



**TOMPKINS
CORTLAND**
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

2018
Self-Study

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A College of The State University of New York

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Standard 1

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Mr. Jonathan Walz-Koeppel, Database Administrator, Campus Technology

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Middle States Self-Study Process	2
College Involvement in the Self-Study Process.....	2
Draft Input and Revisions.....	2
Findings.....	3
Suggestions.....	5
Standard I: Mission and Goals	7
Mission, Vision, and Values (MVV).....	7
Student Success Goal.....	8
Institutional Effectiveness Council.....	9
New Strategic Goals & Priorities.....	9
MVV, Goals, and College Support of Scholarly Inquiry and Creative Activity.....	11
Communication of Information Related to MVV and Goals.....	12
Standard II: Ethics and Integrity	13
Introduction.....	13
Commitment to Freedom and a Climate of Respect.....	13
Fair and Impartial Practices and the Grievance Process	16
Policies Regarding Conflict of Interest	18
Honesty and Truthfulness in Communication.....	18
College Compliance with Federal, State, and Commission Reporting Policies, Regulations, and Requirements	18
Assessment of Practices and Policies Related to Ethics and Integrity.....	18
Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience.....	19
Introduction.....	19
External Requirements.....	19
General Education Requirements.....	20
Degree Programs at the College.....	20
New Programs.....	21
Program Revisions	22
Instructional Faculty.....	22
Full-Time Faculty.....	24
Adjunct Faculty.....	25
Opportunities and Resources for Students	26
The Baker Learning Commons	26
Health Services	28
Technology Learning and Support Services.....	28
The Office of Diversity Education and Support Services.....	29
The Office of Global Initiatives	30
Pathways Program.....	31
Innovative Programs.....	31

Table of Contents

Standard IV: Support of the Student Learning Experience	33
Introduction.....	33
Admissions Process	34
Entry-Level Advisement & Course Placement.....	35
Program Advisement, Career & Transfer Planning, and Counseling Services.....	37
Student Information and Records.....	38
Athletic, Student Life & Other Extracurricular Activities.....	40
Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment	41
Institutional & Program Learning Goals/Outcomes.....	41
Creation of Goals/Learning Outcomes.....	41
Assessment of Learning Outcomes.....	41
Program Review Process.....	43
Assessment of Student Preparation for Life, Career, and Further Education.....	43
Assisting Students in Improving Their Learning.....	45
Assessment and the Development and Improvement of Pedagogy, Curriculum, and Academic Programs.....	45
Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement	47
Introduction.....	47
College Objectives and Goals.....	47
Fall Day and Midwinter Day.....	47
Financial Planning and the College Budget.....	48
Strategic Priorities.....	51
Financial Forecast.....	54
Independent Auditing.....	56
College Master Plan.....	57
Institutional Assessment and the Use of Assessment Data.....	58
Evaluation of the College’s Assessment Processes.....	59
Assessment and the Development and Improvement of Support Services.....	60
Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration	63
Introduction.....	63
Leadership and Administration.....	63
Board of Trustees.....	63
Chief Executive Officer.....	65
Administrative Structure.....	66
Shared Governance.....	67
The College Forum.....	67
The Curriculum Committee.....	68
Student Government Association	68
Assessment of Governance, Leadership, and Administration.....	69
Vision Statement.....	69

Acknowledgments

We owe a great debt of thanks to the many people who served on committees, read through drafts, and helped craft the self-study. And our undying gratitude to Lyn Thompson for all of her hard work throughout the process, all the while keeping us on track. Thanks also to Cathy Northrop for her help with the team visit and logistics. Thanks to John Conners for his support and guidance.

Kris Altucher
Travis Vande Berg
Middle States Co-Chairs

Alicia Maroney
Amber Gilewski
Andrew Davis
Ashley Ahola
Barbara Kobritz
Blixy Taetzsch
Brian Ackley
Brittany Spencer
Bruce Need
Bryan Chambala
Butch Westlake
Carol Sammis
Carolyn Boone
Cathy Northrop
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Kevin Caveney
Khaki Wunderlich
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Lauren Wright
Lisa Ford
Lisa O'Loughlin
Lyn Thompson
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Marlo Colletto
Mary Ellen Ensign
Melissa Schmidt
Michelle Nightingale
Mick McDaniel
Olivia Hersey
Patty Van de Bogart
Rhonda Kowalski
Robert Edgecomb
Sandy Drumluk
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Sue Dewey
Sunday Earle
Susan Cerretani
Susanna Van Sant
Taylor Reid
Timothy McCabe
Tina Stavenhagen-Helgren
Tova Dutcher
Victoria Zeppelin

List of Appendices

- Ex. 1 Self-Study Steering Committee List
- Ex. 2 Curriculum Committee Guidelines 2017-18
- Ex. 3 Student Grievance Process Memo
- Ex. 4 2016 Faculty and Staff Survey
- Ex. 5 Listening Tour Notes
- Ex. 6 Faculty Semester Startup Meetings
- Ex. 7 Institutional Effectiveness Council Update
 - 1.1 A Brief History of Planning at TC3
 - 1.2 Institutional Effectiveness Council Presentation
 - 1.3 Strategic Planning at Tompkins Cortland Community College
 - 1.4 Strategic Priorities 2015-20 Part I
 - 1.5 Strategic Priorities 2015-20 Part II
 - 1.6 Strategic Priorities 2015-20 Part III
 - 1.7 Strategic Priorities Follow-up Action Plan, November 2015
 - 1.8 Strategic Priorities Action Plan Update/Progress Report, March 2016
 - 1.9 Strategic Priorities Action Plan Update/Progress Report, July 2016
 - 1.10 Strategic Priorities Action Plan Update/Progress Report, November 2016
 - 1.11 2017-18 Guidelines for Department Plans
 - 2.1 Revised Program Learning Outcomes, July 2016
 - 2.2 Chief Diversity Officer/Director of Diversity Education and Support Service Position Description
 - 2.3 Department Diversity Equity and Inclusion Plan Resource Guide
 - 2.4 Emerging Scholar Information – Diversification of the Full-time Teaching Faculty
 - 2.5 2016 Student Opinion Survey
 - 2.6 Screening Committee Manual
 - 3.1 SUNY General Education Approved Courses
 - 3.2 English Assessment
 - 3.3 Associate Provost Position Description
 - 3.4 Faculty Staffing Memo – Full-time and Adjunct Faculty Staffing Levels
 - 3.5 Student Evaluation Rates
 - 3.6 Professional Salary Agreement
 - 5.1 Program Outcome Assessment Memos, August 2014, July 2015, July 2016, June 2017, July 2017,
 - 5.2 Program Learning Outcomes and SUNY General Education Requirements, July 2016
 - 5.3 Program Learning Outcomes - Information Literacy, January 2017
 - 5.4 Learning Outcomes Assessment Memo, June 2017. Closing Loops Memo November 2017
 - 5.5 Outcome Assessment: 2017-2018, October 2017
 - 5.6 Information Literacy: Actions Taken Based on Assessment, Spring 2017
 - 5.7 Information Literacy: Program Report Assessment, Spring 2017
 - 5.8 SUNY Excels Data: Tompkins Cortland
 - 6.1 IPEDS Data Feedback Report 2017
 - 6.2 Organizational Realignment Memos
 - 6.3 SUNY Guided Pathways Proposal, October 2017
 - 6.4 Tompkins Cortland Foundation Childcare brochure
 - 6.5 Institutional Research Data Assessment
 - 6.6 Tutoring Assessment
 - 6.7 Institutional Effectiveness Council Recommendations, April 2013
 - 6.8 Institutional Effectiveness Recommendation Updates, Spring 2017
 - 7.1 President Montague Resume

Supplementary Documents

- TC1 Fall Day 2016
- TC2 Midwinter Day 2017
- TC3 Professional Development Report to the Board of Trustees
- TC4 Fall Day and Midwinter Day
- TC5 College-wide Meetings
- TC6 College Communications – Sample
- TC7 Compliance Report to the Board of Trustees
- TC8 Verification of Compliance with Accreditation-Relevant Federal Regulations
- TC9 IPEDS Human Resources Report
- TC10 IPEDS Enrollment Data - Student-to-Faculty Ratio
- TC11 PEAKS Leadership Proposal and Overview – Professional Development
- TC12 Tutoring Services Survey - Sample
- TC13 Access and Equity Services Annual Report, July 2016
- TC14 Student Success and Intervention Survey
- TC15 Vectors Scholar Program Information
- TC16 Program Reviews – Sample
- TC17 Master Plan 2011
- TC18 Market Research
- TC19 Strategic Plan for Technology 2011-2016
- TC20 Institutional Effectiveness Committee: Full Report
- TC21 Information Literacy Assessment: Full Report
- TC22 Departmental Reviews - Sample
- TC23 Board of Trustees - Sample Assessments
- TC24 Department Plans
- TC25 Tompkins Cortland Community College Periodic Review Report



Executive Summary

Introduction

Tompkins Cortland Community College was founded in 1968 and is one of 30 community colleges and 64 campuses within the State University of New York (SUNY) system. The College is accredited by the New York State Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association.

The College is located in the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York and serves Tompkins and Cortland Counties. The College's main campus is in rural Dryden, NY, and there are two extension centers, one each in the nearby cities of Ithaca and Cortland. In Fall 2017 the College enrolled 2,768 students in regular credit programs. Seventy-two percent of entering students were full-time students, and 28% were part-time students. Members of the student body come from 51 counties in New York state, 12 other U.S. states, and more than 23 countries. About 55% of the College's students transfer to a wide variety of colleges and universities, including nearby Cornell University, SUNY Cortland, and Ithaca College. In addition, there are also approximately 5,255 high school students enrolled in the College's concurrent enrollment courses for college credit in the high school.

Tompkins Cortland offers associate degrees (A.S., A.A.S., and A.A.) and certificates in [39 program areas](#), including business, communications, new media, digital cinema, hotel and restaurant management, environmental studies, nursing, criminal justice, human services, wine marketing, and several liberal arts programs, including general studies. The College began offering two new degree programs – Culinary Arts and Sustainable Farming and Food Systems – at the beginning of the 2014-15 academic year. In addition, the College has extensive involvement in the local community. The College provides [contract training](#) for most major local employers and provides an array of [non-credit workshops](#) designed to build skills relating to computers, leadership and supervision, personal growth, and many other areas. The College employs more than 240 full-time staff members and faculty, and there are four unions representing full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, unionized administrators, and Civil Service employees.

