as the editors of the Final Self-Study Report and will be responsible for making decisions about what narratives, information and/or recommendations from each Working Group Report will appear in the final Report as well as where and how it will be presented in the final Report. Any substantive changes will be discussed with the Steering Committee.

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Basic Document Format: (we will provide a template document for reference)

- Microsoft Word
- Headings (defined as Heading 1): Patua One; Font size 16, bold
- Subheadings (defined as Heading 2): Rubik; Font size 14, bold
- Text (defined as Normal): Source Sans 3; Font size 12
- Tables: Numbered with heading 12-point font; content 10-point font
- Standard 1-inch margins (top, bottom, left, right)
- Left-justified
- No indentation for new paragraphs; Space between paragraphs
- Tab stops: 0.5
- Header and footer margins: 0.5

Additional Guidelines:

- Chapter titles should be all uppercase and centered
- Headings should be left-justified with the first letter of each main word in uppercase
- Use active voice for narratives
- Acronyms should be written out with the first usage, followed by the acronym in parentheses
- Do not use contractions
- Refer to positions by title, not by name
- Follow APA guidelines for titles of books and articles and for parenthetical and bibliographic citations
- Use commas before all elements in a series (e.g., people, places, and things)
- Use alphabetical order when listing names
- Capitalize the following words: College, when referring to Tompkins Cortland Community College; Committee, when used with the name of a committee; Mission and Goals, when referring to the College Mission and Goals; Evaluation Team; seasons when referring to a semester (e.g. Fall 2024); Steering Committee; Program Learning Outcomes; and Student Learning Outcomes.
- Page numbers should be printed in the lower left corner

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- Use square bullets

Folder and File Naming Conventions:

- Working Group Reports should be submitted electronically in Teams with the following filename format: Standard Number_Draft Number_Year.Month.Day (ST1_D1_2025.8.15).

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VII. Self-Study Timeline

Activity	Timing
Appoint Self-Study Co-Chairs	Aug 30, 2024
Begin monthly updates for Shared Governance groups (Board of Trustees, Executive Council, Faculty, and Senate begin)	Sept 2024 (ongoing through entire Self-Study process)
Participate in SSI	Sept-Nov 2024
Identify Steering Committee and Working Group Composition and Responsibilities	Oct 2024
Draft Institutional Priorities and Lines of Inquiry	Early Nov 2024
Appoint Working Group Chair(s)	By Dec 1, 2024
Orientation for Working Group Chairs with ALO/Self-Study Co-Chairs	Dec 9, 2024
Attend MSCHE Conference	Dec 12-13, 2024
Meet with MSCHE VP Liaison	By Dec 16, 2024
Convene Steering Committee for overview of process	By Dec 16, 2025
Confirm Working Group members and present SSD to Steering Committee by this date	Jan 21, 2025
Steering Committee begins monthly meetings to review progress and prepare the evidence repository	Jan 24-May 2, 2025
Present Self-Study Design to President's Cabinet	Jan 28, 2025
Launch Self-Study webpage (with purpose, timeline, committee structure & members) on College website	Jan 31, 2025
Working Groups meet bimonthly to review and analyze evidence per the standards and lines of inquiry	Feb-May 2025
Submit SSD to MSCHE VP Liaison	Feb 14, 2025
Host MSCHE VP Liaison on campus	Apr 16, 2025
Working Groups submit chapter outlines to ALO & Self-Study Chairs	May 15, 2025
ALO & Self-Study Chairs provide feedback on chapter outlines	By May 30, 2025
Submit revised SSD, if needed	By May 30, 2025
Working Group Co-Chairs prepare chapter first drafts; Steering Committee continue to meet virtually to discuss chapter format and questions that arise during the writing process	June-August 2025
Campus-wide update on Self-Study Process	Aug 18, 2025