The College is financially supported through tuition and contributions from the state and from its sponsoring counties. The College also receives financial support from the [TC3 Foundation](#), an independent, self-supporting, non-profit charitable organization founded in 1971 by the College's board of trustees and other community leaders. The Foundation raises, invests, and administers private funds to benefit students, faculty, and staff.

Middle States Self-Study Process

Vice President/Provost John Conners, Ph.D., began the current Middle States self-study process in the Spring of 2015 by appointing Kris Altucher, Ph.D., Associate Dean of Institutional Research and Organizational Learning, and Travis Vande Berg, Ph.D., Professor of Sociology, as co-chairs. During the Spring 2016 semester, Conners, Altucher, and Vande Berg discussed the general study framework and concluded that an eight-working group structure (Ex. 1), one group for each Standard, with an additional group focused on compliance, would be optimal. They contacted appropriate individuals within the College to solicit participation in the role of working group chairs, with the goal of having each working group co-chaired by a faculty member and an administrator. Chairs were chosen based on their experience, their knowledge of the College, and their willingness to openly and honestly examine the functions and workings of the institution. Conners and the self-study co-chairs charged the working group chairs with recruiting additional members, taking care to enlist broad representation from within the College community. After finalizing their membership, the eight working groups began their research in the Fall of 2016, using the [2016 Fall Day \(TC1\)](#) as a kickoff planning and organizational session.

College Involvement in the Self-Study Process

In an effort to inform the College community about the Middle States self-study process, the working group chairs presented their initial findings, addressed questions, and solicited feedback at the Spring 2017 [Mid-Winter Day \(TC2\)](#), presented updates to relevant College committees and groups, and to the Board of Trustees. Working group co-chairs, committee members, and one or both of the self-study co-chairs were present at these meetings to take notes on the discussions and to bring relevant suggestions and questions back to the working groups. Throughout this period, the self-study co-chairs held monthly meetings with the working group chairs to discuss findings and any issues that had arisen, to answer questions, and to track the progress of the self-study process.

Draft Input and Revisions

At the end of the Spring 2017 semester, each pair of working group co-chairs submitted a revised chapter draft to Dr. Altucher and Dr. Vande Berg, who spent the Summer of 2017 writing, editing, and assembling an initial self-study draft. This draft was presented to the President's Executive Council for review and feedback, and Altucher and Vande Berg incorporated comments and feedback into a second draft. The initial self-study draft was also reviewed by librarian Barbara Kobritz, and her comments and feedback were also incorporated into the second draft. The second draft was reviewed by the appropriate staff and leaders at the College, as well as the Director of Communications prior to being submitted to the Middle States Regional Accreditation Team. On October 24 and 25, 2017, Mark McCormick, Ph.D., Middle States Regional Accreditation Team chair, made a preliminary visit to the College. Dr. McCormick met with President Montague, the President's Executive Council, the self-study steering committee, the self-study Co-Chairs, and members from several student groups. The self-study process will culminate with the visit from the Middle States Regional Accreditation Team in April 2018.

Findings

Since its last Middle States self-study, the College has faced enrollment and budgetary challenges similar to those other institutions of higher education are experiencing. In response, the College has had to critically examine all aspects of its operation while simultaneously keeping its mission of student success at the forefront of everything it does. At the same time, the College experienced a leadership transition during the self-study process with the retirement of President Carl Haynes and the appointment of Orinthia Montague, Ph.D. as the fourth president of Tompkins Cortland Community College. Given these ongoing challenges and the possibilities provided by new leadership, this self-study provides an opportunity for the College to reflect both on the past ten years and on how to best strategize and plan for the future.

The College used an open, inclusive process for the development of its [mission and goals](#) – which are united by the single, continuing [goal of student success](#). It has periodically evaluated and reaffirmed the validity and appropriateness of its mission and goals as well as the ways in which they guide decision-making within all aspects of the College, and publically shares the mission and goals and their evaluation and assessment with the larger community. The Tompkins Cortland community understands, supports, and feels responsible for upholding the mission and goals, and as a result, each member of the College community sees the value of his or her role in the College.

In its exercise of its mission, the College places ethics and integrity at the center of its decision-making and actions. It is committed to the freedoms and rights of all, how this commitment fosters a climate of respect and inclusivity, how it is reflected in its policies and procedures, and how it shapes the College's communication with members of the campus community and other stakeholders.

Tompkins Cortland provides its students with rigorous and coherent learning experiences as guided by New York State Education Department guidelines, State University of New York requirements, and the institution's own Mission, Vision, Values (MVV), and student success goal. The College meets – and exceeds – the higher education expectations. The institution's MVV and student success goal guide its decision making and actions with regard to the student learning experience – from recruiting and admitting students to their retention through to their completion by graduation and/or transfer to a four-year institution. The College prioritizes entry/first-semester services and ongoing support for all students to undergird the successful learning experience of a rapidly changing student population. Institutional policies, procedures, and business practices ensure that the MVV and student success goal are met at every stage of the student experience. The College website and printed materials provide accurate and comprehensive information on the institution's [admission standards and application procedures](#), [tuition and other academic costs](#), [academic standards](#), and [financial aid](#). Upon admission to the College, students are guided through a system of [placement testing](#), [advisement](#), [registration](#), and [orientation](#). This support of the student learning experience is further enhanced as students engage in classroom instruction, live in [campus housing](#), participate in [extracurricular activities](#), and otherwise acclimate to the College environment.

Tompkins Cortland is committed to rigorous and ongoing assessment of student learning and achievement – of both [General Education requirements](#) and [degree program requirements](#). This assessment is largely faculty driven and owned, and the College's policies and procedures for the development of educational goals, the assessment of student achievement of those goals, and the use of those assessment data to make improvements keep student success at the center of all academic assessment activities.

The College faces financial and resource challenges as do most institutions of higher education, and the institution works diligently to use the resources it has to fulfill its MVV and student success goal through its programming, assessment, resource allocation, and decision-making processes. While it must face the reality of these challenges on a regular basis, the entire College community maintains its commitment to student success and continues to seek opportunities for growth and innovation in its financial planning and budgeting process, its use of financial and other resources, its enrollment challenges and the impacts of those challenges, the Master Plan and its impact on institutional infrastructure and facilities, and the role that assessment plays in assisting the institution in working within its economic and educational context. The College also incorporates a system of shared governance, which includes the [Forum](#), the Curriculum Committee (Ex. 2), and the [Student Government Association](#).

The College has a clearly articulated and transparent governance structure consisting of groups with overlapping but clearly delineated areas of responsibility. This structure allows staff to play multiple roles in influencing the governance of the College. The institutional leadership and administrative structure has until recently consisted of a ten-member Board of Trustees, a Chief Executive Officer in the form of the College President, two vice presidents (one of whom additionally serves as the Provost), and six deans, each of whom leads at least one fully staffed department. The administrative leadership additionally makes up the President's Executive Council and the Provost Council.

Under the direction of the new president, the leadership structure is currently in transition. A new Vice President for Student Services position has been created to help further the increased emphasis on the student experience at the College. Other positions are being reworked from two to one title (Associate Dean of Institutional Research and Dean of Academic Affairs will be combined as Associate Provost), while others may ultimately be eliminated to meet changing demands and budget needs.

The College has a vibrant culture of assessment and data-driven improvement and has already implemented many of the suggestions for improvements that arose during the self-study process, including refining assessment of State University of New York General Education outcomes, clarifying the student complaint process (Ex. 3), and planning for the reinstatement of the Institutional Effectiveness Council or a similar body on campus. This culture, in combination with the valuable insights provided by the self-study process, will be especially valuable in assisting the institution in its planning for the future.



In less than a week, a Tompkins Cortland Community College student club raised more than \$1,200 for the hurricane relief efforts in Puerto Rico. Students Take Action and Negotiate Dialogue, or S.T.A.N.D., took up the collection on campus during the week of October 16-20, 2017. The money is being used to purchase and ship supplies to Caguas, Puerto Rico, a city of 142,000 people that was devastated by Hurricane Maria.

Members of S.T.A.N.D.
left to right: Instructor and Faculty Advisor Kerry Curran, Sophia Faller, Jonathan Hatala, Carrie D'Aprix, Sophie Janowsky, Jessica Proctor, Professor and Faculty Advisor Kelly Wessell

Suggestions

Through the critical examination inherent in the self-study process, the College has identified seven specific items for suggested improvements. Each of these arose through the process of the working groups' research and is supported by data, and several were raised by more than one of the working groups in their reports.

An increased effort by the college to both involve and communicate to the larger campus community on issues related to institutional planning

Non-administrators tend to view the College planning process as unclear and are largely unsure of its alignment with the College MVV and student success goal. In the 2016 Faculty and Staff Survey (Ex. 4), only 47% of respondents agreed that “College planning is in alignment with Tompkins Cortland Community College’s mission and goals.” Administrators had the highest rate of agreement with the statement (76%) while only 51% of full-time faculty, 15% of adjunct faculty, and 52% of classified staff agreed. Furthermore, only 42% of respondents agreed that “Everyone can participate in the process the College uses to set institutional priorities.” Since administrators are responsible for departmental planning, it follows that they would likely be the most aware of the relationship between planning with the College’s mission and goals and to perceive a greater sense of participation in the planning process. However, there is clearly room for improvement in communicating this to and creating a sense of involvement in institutional planning and priorities across the rest of the campus community.

While the College has processes in place to align planning with the institution’s mission and goals, many faculty and staff are either unaware of this or believe that there is a lack of alignment. Some may perceive that decisions are made contrary to the priorities set forth during the planning process, but it may also be at least partially due to the College’s large budget shortfalls, which have made it difficult to direct funding and resources to new initiatives. The College should identify ways to better inform faculty and staff about institutional, departmental, and budget planning processes to build a campus-wide understanding of how these processes are designed to meet our student success goal and to ensure that the College community believes in the integrity of the processes. The “listening tour” (Ex. 5) model used in developing, assessing, and refining the [College’s strategic goals and priorities](#) was generally cited as successful and could be expanded, especially with regard to budgeting and financial issues.

A focus on communication and transparency will be particularly crucial as new leaders assume their duties in the restructured organizational configuration. Long-standing relationships and networks will need to be replaced with other ways of spreading information. In light of this suggestion, the Provost and the new President held a series of listening meetings with all faculty (Ex. 6) at the beginning of the 2017-18 academic year.

Reviving the Institutional Effectiveness Council (IEC)

Based on the suggestion from the working committee, the IEC and its subcommittees are already scheduled to meet again during the Spring 2018 semester. While the Executive Council has been operationalizing and tracking the progression of the recommendations made in the IEC report, with the many changes across the College since the last comprehensive report, the committee felt it was time to revisit the overarching framework for institutional assessment efforts at the College.

Streamlining and/or simplifying college terminology

While the MVV, the single continuing goal of student success, the flywheel and its components, and the new [strategic goals and priorities](#) are all interrelated, this current framework has developed incrementally and additively over the past decade, and the large number of terms can be confusing for the College community and potentially complicates [department planning](#) and may impact community members' perceptions related to institutional planning as discussed above.

A centralized office or committee responsible for regular, ongoing compliance with federal, state, and SUNY guidelines

Given the importance of compliance and the challenges associated with maintaining compliance with the ever-changing guidelines of multiple agencies and governmental levels, the College would benefit from an individual or centralized body responsible for compliance. One possible option suggested by the working group that raised this issue would be a committee composed of members of various areas of relevant responsibility, including but not limited to, Admissions, Financial Aid, and Academic Records. Another possibility would be including it as central component of one of the positions being created or reformulated.

Overall assessment of the college's global initiatives, particularly the institution's study abroad programs

This arose during the last self-study process and with more recent changes in structure and staffing, a comprehensive assessment of all of the [Global operations](#) would provide a valuable baseline for future planning, as well as shine light on how to best foster Global's integration with the academic functions of the College.

Assessment of faculty advisement

This issue has arisen repeatedly in institutional assessment processes, and new and creative approaches to address this area of concern are warranted. However, as this is a contractual issue, it will require negotiation between the College and the faculty union in order to be addressed.

Efforts to increase the response rates for students' evaluation of teaching faculty

While the College does not have response-rate information for the time period prior to switching to online evaluations of teaching faculty, anecdotal evident from full-time faculty suggests that student response rates have diminished since the switch. This has resulted in less data overall and less helpful data for faculty's own self-assessment and reflection as well as for the College's use when making decisions regarding adjunct retention or full-time faculty promotion or tenure. Additionally, some faculty members suggest that the questions/prompts on the evaluations themselves would be more useful if updated to reflect dynamic teaching and learning models and to encourage more opportunities for students to provide written, qualitative feedback.

While Tompkins Cortland Community College faces challenges in the years to come, it will continue to face them head-on and to evolve through self-reflection by drawing on the strengths of its organizational culture of data-driven assessment and a committed and caring College community that keeps student success at the center of everything that it does.

Standard I: Mission and Goals



The institution's mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.

Tompkins Cortland Community College used an open, inclusive process for the development of its mission and goals; has periodically evaluated and reaffirmed the validity and appropriateness of its mission and goals, as well as the ways in which they guide decision-making within all aspects of the College; and publicly shares the mission and goals and their evaluation and assessment with the larger community through multiple means. The College community understands, supports, and feels responsible for upholding the mission and goals, and as a result, each member of the College community sees the value of his or her role in the College.

Mission, Vision, and Values (MVV)

The College's [Mission](#) reads, "*We serve our community by meeting educational needs, creating an environment for student success, and preparing our students and ourselves for citizenship in a global society.*" The mission is closely connected to the College's statements of its [Vision and Values](#). The College's Vision is, "*To see strengths and unique potential in every person. To inspire people to make the courageous choice to learn, grow, and serve,*" and is supported by its Values: Learning, Excellence, Opportunity, Innovation, Relationships, and Diversity.

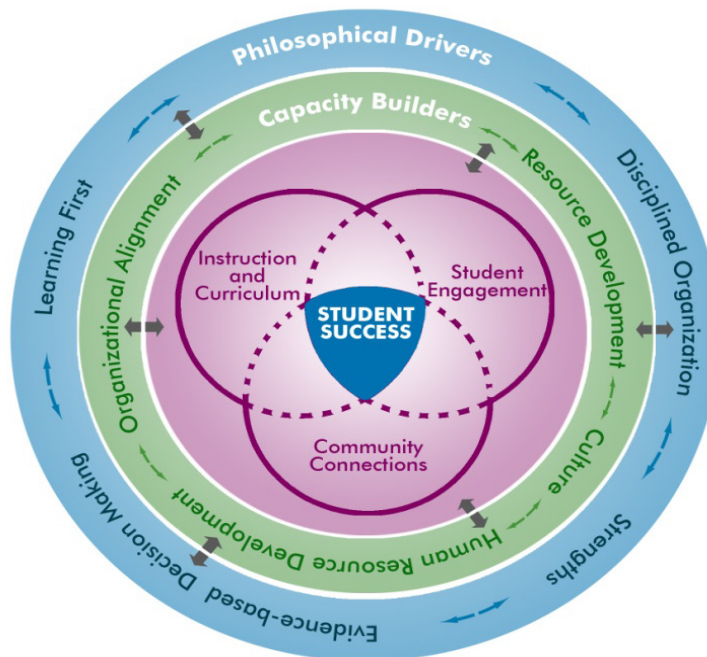
The College developed the MVV through a process of appreciative inquiry, drawing on input from interviews with students, employees, alumni, community leaders, and other stakeholders. The process began with a series of interviews and culminated with a summit in Fall 2005 involving the participation of hundreds of representatives from the above groups. Based on information gathered through this process, a group of staff and faculty at the College drafted the MVV, which were approved by the College Forum in May 2006. The Board of Trustees then formally adopted the MVV in June.

Student Success Goal

The 2006 iteration of the mission included six goal statements, all “pointing” to student success. Following several years of discussion in numerous venues, the College decided to both simplify and clarify our goal – recognizing that the previously identified goals were supports for our actual goal of student success. Student success was recognized as our “Single Continuing Goal,” and the previous supporting goals were recrafted as vital components of that success or as requisite elements to build or maintain our capacity to support the goal.

Borrowing a metaphor from Jim Collins and his book *Good to Great*, the flywheel was used to create a visual and conceptual representation of how the College would frame its strategic planning, illustrating the interconnectedness of all aspects of the College, to achieve the single, continuing goal of student success. As the unifying goal of all College activity, student success is at the center of the flywheel and is shown at the intersection of its three vital components that most directly impact student success – instruction and curricula, student engagement, and community connections.

The goal and its components are supported by the College’s capacity builders (including resource, development, culture, human resource development, and organizational alignment) and philosophical drivers (disciplines, organizations, strengths, evidence-based decision-making, and learning first). In this form, the flywheel provides a framework for keeping student success at the center of guiding and supporting decision-making and action across all aspects of the College



Institutional Effectiveness Council

The College created the College Planning and Assessment Council (CPAC) in 2006 (1.1) to develop institution-wide objectives, planning, and assessment. The Institutional Effectiveness Council (IEC) was then created in 2011 to oversee and assess the implementation of the student success goal and flywheel framework across the College (1.2). The IEC consists of three subcommittees representing Academic Assessment, Capacity Builders Assessment, and Co-Curricular Assessment. Each of these committees has members drawn from the staff, faculty, and administration and is tasked with reviewing the state of assessment at the College, including how assessment feedback is used to inform decision making related to planning, resource allocation, program and curricular development, and institutional and educational outcomes at the levels of faculty, administration, staff, and governing structures across the College. Each committee's charge includes examining how assessment feedback is used to inform decision making related to planning, resource allocation, program and curricular development, and institutional and educational outcomes at the levels of faculty, administration, staff, and governing structures across the College. Each committee reports its findings and recommendations to the IEC, which includes this information in developing or adapting plans related to implementation and oversight. For additional discussion of both CPAC and the IEC, please see the chapter dealing with [Standard VI](#).

New Strategic Goals & Priorities

In order to evaluate (1.3) the continued appropriateness and relevance of the College's MVV and student success goal, the president conducted a campus "Listening Tour" (Ex. 5) from March 31 to April 28, 2015. The purpose of the Listening Tour was to provide multiple opportunities for all College staff and faculty to engage in a dialogue with the president and members of the executive council about the College's mission, strengths and weaknesses, and future opportunities, challenges, and potential. Based on information and feedback provided by the Listening Tour, the College's MVV and student success goal were re-affirmed as were the general metrics used to define student success. The president and the executive council also used internal and external research and feedback from the Listening Tour and from data on the College's student success metrics using [Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System \(IPEDS\)](#), the [Student Achievement Measure \(SAM\)](#), and the [Voluntary Framework of Accountability \(VFA\)](#) to develop and support a new set of Strategic Priorities and Goals (1.4). The latter two of these data sources were especially important, as one conclusion of the Listening Tour was that current IPEDS data do not accurately reflect the College's student body, which includes students who transfer prior to program completion, attend part-time, and/or do not intend to complete a degree program. SAM provides a standardized measure of student success, tracking the movement of students at higher educational institutions. It differs from the current federal model of measuring only graduation rates for first-time, full-time students who attend a single institution. The VFA's metrics include additional subpopulations, better reflecting the diversity of students served by community colleges, and include two-year and six-year cohort outcome measures of academic progress, completion, and transfer. These data allows the College to compare itself to other institutions. The College's goal in drawing from these three data sources is to provide a more complete picture of student progress and completion for use in planning, services, and programming decisions.

While participation with IPEDS is required of accredited US institutions of higher education, the College has elected to participate in both the SAM and the VFA for specifically these purposes. The Institutional Research department sends highly detailed data files to all three of these organizations on a regular basis.

Based on an analysis of these comparative data and with both student success and the long-term well-being of the College in mind, the College formulated the following long-, intermediate-, and short-term strategic goals: To increase completion rates – as measured by IPEDS and VFA/SAM cohorts – by 50% by 2025;

1. To increase success rates for basic skills courses to the 75th percentile in the National College Benchmarking Project
2. To increase to the Fall-to-Fall retention of first-time/full-time (FTFT) students to 61% for Fall 2018 to Fall 2019 to match the SUNY community college average for Fall 2013 to Fall 2014
3. To increase students' first semester academic success to 72% by Fall 2017
4. To increase new FTFT student enrollment by at least 1% every year.