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Working Group Chairs submit chapter drafts to ALO and Self-Study Co-Chairs	Aug 31, 2025
Working Groups present findings to campus community for feedback	Oct 7, 2025
Working Group Co-Chairs discuss findings with Shared Governance and Affiliated Committees	Sept-Nov 2025
Monthly Steering Committee meetings to review chapters and feedback from the campus community	Sept-Dec 2025
Campus-wide Self-Study Update	Jan 20, 2026
Confirm Evaluation Team Chairs	Feb 16, 2026
Working Group Co-Chairs present final drafts of chapters	March 15, 2026
Confirm Evaluation Team Vice Chairs	March 16, 2026
Confirm Evaluation Team Rosters	March 31, 2026
ALO and Self-Study Co-Chairs edit chapters to develop cohesive narrative for Self-Study Report	April-May 2026
Host Evaluation Team Chair Preliminary Visit	By April 30, 2026
Share Final Draft of Self-Study Chapters with Shared Governance and Affiliated Committees	May 2026
ALO and Self-Study Co-Chairs make final edits and assure completeness of Evidence Repository	June 2026
Executive Council and Board of Trustees Review	July 2026
Upload Self-Study with Evidence	By Sept 4, 2026
Host Evaluation Team Visit	Week of Nov 16-20, 2026
Receive draft Team Report	By Dec 1, 2026 (7 days post visit, with extra time due to Thanksgiving)
Provide any corrections in errors of fact in the draft Team Report	7 days after draft report
Team Chairs upload Final Team Report	5 days after corrections
Upload institutional responses to MSCHE portal	7 days after final report

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VII. Communication Plan

The Self-Study Leads will coordinate communications with the Director for Strategic Marketing throughout the Self-Study. We have a public webpage on the College website dedicated to the Self-Study process. This page, located within the "About College" section of the College website, contains:

a. Overview of the Self-Study process

b. FAQ about MSCHE Accreditation

c. MSCHE Standards

d. Steering Committee and Working Group Membership

e. Self-Study Schedule

f. Self-Study Design

g. Prior Self-Study Report and Evaluation Team Report

h. Contact information for the ALO and Self-Study Co-Chairs

As Self-Study presentations and Working Group updates are planned for College constituencies, these will be promoted on the webpage and materials will be shared. A survey form will be available on the site for providing feedback.

In addition, we will use the following strategies to communicate our progress:

a. The ALO will provide monthly updates to the Executive Council and Board of Trustees about the Self-Study, beginning in Fall 2024 with discussion about the Design.

b. The Self-Study Leads will post to the website and email announcements to the College Community with status updates on the Self-Study and opportunities for engagement.

c. Steering Committee members will make presentations and gather feedback in meetings with the Campus Community, utilizing non-class/faculty contract days (pre-semester week, Fall and Mid-Winter Staff Development Days), as well as regular meetings of governance and affiliated committees (Academic Assessment Committee,

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Board of Trustees, College Senate, College Teaching Center, Curriculum Committee, DEAC, Faculty, FSA Board, General Education Committee, Institutional Effectiveness Committee, Strategic Planning Steering Committee, Student Government Association). Microsoft Forms will be used to help gather feedback in written form.

i) In year 1 of the Self-Study process, the ALO and Self-Study Co-Chairs will be updating the Community about the Self-Study process (including the Self-Study Design) and MSCHE Standards.

ii) In year 2, Working Group Co-Chairs will provide standards-specific presentations on their findings and engage governance and affiliated committees in discussions about the strengths, areas for improvement, and recommendations.

d. The College will inform and engage members of the community in scheduled meetings during the Self-Study preparation visit with the MSCHE liaison.

e. The Self-Study Leads will schedule public forums dedicated to the completed Self-Study draft and invite the entire college community to read and comment on the final Self-Study report.

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IX. Evaluation Team Profile

Team Chair

Tompkins Cortland Community College would prefer a sitting, or recently retired, president of an institution of comparable scope, complexity, and scale. An evaluation team chair familiar with the following characteristics of our institution would be desirable:

- Served at a public community college, especially one small in size in terms of enrollment, offering A.S., A.A.S., and short-term credentialing programs;
- Has been part a large state-wide system of governance;
- Has experienced significant leadership transitions;
- Has experience with college-affiliated Foundations and significant property assets;
- Served in a rural location, with a portion of the student demographic drawing upon suburban and urban areas, as well as a large concurrent (dual) enrollment program;
- Has experienced shrinking core enrollment of primarily traditional-age, full-time students, and growth in adult and part-time enrollment; and
- Familiar with multiple modalities of instructional delivery, including in-person, online asynchronous, online synchronous, hybrid, and HyFlex.