Importantly, these new strategic goals do not alter the College's single, overarching goal of student success. Instead, they support this goal by focusing the College's efforts on specific indicators of student success. Recognizing that meeting these four strategic goals will take concerted action across the entire institution, the College also identified four strategic priorities to assist in guiding its efforts:

1. A specific emphasis on students' first semester (First Semester Matters), which includes subgroups focused on transition/entry-level processes, basic skills/first semester courses, and support for residential students;
2. A specific focus on high-need students and the identification of structural barriers to their academic progress and success;
3. Marketing
4. Enhancement of information availability and use across the College.

Each Strategic Priority had an assigned working group, led by members of the executive staff, to coordinate efforts, track appropriate indicators, assess progress, and to make adjustments and recommendations as needed. The president shared these new strategic goals and priorities with the College community through a series of memos and presentations (1.4-1.10). In addition, the president also provided quarterly reports to update the College community on progress towards the goals and the actions and initiatives of each strategic priority working group.

Student data play a large role in guiding stakeholder decisions regarding planning, initiating, and assessing programs related to the College's MVV and goals. In addition to data provided from IPEDS, VFA, and SAM; College staff, faculty, and administration also have access to real-time enrollment and [demographic data trends](#) for the institution via the College website and to student academic records information via Salient. These varied data sources are used to support evidence-based decision making across the College. For example, in budget and departmental plans (1.11), department chairs are required to specifically address how their initiatives support the MVV, student success goal, and new strategic goals and priorities. These planning documents are then viewable by all staff, faculty, and administration through the College's online portal system. This process is described in more detail in [Standard VI](#).

MVV, Goals, and College Support of Scholarly Inquiry and Creative Activity

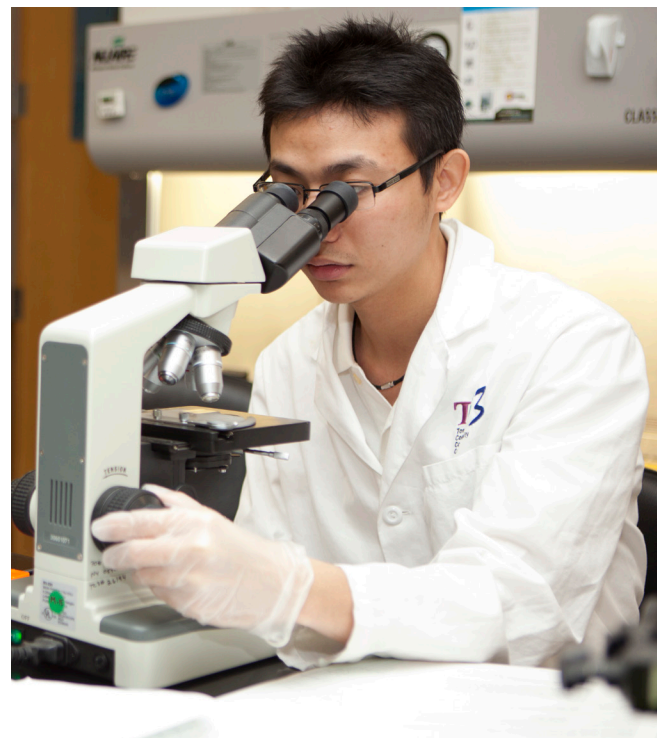
The College supports scholarly and creative activity by conferring a SUNY Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities award to a full-time faculty member each year, by supporting the [College Teaching Center](#), and through longtime support of the annual [“Connecting, Collaborating, and Celebrating the Art of Teaching”](#) Conference.

In addition, each academic and administrative department at the College is encouraged to budget monies for its own staff to engage in professional development relevant to that department’s needs. The College’s Human Resources department tracks involvement in professional development through a semiannual survey administered to departments. [The results of this survey](#) (TC3) are shared with the Board of Trustees. This is further elaborated in [Standard III](#).

Furthermore, several examples of support for scholarship are noted in the IEC Response memo, including: “The College [has] invested in implementation of the Bard College *Writing to Learn* program, including certification for our faculty. After four years, more than 50 faculty have participated in various levels of training and many have incorporated [Writing to Learn techniques](#) into their classroom practice. Multiple session training programs continue, led by in-house trainers. A new General Studies block schedule pilot is based on shared WTL practice.”

According to the results of the 2016 Faculty and Staff Survey (Ex. 4), 72% of all respondents agreed that “the College encourages creative activity and scholarship,” an increase from 68% in 2014. The percentage of full-time faculty respondents agreeing with the statement was 78%, which is a slight increase from 2014. The percentage of adjunct faculty agreeing increased from 62% to 67%. Administrators showed a slight increase – from 65% agreement in 2014 to 66% in 2016.

Budget shortfalls have resulted in fewer opportunities for professional development, most notably sabbatical leaves and the ability or time to attend conferences. The challenge for the College is figuring out how to support activities in this area while dealing with financial concerns at the institutional level.



Communication of Information Related to MVV and Goals

Tompkins Cortland engages in a multi-pronged approach to ensure that both internal and external stakeholders are aware of the College's MVV and goals and have access to data on its students and its progress toward fulfilling its mission and goals. The MVV are publicized on the College website, in orientation for new students and new employees, and in framed displays in many classrooms and meeting rooms. The College's [student success goal, flywheel framework, and strategic goals and priorities](#) are also posted on the website along with [interactive dashboards](#) that allow both internal and external stakeholders to view real-time enrollment and demographic data trends. At every Board of Trustees meeting, relevant staff, faculty, administrators, and/or students provide presentations regarding progress towards achievement of the College's mission and goals. The agendas, materials and minutes from [Board of Trustees meetings](#), which routinely include various discussions of the College's progress toward its goals and the [president's monthly and annual reports](#) to the Board, are posted on the College website and are emailed to members of the College community. Regular updates on the College's student success initiatives are also provided multiple times throughout the year via email and meetings of the faculty, Leadership Council, and the College Forum in addition to all-College meetings and the annual [Fall Day and Midwinter Day](#) (TC4). These opportunities allow all members of the College community to keep informed about the College's progress toward fulfilling its MVV and goals, to ask questions, to provide feedback, and to learn ways to become more involved.

These efforts at communication clearly work. In the 2016 Faculty and Staff Survey (Ex. 4), 89% of respondents indicated that they were familiar with the Mission, Vision, and Values statements, and over 78% of each subgroup (full-time faculty, administrators, adjunct faculty, and classified staff) indicated their familiarity. As an indication of the extent to which each member of the College community "owns" the goal of student success, 90% of respondents agreed with the statement "I share responsibility for student success at Tompkins Cortland Community College."

From left, Olu Roberts, Mame Ndiaye, and Stacey Green won the prestigious Gilman Scholarship for study abroad in 2016, along with Karen Betts and Christen Parker (not pictured).



Standard II: Ethics and Integrity



Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully.

Introduction

In the exercise of its mission, Tompkins Cortland Community College is committed to ethics and integrity in its decision-making and actions. In this chapter, we will discuss the ways in which the College is committed to the freedoms and rights of all, how this commitment fosters a climate of respect and inclusivity, how it is reflected in its policies and procedures, and how it shapes the College's communications with members of the campus community and other stakeholders.

Commitment to Freedom and a Climate of Respect

The College is committed to academic freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom of expression, and respect for intellectual property rights. Faculty members are free to design and deliver course content in coordination with their academic department. While there is oversight provided to this process via institutional structures such as the Curriculum Committee (for a more in-depth discussion of the Curriculum Committee, please see [Standard VII](#)), the purpose of this oversight is not to censor or otherwise impede the freedoms of the faculty but rather to ensure that course offerings and decisions involving degree programs abide by the MVV and student success goal of the College as well as contributing to the stated learning goals (2.1) of the degree program(s) in question. This oversight is part of the ethical responsibility of the College in providing a unified, purposeful educational environment for its students. While not a specific requirement of continuing appointment at the College, the faculty is also encouraged to freely publish the results of scholarly research as outlined by the SUNY policy on unrestricted disclosure of research activities.

The College also has a long-standing culture of open lines of communication and expression between students, faculty, staff, and administration. Some of these avenues of communication are formal, such as the [College Forum](#) (for a more in-depth discussion of the Forum, please see [Standard VII](#)) and other standing committees, the provost's monthly meetings with the faculty, the provost's meeting with program chairs at the beginning of each semester, and department meetings. Other avenues are more informal, as seen in the history of cooperative labor union contractual negotiations and the tradition of an open-door policy to students, faculty, and staff by upper-level administrators.

The College's commitment to freedom and open communication and expression strengthens the overall culture of respect within the College community, particularly as it relates to diversity of backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives. This emphasis on the value of diversity is tied directly to the College's [mission](#), part of which reads, "Diversity enriches our learning. We embrace diversity in all of its contexts, including strengths, perspectives, and people. We seek to increase our capacity to understand issues of difference, power and privilege and to constructively resolve conflict." This aspect of the mission has directly guided several recent College initiatives.

In 2016, the College's [Institutional Research Department](#), in conjunction with the [Diversity and Equity Action Council](#) (DEAC; discussed below) and the Office of Multicultural Services (now the Office of [Diversity Education and Support Services](#); discussed in [Standard III](#)), published its third triennial comprehensive [State of Diversity Report](#). The report focuses on trends in enrollment, staffing, and student success using data from a range of sources including student and staff surveys, human resources records, and student records.

The most recent State of Diversity report described positives progress in areas such as strategic priorities that focus on the success of our highly diverse students, supporting their transition to college, and providing on-going attention to those who are identified as "high risk." Additional positive findings include implementation of the [Emerging Scholars Program](#) to diversify our full-time faculty; a continued increase in the percentage of faculty and staff experiencing encouragement or support in diversity-related efforts; all first-time full-time students, when grouped by race/ethnicity, have higher rates of academic good standing than in the past; faculty are initiating curricular and pedagogical improvements to engage all students; diversity-focused programming, especially student-lead, that addresses issues of identity, inclusion, and social justice is happening regularly.

The report also illuminates ongoing challenges and a need to better understand the nuances of diversity across the campus. The College needs to continue to find ways to attract more diverse applicants for all position postings. There remains a persistent gap in success rates between white students and students of color. There was an increase in the percentage of staff, especially faculty and adjuncts, who reported experiencing some amount of harassment and discrimination. There needs to be a mechanism developed for determining what those experiences were, whether processes were used to address them, and if so, how effective those processes were, in order to determine what next steps to take.

In 2016, the College created a new position of Chief Diversity Officer (2.2) with the responsibilities of overseeing diversity initiatives and leading the College forward in its inclusion efforts. This was followed in Spring 2016 by the establishment of the [College's Diversity and Equity Action and Inclusion Plan](#) to meet SUNY mandates. The plan provides a guide for the College's diversity and equity efforts over the next five years. One of the core elements of the plan is that each administrative department is now required to develop its own departmental diversity and equity plan (2.3) each year, to specify the role the department plays in supporting the College's diversity initiatives and goals, and to outline the departmental diversity assessment goals and metrics. In this way, the plan provides a policy framework for incorporating diversity efforts into all levels of the College.

The Diversity and Equity Action Council (DEAC) plays an integral role in ensuring that diversity and equity are continually considered in the operations of the College. Council subcommittees have focused on developing and maintaining an inclusive campus climate and on programming and professional development opportunities related to diversity issues for students and staff. The Council's recommendations are first presented to the Chief Diversity Officer and the Provost/Vice President and then to the President. The minimum [membership](#) of the

Committee consists of three administrators, three members of the classified staff, three faculty members (two of whom are teaching faculty), and two ex officio members (the Chief Diversity Officer/Director of Diversity Education and Support Services and the Director of Human Resources). Membership also includes interested students and community members. Members are appointed by the College President and serve a one-year, renewable term.

The College has worked hard to achieve a more diversified faculty and staff population, though because it is located in a remote rural setting that has consistently been a challenge. In an effort to reflect the diversity in the [student body](#), and as a result of the lack of diversity among qualified candidates in many faculty searches, the College is making a major commitment to hire full-time faculty members from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds through a unique initiative called the Emerging Scholars Program (2.4). Through this innovative program, the College identifies past Tompkins Cortland graduates from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups who are pursuing or interested in pursuing a graduate-level education and have demonstrated a commitment to the College community. These graduates are encouraged to apply for the program with the official sponsorship of a current full-time faculty member. The selected Emerging Scholars enter into a three-year training and mentoring program in which they complete their graduate studies at the Master's level while working with program faculty to prepare for teaching at the College. The Scholars receive a stipend to pay for their graduate studies, and upon completion of the program are hired as a tenure-track faculty position at the College. As the initial program proposal observes:

“The College proposes, therefore, to engage in a process of recruiting members of historically underrepresented ethnic groups from our current students and recent graduates who demonstrate the potential and desire to develop into effective faculty members, and to support them in their growth into the faculty role. We will, in short, “grow our own faculty.”

Candidates to this program will not only be able to contribute to the College's cultural wealth more generally, but they will also possess several unique qualifications as a consequence of having been Tompkins Cortland Community College students. First, they will join us with personal knowledge of the challenges they encountered as well as the resources that supported their academic success. Serving as role models for all of our students, they can say, with authority, “I've been here too. I know what this feels like. I know what works.” Serving as especially powerful role models for students of color, they can add, with equal conviction, “I belong here, and so do you.” Second, they will be uniquely qualified to help us identify and affirm what we are doing well to support students of color, and to identify and confront our continuing challenges. Finally, because we will be building on already established relationships of trust, we will be in an exceptionally strong position to take up those continuing challenges.

It should also be noted that this approach is more socially responsible than a recruiting effort that would call simply for the College to compete with other institutions to attract those who are already traditionally qualified for faculty appointments and interested in pursuing them. Instead, our approach would lead to a larger number of faculty – in our state, our region, and our nation – who are members of underrepresented groups. Thus the effort to enrich the lives of our students and staff would not diminish parallel efforts at other colleges.”

The first two Emerging Scholars were selected in 2015 and formally began the program in the Fall of 2016.

As illustrated by the above initiatives, the perception and reality of diversity and inclusiveness on campus is a key priority for the College. According to the 2016 Student Opinion Survey (2.5), students' perception of diversity among faculty and staff has hovered around 3.63 out of 5 while their perception of diversity among the student body has remained slightly higher (3.76 out of 5). However, students do report a slightly decreasing rate of "racial harmony" on campus – from 3.68 in 2010 to 3.58 in 2016.

The [College's library](#) is largely responsible for maintaining the institution's fair use and copyright practices with respect to intellectual property rights and educating the campus community about copyright. The library maintains a webpage detailing the [College policy](#), defining and discussing copyright, explaining the copyright permission process, and outlining how violations of copyright policy are dealt with. Tompkins Cortland subscribes to an Annual Copyright License through the [Copyright Clearance Center](#), which covers many of the print resources used for course packs and other course reserves materials. When necessary, the library will seek to purchase rights for those items that are not covered under the annual license.

Fair and Impartial Practices and the Grievance Process

Tompkins Cortland has a long history of well-developed, negotiated contracts for staff and faculty through three unions present on campus, the [Civil Service Employees Association](#) (CSEA), the Professional Administrators Association (PAA), and the Faculty Association as represented by [New York State United Teachers](#) (NYSUT). The vast majority of the College's policies and practices related to employees and employee relations are determined by the individual employee's [union contract](#). This includes the College's practices regarding hiring, evaluation, promotion, discipline, and separation of employees as well as grievance processes. In addition, the College's employee-related practices are guided specifically by [Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity](#) policies as well as official policies dealing with discrimination and harassment, workplace violence, [FERPA](#), and drug-free workplaces. The [College's Human Resource department](#) is responsible for communicating policies and practices, tracking and documenting practices such as employee evaluations, and maintaining up-to-date employee personnel files that include any information related to evaluation, promotion, discipline, or employee grievances.

The College's fair and impartial hiring practices are further ensured by its screening committee process. In hiring all full-time positions, the College forms screening committees that meet with both the provost and the director of human resources in order to review the roles and responsibilities of search committee members, the College's screening committee manual (2.6) (which includes, among other things, a discussion of lawful and unlawful interview questions), and any other pertinent information related to each specific search. As of the time of this writing, the College has not faced any unfair employment claims or charges.

Each union's contract addresses the evaluation for its particular employment group, including specific tools and templates for employee evaluations, the structure of the annual evaluation process, and guidelines for probationary evaluations. Probationary evaluations provide a framework for all new employees to be evaluated early in their employment at the College in order to address any potential issues, which may affect decisions related to permanent employment. Similarly, promotion practices (including quality step increases, rank promotions, and new job titles), eligibility, and notification timeframes are specified in each union contract. When the College initiates discipline against an employee, all notices and actions are documented and placed into the employee's personnel file in the Human Resources Department. Practices related to employee separation or termination of employment are outlined in each union contract with each specifying timelines and benefits that ensure fair and impartial treatment of the employee. (For a discussion of College policies and practices related to employee separation and College data, please see [Standard IV](#)).

Similarly, the employee grievance process for both informal and formal complaints is outlined in each union contract. Informal complaints are channeled through an employee’s direct supervisor and/or department head. Any grievance not resolved via the informal process moves to the formal complaint process in which the complaint is forwarded to the Human Resources Department for formal notice and processing. Processing timelines and notifications outlined in the union contracts provide a structure to ensure fair and equitable treatment within the process. Formal grievances are documented and are reported to the [Board of Trustees](#) through each Board meeting’s [agenda](#) mailing. The presidents of each union reported being satisfied with the grievance process at the College as it related to his or her specific collective bargaining unit. With the exception of two filed grievances, all formal grievances against the College have been resolved and have resulted in either a change of practice or a clarification of a practice or procedure. The two outstanding grievances were processed through the College’s grievance procedures but were determined to fall outside of the purview of the College and rest with the [Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium](#).

The [student grievance process](#) at the College varies according to the specific nature of the grievance. Generally, the policy identifies the contact person and criteria for filing at each stage of the grievance process – the informal step (when applicable), the formal request level, the appeal level, and the second appeal level (when applicable). For example, student grade challenges begin with the student communicating with the instructor (the informal step). If the student wishes to then file a formal complaint, he or she does so with the chair of the department in question (the formal request level). Finally, if the student requests an appeal, the request goes to the Provost/Vice President (the appeal level).



Policies Regarding Conflict of Interest

[Board of Trustees by-laws](#) set guidelines for avoiding conflicts of interest by members of the Board and stipulate that Board members may not receive financial gain from nor be employed by the College. Within the Budget and Finance department, the [Administrative Manual](#) contains a Code of Ethics that addresses guidelines regarding purchases, competitive bidding, following the best practices specified by the [National Association of Education Buyers](#) Code. The College follows these guidelines in soliciting proposals from, reviewing, interviewing, and selecting contractors, and for purchases made by the College.

Honesty and Truthfulness in Communication

While the College does not have a formal policy regarding honesty and truthfulness in communication, it does take a strong unwritten position on presenting the institution, its decisions, and its actions in a forthright, honest manner to the College community, the local communities, prospective students, and other stakeholders. The president and the provost regularly share updates and information about the College via email, and the president holds all-campus state of the [College meetings](#) (TC5) at least once a semester. In addition, one function of the [College's Fall and Mid-winter Days](#) (TC4) is to provide an opportunity for the leadership to share current information and address issues within the College community, including new programs, budget information and challenges, and recent campus events of concern or note. This commitment to open, honest communication extends to even the most challenging situations. For example, in 2016 three students were injured in an on-campus stabbing. While there are limitations on what information can be shared during a criminal investigation, the [College notified](#) (TC6) all of the stakeholders in the greater College community, including prospective students, about the stabbing and the follow-up investigation.

The College's [Financial Aid department](#) is committed to providing prospective students with clear, accurate, and honest information regarding the [cost of attending](#) Tompkins Cortland Community College and the various financial aid options available to students. For a more detailed discussion of how this information is communicated to students, please see [Standard IV](#).