Team Members

The College would prefer team members who have experience at institutions with some of the above-listed characteristics. Ideally, members would have expertise in at least one of the following areas: academic and non-academic assessment; finance and operations; strategic enrollment management; student advisement; collective-bargaining; and governance.

Peer, Competitor, and Aspirant Institutions

Peer Institutions

Cayuga Community College (SUNY)
Clinton Community College (SUNY)
Columbia-Greene Community College (SUNY)

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Finger Lakes Community College (SUNY)

Fulton-Montgomery Community College (SUNY)

Genesee Community College (SUNY)

Herkimer Community College (SUNY)

Jamestown Community College (SUNY)

Jefferson Community College (SUNY)

Mohawk Valley Community College (SUNY)

SUNY Adirondack (Community College)

SUNY Corning Community College

Ulster County Community College (SUNY)

Competitor Institutions

Cayuga Community College (SUNY)

Corning Community College (SUNY)

Finger Lakes Community College (SUNY)

Mohawk Valley Community College (SUNY)

Onondaga Community College (SUNY)

SUNY Broome (Community College)

SUNY Corning Community College

Aspirant Institutions

Finger Lakes Community College (SUNY)

Jamestown Community College (SUNY)

Mohawk Valley Community College (SUNY)

Pennsylvania Highlands Community College

Queensborough Community College (CUNY)

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Largest Programs

Liberal Arts: General Studies A.S.

Business Administration A.S.

Nursing A.A.S.

Signature Programs

Nursing A.A.S.

Culinary Arts A.A.S.

Sustainable Farming & Food Systems A.A.S.

Applied Science & Technology A.A.S.

Construction and Environmental Technology A.A.S.

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X. Strategy for Addressing Annual Institutional Update Indicators and Metrics

One of the Lines of Inquiry specifically asks Working Groups to address the AIU indicators in relation to the standard. The data in the Annual Institutional Update (AIU) provide baseline measures for relevant parts of the College's Strategic Plan and Institutional Priorities. For example, data from the AIU lists retention rates and graduation rates, which come from IPEDS submissions, indicating student success over time. Fiscal, operational, and infrastructure sustainability—integral to the College's Strategic Plan and institutional priorities—is measured against the metrics found in the AIU. Data found in the AIU provide transparency regarding the College's fiscal responsibility for managing funds entrusted to it by the public. The College maintains dashboards with data relevant to college-wide goals—including enrollment, retention and graduation rates, and student demographics—to allow leadership, faculty, and staff to monitor trends and review progress.

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XI. Evidence Inventory Strategy

Each of the Working Groups has a channel within a Middle States Self-Study team in the College's Teams application. Each channel was pre-loaded with a list of webpages and files of evidence, using the Evidence Expectations by Standard as a guide. In addition, a "general" channel contains evidence that is likely to be relevant to multiple standards (e.g. IPEDS reports, Board of Trustees meeting packets, etc.). Working Groups submit evidence requests to the Self-Study Leads and Institutional Research through a Microsoft Form. Once a Working Group has determined that they will use a piece of evidence, the Chairs enter a description of that evidence, with a filename that follows our standard nomenclature, into a spreadsheet shared by all groups. The College is in the process of implementing a new accreditation management platform for use in organizing the evidence repository. Once the platform is set up, we will transfer the evidence files into it. The platform allows for a web-based interface for the Evaluation Team to review the Self-Study narrative with hyperlinked evidence.

XII. Strategy for Identifying Self-Study Site Visits to be Conducted

In addition to the Main Campus, the College has many additional locations, primarily due to its large concurrent enrollment program. There are no branch campuses. Prior to the Self-Study Site Visit, the College will submit a substantive change request to close one Additional Location and re-classify several Additional Locations to Other Institutional Sites. Per Commission requirements, the Evaluation Team visits one-third of approved Additional Locations. The ALO and Self-Study Chairs, in consultation with the Commission VP Liaison, will decide which Additional Locations to visit as part of the Self-Study Site Visit. When selecting Additional Locations to visit, we will consider proximity to the main campus, the scope of offerings, assessment results, and setting/demographics (rural and more urban, varying population sizes, etc.). We will provide the final list of Additional Locations for site visits to the Evaluation Team Chair within 10 days after their Preliminary Visit to the College.

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