College Compliance with Federal, State, and Commission Reporting Policies, Regulations, and Requirements

Tompkins Cortland Community College is in compliance with federal, New York state, and MSCHE requirements. The College website provides information about [graduation rates, retention, institutional assessments, student consumer information, and survey results](#). In addition, the College compiles a report annually of all [compliance reporting](#) (TC7) across departments, which is then presented to the Board of Trustees. For a formal discussion of the College's compliance with policies, regulations, and requirements, please see [the College's Verification of Compliance with Accreditation-Relevant Federation Regulations Report](#). (TC8)

Assessment of Practices and Policies Related to Ethics and Integrity

As required by Board of Trustees' policies, the College routinely reviews and updates as necessary institutional policies, processes, and practices. The [College Forum](#) is actively involved in making policy and practice recommendations and provides a venue for members of the College community to participate in review and revision discussions. (For a more detailed discussion of the Forum, please see [Standard VII](#).) The institution provides information about new and/or updated policies or procedures via the College email system and website, and individual departments initiating policy or procedural revisions or changes are responsible for disseminating specific information to stakeholders.

Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience



An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence at all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, level, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.

Introduction

Tompkins Cortland Community College provides its students with rigorous and coherent learning experiences as guided by New York state Education Department (NYSED) guidelines, State University of New York (SUNY) requirements, and the College's own Mission, Vision, Values (MVV), and student success goal. The College meets, and exceeds, the higher education expectations.

External Requirements

As is the case with all degree-granting programs within public institutions of higher education in NYS, Tompkins Cortland must meet [NYSED guidelines](#), which mandate that the following percentage of coursework be in the liberal arts and sciences for the three types of degrees offered by the College: Associate of Arts (AA) – 60%, Associate of Science (AS) – 50%, and Associate of Applied Science (AAS) – 33%. In addition, as part of the SUNY system, all AA/AS programs offered by the College must also satisfy [SUNY General Education \(GE\) requirements](#): 30 credit hours of course work distributed across at least 7 of the 10 GE areas, including basic communication and mathematics. Degree programs in liberal arts and sciences must also offer students at least one [seamless transfer](#) path to a SUNY four-year college. Tompkins Cortland reviewed and revised its own GE requirements (3.1) in 2009 in order to align more closely with SUNY GE requirements, and currently, the College's speech/interpersonal communications requirement is the one GE requirement that does not also satisfy a specific SUNY GE requirement. The combination of NYSED requirements and SUNY requirements creates a coherent student learning experience and promotes synthesis of learning across degree programs at the College. The College registrar is tasked with ensuring that all programs meet NYSED guidelines.

General Education Requirements

All degree programs at Tompkins Cortland are designed around both SUNY's and the College's own GE requirements, as well as major-specific content. Every degree program requires Academic Writing I and II (ENGL100 and ENGL101, respectively), a college-level math course, and a natural science course. All degree programs also require a communications course, either Fundamentals of Speech (ENGL201) or Fundamentals of Interpersonal Communication (ENGL204). These courses ensure that all students meet the SUNY and College GE requirements of Basic Communication and Mathematics. In addition, every AS (with the exception of Engineering Science) and AA degree requires that students fulfill 30 credits of SUNY GE coursework from at least 7 of 10 content areas. AAS programs do not have these requirements, but students are encouraged to fulfill the same number of content areas if they plan to transfer and complete a SUNY Bachelor's Degree. Each degree program also requires that students fulfill the College's Liberal Arts and Sciences requirements by completing at least one 3-4 credit course in each of the following areas: humanities, mathematics, natural sciences, and social sciences.

SUNY GE requirements require competencies in critical thinking and information management/literacy, and the College's GE requirements also include social/global awareness. These requirements are not fulfilled by specific courses at the College but are instead embedded within each degree program and are reflected, fulfilled, and assessed within program-specific learning outcomes (2.1). While programs have implicitly assessed critical thinking and information management learning outcomes in the past, beginning with the 2016-2017 academic year these two outcomes will be specifically assessed within each program in order to more directly fulfill the relevant SUNY GE requirements. (For more discussion of this, please see the chapter on [Standard V](#)). In addition, the College's English department is in the process of reviewing its own assessments of ENGL100 and ENGL101 (3.2) learning outcomes, which include both critical thinking and information literacy. As these two courses are required of students in all degree programs at the College, these data will provide another source for the assessment of the two SUNY GE requirements.

Degree Programs at the College

The College provides clear and accurate information about its degree programs, aimed at helping students understand and follow degree requirements and timeframes, through multiple venues. Current and prospective students may access the [College Catalog](#) on the College's website via the "Academics" tab and select a degree or certificate program from a list of all of the College's offerings. The program page then lists the specific requirements for the degree or certificate. Crucial information, such as whether a particular course is offered only in the fall or spring or whether there is a minimum grade requirement, is in red. The student may also print a [program worksheet](#) containing this information. By clicking on the "schedule" tab next to each course, a student can see a list of available sections of the course. Selecting the course name also provides pre-/co-requisite course requirements as well as textbook information. Whenever a new program has been approved, a new course has been added, or changes have been made to an existing program's requirements, the Registrar's Office updates all sources of information available to the College community, including program worksheets, the online catalog, and the degree requirements as provided in [DegreeWorks](#).

DegreeWorks is an educational software program that allows the student to see several indicators of progress towards successful completion of a desired degree or certificate program, including the total number of credits and specific coursework required; credits and coursework completed, in progress, and still needed; and the student's progress toward meeting SUNY GE requirements. DegreeWorks also provides a planning tool: [Student Success and Advisement Services](#) staff, faculty advisors, or a student may set up a degree plan listing the courses that the student should/intends to take each semester in order to graduate within the desired

timeframe. As of Summer 2016, Student Success and Advisement Services provides all entering students with a plan for his or her program completion. This plan takes the student's starting point into account (i.e., if the student needs to complete developmental courses) as well as his or her career or transfer goals, and it provides students with a roadmap for a date to program completion. In consultation with an academic advisor or Student Success and Advisement Services, this plan can be and is revised as the student proceeds through the program. In addition, DegreeWorks includes a tool called "What If," which allows a student who is considering a degree or program change to see which of the courses already completed or in progress would apply toward the new degree or program and which courses would still be required. The student and his or her academic advisor may then discuss whether the student should make the change. Students' academic advisors also use both program worksheets and DegreeWorks to help students see which courses they need in order to graduate in the expected timeframe.

The College's processes of developing new programs and revising currently existing programs are extensive, multi-faceted and designed specifically to provide feedback from various stakeholders in order to ensure that the programs fulfill NYSED Guidelines and SUNY requirements, consist of an appropriate number of credit hours, provide students with a coherent learning experience across their program coursework, and promote a synthesis of learning.

New Programs

Ideas for new programs come from a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, faculty discussions with employers, industry and community organizations, scans of the environment, labor market data analysis, as well as faculty at other two-year and four-year colleges. The registrar then researches similar programs at other SUNY schools or in other states, and shares this information with the faculty creating the new program. As the program takes form, the registrar reviews program materials and provides ongoing feedback, particularly in relation to SUNY policies. As part of SUNY's seamless transfer policy, all proposals for AA and AS degree programs require a course equivalency table and a letter of support from the Chief Academic Officer of two parallel SUNY baccalaureate (BA) degree programs, confirming that Tompkins Cortland graduates will be able to transfer and complete the respective BA degree program within two additional years of study. [SUNY](#) and [NYSED](#) processes for new programs require that proposals for AAS degrees include a determination of need for the program as well as employment potential.

While the creation of a new program is largely the work of the faculty who are constructing it, there are several layers of feedback and oversight built into the process. For internal approval, the faculty developer works with the registrar in preparing a program summary, learning outcomes, and the required coursework. The developer also works with the appropriate liaison librarian to ensure that the College library has the necessary resources to support the new program coursework. All new courses must go through a Curriculum Committee review process (Ex. 2). After the faculty developer develops a draft of the program coursework, it must be approved by the faculty within the department in which the program will be housed (Social Sciences, English and Humanities, Math, Engineering, Technology, and Science, Business, or Nursing) before being presented to the College's Curriculum Committee. If the proposal receives Curriculum Committee approval, it is presented to the faculty at large for review and feedback, followed by a written ballot vote of full-time faculty conducted by the College Provost. Upon faculty approval, the program is sent to the College Forum for a resource assessment and then to the Board of Trustees for final internal approval.

Once a new program receives internal approval, the College submits a program announcement to the SUNY Provost who reviews it and distributes it within SUNY for a 30-day comment period enabling other campuses to provide feedback or to express concerns. At the conclusion of the comment period, the College addresses any concerns and submits a program proposal to the SUNY Provost who reviews it and works with the College registrar to resolve any issues. Upon resolution of any outstanding issues, the SUNY Provost approves the new program and forwards it to the NYSED for further review and registration.

Program Revisions

Program revisions may include the creation of a new course, changes to an existing course, or changes to program or certificate requirements. The process for program revisions parallels that of new program creation outlined above.

Any changes must comply with Tompkins Cortland, SUNY, and NYSED guidelines and GE requirements. Program faculty, in consultation with the registrar, propose program changes that they believe will better support student learning and, if applicable, better support transfer within SUNY. These changes are introduced first to the department in which the program is housed. Based on departmental feedback, the faculty proposing the changes either make revisions or move the process to the Curriculum Committee for consideration and, if needed, a vote.

All proposed curricular changes at the College fall under one of three decision levels. Level 1 decisions include those changes that are contained within a single academic program or department and only directly affect the students enrolled in the program in question. Level 2 decisions include changes that will impact more than one program or department and may affect students in other programs. The Provost/Vice President of the College takes the final action on these changes. Level 3 decisions include those changes that will have a broad impact on the curriculum of the College. If the Curriculum Committee approves a Level 3 change, the tenure-track faculty then votes on the proposed change. Additionally, the College Forum considers the resource impacts of the proposed change and conducts a formal vote, after which the change is voted upon by the Board of Trustees.

Instructional Faculty

As of November 2016, the College employed 62 full-time instructional faculty members. Of those, 51 were tenured, and 11 were on the tenure track. Additionally, the College employed 196 part-time/adjunct instructional faculty members. The ratio of full-time to part-time faculty was 1:3.05 [[IPEDS Human Resources Report \(TC9\)](#)]. Based on [IPEDS enrollment data](#), (TC10) the College's five-year average student-to-faculty ratio between 2011 and 2016 was 18:1. The College uses enrollment caps for each course to ensure adequate teacher-to-student ratios in both face-to-face and online classes. For the majority of courses, enrollment does not exceed 30 students.

The 2016 Student Opinion Survey (2.5) shows a high level of student satisfaction with the “availability of courses at times you can take them and availability of courses you need for graduation”, indicating that student demand is being met by the number of faculty the College employs. The College may cancel under-enrolled sections of courses, but the content may be offered in other sections or in the form of independent studies if necessary in order for students to stay on track to meet graduation requirements. In addition, the College adds sections to the schedule to meet demand as funding and classroom space allow. These added sections are often taught by adjunct faculty.

The College faculty – both full-time and adjunct – is fully qualified for their positions and teaching responsibilities. Of the 62 full-time faculty teaching classes in the Fall 2016 semester, four faculty members had earned the highest degree of a Bachelors, 38 had earned the highest degree of a Masters, 16 had earned the highest degree of a Ph.D., and 4 had earned the highest degree of a J.D. Of the 196 adjunct faculty teaching classes during the Fall 2016 semester, 7 had earned the highest degree of an Associates, 47 had earned the highest degree of a Bachelors, 120 had earned the highest degree of a Masters or other professional degree, and 22 had earned the highest degree of a Ph.D.

The College uses a thorough search process to ensure that the faculty hired to teach meet the qualifications of the position. For each full-time teaching position, a search committee works with the Provost to craft a position description and to identify the specific credentials required to fill the position. To meet adjunct position needs, the College solicits applications to fill a pool of potential adjuncts across academic disciplines. In consultation with department chairs, the Dean of Instruction [this will shift to the new Associate Provost (3.3)] makes hiring decisions and assigns courses from this pool.

A successful balance between full-time and adjunct teaching faculty has been an ongoing area for concern. As Provost and Vice President Connors notes about the full-time/adjunct faculty breakdown (3.4):

“[The percentage of courses taught by adjuncts].....has hovered around fifty percent for the past several years, well above the 38 – 40% level that prevailed between our 1998 and 2008 self-study reports and even more than the 33.3% to which we aspire.

The principal causes are two, one of them created largely by external forces and the other a product of decisions we have made. The first cause is the steady defunding of community colleges by public funding sources. New York State has consistently fallen far below its stated responsibility of providing forty percent of the College’s operating budget, with the most recent percentages of such support in the mid-twenty percent range. Indeed, it is only in the current academic year that the state has finally returned us to per-FTE level that prevailed eight years ago. Also, our county sponsors have provided no increase in their support for the past two years after only modest increases before that time.

The second cause is directly related to choices we have made concerning instruction. Despite funding challenges, we have remained steadfast in our decision not to increase the maximize class size for any of our offerings even when our doing so would allow us to shift a greater percentage of instruction to full-time faculty members. Our reason for this stand is grounded in our sense of the academic needs of our students; to increase class size would indeed alter these percentages and – at least in the short term – cut expenses, but it would do so at a great cost to students and their learning.

Finally, I will acknowledge that we are acutely aware of the need to fill faculty vacancies in several areas. With recent departures of full-time faculty members, we have only adjunct staffing in such disciplines as early childhood and culinary arts, while we have very significant needs in such areas as the computer fields, biology, human services, and sustainable farming and food systems. It is our intention to fill all of those positions – and probably others – as soon as we have stabilized enrollment and the College’s finances.”



From Left to Right:

Sue Stafford,
*Professor,
 Hotel & Restaurant Management*

Scott Ochs
*Professor,
 Criminal Justice/Sociology*

Full-Time Faculty

Tompkins Cortland’s primary goal is to meet its students’ educational needs and to create an environment in which they can succeed. To that end, the College’s full-time faculty focuses primarily – but not exclusively – on teaching responsibilities. The [faculty contract](#) requires full-time faculty to participate in an annual review process for which each faculty member is required to 1) submit annual written reports to the provost, 2) be evaluated by their students, and 3) be observed in the classroom by the Dean of Instruction (or the Provost under the new structure). The annual written reports to the provost address teaching, reflections on student learning, academic advisement, and professional development and service. The faculty contract determines the frequency and schedule of both student evaluations and classroom observations. The frequency and number of both are inversely proportional to rank and length of service to the College, though individual faculty members can – and do – request additional non-required evaluations and observations. The results of student evaluations are provided to individual faculty members after final grades have been submitted. Since the fall semester of 2010, the College has contracted with [SmartEvals.com](#) to issue and tabulate online student evaluations. Student response rates have averaged 35% (3.5) over the past 13 semesters. [\[Recommendation VII\]](#)

In addition to these annual reports, evaluations, and observations, the provost also reviews full-time faculty performance as part of the promotion and tenure processes. These processes are not governed by committees or department faculty but instead go through the provost, the College President, and, finally, the Board of Trustees. The annual review process serves to address any issues that would result in the denial of promotion or tenure and to provide direct guidance and opportunity for faculty members to make improvements. Faculty who have been at the rank of full professor for at least five years are eligible for [Excellence Awards](#). The successful applicant will have “consistently maintained excellence.”

Tompkins Cortland promotes educational effectiveness and maintains an informed, knowledgeable faculty by providing full-time faculty with opportunities, resources, and support for professional growth and innovation through a variety of forms. The College provides monetary support for professional development via the Provost, the Associate Provost, the [Tompkins Cortland Community College Foundation](#), the College’s Perkins Grant, and the [College Teaching Center](#) (CTC), whose [mission](#) is “to help educators share resources and experiences to enhance teaching and learning.” The College provides incentives for faculty professional development including tuition reimbursement and waiver options for courses taken at Tompkins Cortland and providing base salary increases to those who obtain advanced degrees or certifications relevant to their professional responsibilities during the course of their employment at the College. In addition, the faculty

contract states the College's commitment to make reasonable efforts to adjust work schedules to accommodate approved external professional development activities as well as to accommodate those provided by the College itself. Travel expenses, including transportation, lodging, event registration fees, and meal allowances, are also reimbursed or paid for by the College for approved professional development activities. Additionally, the College holds annual [Fall and Mid-winter Day](#) (TC4) campus retreats to provide faculty and staff with the opportunity to learn about new initiatives in various programs, departments, and disciplines.

The College routinely provides institutional support for innovative teaching strategies, such as the incorporation of [Open Education Resource \(OER\) materials](#). [Compensation](#) is available for faculty members who mentor their colleagues in the adoption of OER materials into courses, faculty who create OER for first-time use in a course, and faculty who adopt existing OER for use in a course in which it had not been previously used. Full-time faculty members and staff report their [professional development](#) (TC3) activities twice a year to the Human Resources department, which shares this information with the Board of Trustees. Between January and June 2016, three full-time instructional faculty members participated in leadership/skill development programs, ten participated in conferences or seminars, four participated in job-specific education opportunities, two participated in degree-related programs, and six participated in other professional development activities.

The College also provides its own opportunities for professional development. Some examples of these in recent years include the [PEAKS Leadership Program](#) (TC11) (in collaboration with Onondaga Community College and Mohawk Valley Community College), and as mentioned above, the College's annual Fall and Mid-Winter Days, the College Teaching Center, and the annual [Connecting, Collaborating and Celebrated the Art of Teaching Conference](#) (in collaboration with six other New York state community colleges). Additionally, as a member of the SUNY system, faculty have access to the [SUNY Center for Professional Development](#), which provides professional development opportunities in teaching, technology, and leadership in addition to hosting conferences and other training sessions.

Although the Faculty Contract addresses sabbatical requirements, options, and eligibility, the College suspended such releases in Fall 2010 due to lack of funds, and sabbatical leaves remain unavailable. Faculty do have the opportunity to utilize banked overload to take a leave.

Adjunct Faculty

While individual adjunct faculty may voluntarily involve themselves in other aspects of the College, the College expects adjunct faculty to focus on teaching. The Professional Salary Agreement documents (3.6) the minimum requirements (e.g., for class meetings, office hours, etc.) for adjunct responsibilities. Program chairs also observe adjunct faculty members in their first semester of teaching at the College. If the program chair opts not to conduct the observation, the Dean of Instruction (or Associate Provost) conducts the first semester observation. After the first semester, adjuncts are only observed at their request or if there is a perceived need. Students in each class taught by an adjunct faculty member are given the opportunity to complete an online course evaluation. The College does not differentiate between the response rates for classes taught by full-time faculty and for those taught by adjuncts. Adjuncts may receive and review the results of these evaluations after final grades are submitted, and the Dean of Instruction/Associate Provost provides feedback to the individual adjuncts and addresses any red flags. The College uses this information to make decisions regarding whether or not to review the contract of adjunct faculty members.

The College does not have specific requirements for adjunct faculty to engage in professional development activities. However, adjunct faculty may take advantage of many of the same opportunities provided to full-time faculty, and the College provides some funding for adjunct professional development. The College supports all adjuncts attendance at Mid-winter Day, Fall Day, and the annual Successful Teaching conference. In addition, new adjuncts can be paired with experienced instructors in remunerated teaching mentorships.

Opportunities and Resources for Students

Tompkins Cortland provides a large variety of learning opportunities and resources to support academic programs and students' academic progress, including – but not limited to – the Baker Learning Commons (including the Library, Tutoring Services, and Access & Equity Services), Health Services, Technology Learning and Support Services, the Office of Diversity Education and Support Services, the Office of Global Initiatives, the Pathways Program, and the PEERS and Vector Scholars Programs.

The Baker Learning Commons

The [Baker Learning Commons](#) is a physical space in the center of the academic building that incorporates the library, tutoring services, and access and equity services. It is open seven days a week when classes are in session and provides computers, printers, scanners, and photocopiers for student use. All of the computers in the Commons have Zoomtext and Premier AT Suite to increase accessibility for students. The Commons employs about 45 students each semester, providing opportunities for valuable work experience.

The [College Library](#) provides an array of course-related resources, including articles, databases, scholarly journals, newspapers, books, e-books, DVDs, streaming videos, textbooks, and various materials placed on reserve for classes. In addition, it also provides students with other resources, such as calculators, ear buds, earplugs, flash drives, rulers and protractors, highlighters, staplers, and correction fluid. Library staff provide students with assistance with printing, photocopying, scanning, and basic software support as well as additional learning support services, which include video capturing and closed-captioning, video recording of in-class guest lectures and student presentations, securing copyright permissions for films and assigned readings, and assistance to faculty in the adoption of Open Educational Resources and alternate textbooks to reduce student costs.

Librarians are assigned subject areas and serve as liaisons to academic departments. In this capacity, they routinely consult program faculty to determine the sufficiency of library materials and to keep the collection current and relevant to the curriculum. To supplement the existing collection, the Library offers both quick delivery purchase-on-demand and interlibrary loan services. Librarians also provide research instruction to classes and create Web guides and handouts to supplement instruction. Additionally, they provide research assistance to students in person, by phone, by email, and through chat and text messaging services.

[Tutoring services](#) are housed within the Library and include physical spaces set aside for accounting and business, math and science, and a writing and research center. Within those areas, tutors provide assistance in many other subject areas, and each semester, students get help in nearly two hundred unique courses, not sections, of the 331 courses offered by the College. Tutoring assistance is available both by appointment and on a drop-in basis, and online assistance is available late nights and on weekends. Tutors work closely with librarians to facilitate research and citation assistance. In order to provide support for students in developmental-level courses, Tutoring Services has incorporated both in-class and out-of-class support systems, including modified supplemental instruction, specialized tutoring, peer support, and more. These services have been continuously assessed and modified over time in an effort to best meet the needs of the College's developmental student population. For example, based on assessment data, the program formerly known as SYNERGY, a combined tutoring service for developmental English, reading, and math, was transformed into separate specialized tutoring programs for individual subject areas. The math tutoring center absorbed support for developmental math students while support for developmental English and Reading students was taken over by VOICES and PEERS respectively.

The Writing and Research Center (WRC) later folded the work of VOICES into its own work and now manages and supports peer tutors in the developmental writing classes as well as providing tutorial support outside of class.

[Access and Equity Services](#) is an important component of the Baker Commons, and it is the College’s policy to “provide, on an individual basis, academic adjustments to its requirements for students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in program or course activities or to meet course requirements as well as nonacademic program or activity requirements, including, but not limited to clubs, residence life and meal plans, and athletics.” Academic adjustments may include testing or classroom modifications to policies and practices in academic and student activities, and use of auxiliary aids or services. Staff members work with students with physical, learning, psychological, medical, or other disabilities to help them better understand the nature of their disability, develop self-advocacy skills, and to determine appropriate access plans. Over 20% of full-time students make use of their services.

Students report generally high levels of satisfaction with the three main components of the Baker Learning Commons. Since 2006, student satisfaction with library resources and services has increased and is holding steady at a high level. In the 2016 Student Opinion Survey (2.5), “library resources and services” were the highest ranked College service or facility with a 4.26 rating out of 5. Student use of Tutoring Services continues to grow despite drops in general enrollment. During the 2015-2016 academic year, 1355 individual students made 14,242 visits to the tutoring center and spent 18,791 hours making use of the facilities and services. According to the 2016 Student Opinion Survey, “one of the largest increases in satisfaction was in the area of ‘College Tutoring Services,’ which rose from a mean satisfaction level of 3.87 to 4.14” (out of 5). In addition, all students who have used Tutoring Services during a given semester are provided with a [survey via Survey Monkey](#) (TC12), which allows them to give their perspectives on their experiences, including what they did or did not like about individual professional and para-professional tutors, their thoughts about overall tutoring offerings, tutoring hours of operation, the physical tutoring space, and noise level. Tutoring Services uses this information to make necessary changes to support student success and learning. Students clearly benefit from the services provided by Access and Equity Services. Of the 520 students with disabilities registered for the fall 2016 semester, 51% had an accommodation plan, and students with accommodation plans – whether they made use of them or not – were more likely to be in good academic standing (GAS) than similar students without a plan. The College has seen an increase in student success as measured by GAS among students with disabilities who make use of Access and Equity Services. In 2016-2017, 75% of students with disabilities were in GAS (or had insufficient credits to have standing), and 79% of students with accommodation plans were in GAS (or had insufficient credits to have standing). For those students who had a plan in 2016-2017 and who used testing accommodations as part of that plan, 83% were in GAS (or had insufficient credits to have standing). [Access and Equity Services Annual Report, July 2016](#) (TC13).



Health Services

[Health Services](#) directly supports the College's MVV and student success goal by promoting health and wellness for the individual student as well as the campus community. According to the [American College Health Association](#) (ACHA) and [National College Health Assessment](#) (NCHA), as well as the College's own [Student Success and Intervention Survey](#) (TC14), when a student experiences a health related issue, it can have a negative effect on his or her academic success. Health Services parallels the College's philosophical framework by providing evidence-based accessible and confidential health services, education, and community-based programming that focuses on prevention and promotes behaviors that allow students to reach and maintain optimal health and function, and further decreasing barriers to success.

Technology Learning and Support Services

[Technology Learning and Support Services](#) provides assistance to students during the College's regular weekday hours of operation and most evenings until 7. Some of the services regularly provided to students include password resets, assistance accessing the College's Wi-Fi, navigating online courses and Blackboard learning software, using College email, and scheduling equipment checkout for in-class presentations. Technology Support staff in the Baker Commons provide similar services within that context. They have also monitored the availability of computers for students use.

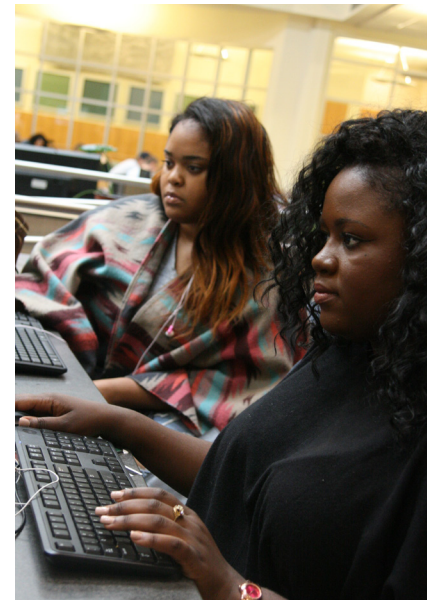
In addition, the office conducted a brief one-time survey of students and found that students wanted certain social networking sites blocked in order to free up computer resources. As a result, Campus Technology blocked the sites on a one-year trial basis, and the capacity issue was immediately eliminated. In 2016, the block was quietly lifted, but computer workstations were reorganized into areas under more direct supervision of the service areas and staff.

Overall, Tompkins Cortland students report high levels of satisfaction with "the computing resources provided for student use on the Tompkins Cortland campus" with 54.3% (n=208) being satisfied or very satisfied. Only 11.7% (n=45) reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with computing resources, and the remaining 34% (n=130) were either neither satisfied or dissatisfied or had not used the resources. One area where students expressed overall dissatisfaction was in their ability to reliably access Wi-Fi on campus. Campus Technology has acquired 100 additional Access Points and once they are deployed it will close to triple the density of the WIFI network (2016 Student Opinion Survey 2.5).



The Office of Diversity Education and Support Services

The [Office of Diversity Education and Support Services](#) (ODESS) “works to promote a positive and inclusive campus community in which underrepresented student groups achieve equity in every respect and have full access to academic success and personal development”. The office engages in departmental review every three years and has expanded its programming in response to student needs and internal assessment. Some of ODESS’s recently developed programming includes the [Network Peer Mentor Program](#), the [Student Diversity Leadership Retreat](#), the [ID Summit](#), and the [Social Justice Peer Educator Program](#). The Network Peer Mentor Program was launched in 2009 and assists first-generation college students and students from historically underrepresented groups in making a successful academic and social transition to Tompkins Cortland. The annual Student Diversity Leadership Retreat began in 2010 and fosters students’ deeper understanding of themselves and others while building leadership skills in support of their future success. Students who participate in the retreat characterize it as being an influential and memorable event in their college experience. The annual ID Summit conference was established in 2014 and provides an opportunity for students to explore identity development through the lenses of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Most recently, ODESS initiated the Social Justice Peer Educator Program, which develops students’ facilitation skills enabling them to be competent and confident to engage with and educate the larger College community regarding issues related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice.



The Office of Global Initiatives

The [Office of Global Initiatives](#) serves both international and traditional students during the regular academic year and provides an intensive summer program, which serves an average of 200 international students annually. The office’s on-campus support services include, but are not limited to twice-monthly International Coffee Hours, special on-campus programming related to international issues and experiences, and discussions on topics such as culture shock. Off-campus programming includes an orientation to the public bus station, visits to local festivals and museums, apple picking, and activities hosted by nearby colleges and universities. The office also works closely with faculty, other departments on campus, community members, and local organizations in order to support the academic and social needs of international students. This support may include educating academic advisors on student visa requirements, finding student peer mentors, providing a place to have a meal during holidays or College breaks, and locating opportunities for job shadowing or internships. The Office of Global Initiatives also provides international cultural learning opportunities for all students by organizing guest speakers, film screenings, music performances and art displays, panel discussions, and various activities during the College’s [International Educational Week](#).

These aspects of the Global Initiatives Office’s services and programming are well received by students. According to the 2016 Student Opinion Survey (2.5), 46.8% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the College “offers a supportive environment for international students” while only 1.8% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The remaining students either did not agree or disagree (12.4%) or didn’t know (39%). In addition, students tend to be satisfied with the number of international learning opportunities provided on campus. Fifty percent of students either agreed or strongly agreed that the College “provides many opportunities to learn about the people, cultures and countries of the world, both in and outside of the classroom.” Only 6.2% of students disagreed or strongly disagreed with the remaining 43.8% neither agreed or disagreed, or didn’t know.

The Global Initiatives office also coordinates the College’s [study abroad programs](#) with the goal of increasing students’ knowledge and understanding of other cultures and helping students develop a globally aware outlook. The College currently operates short-term, faculty-led study abroad trips to six different countries – Cambodia, Colombia, Ireland, Italy, Nicaragua, and Spain. Each study abroad opportunity is directly linked to coursework. Students register for two three- or four-credit cross-disciplinary learning community courses, take the classes, and then travel with their classmates and professors during the break following the term (either January or May). Faculty are continually revising the current programs and new travel locations and courses are continually being considered. Through a [partnership agreement](#) with SUNY Cortland, Tompkins Cortland students may also take advantage of that university’s study abroad programs, which offer greater variety in program type, country options, length of time in-country, and subject matter.

The Global Initiatives Office publishes a [study abroad faculty manual](#) that details study abroad-related policies, standards, and procedures. One of the main roles of the office in relation to study abroad is to set and clarify policies related to safety and risk management in order to ensure high-quality and safe experiences for both students and faculty. These policies and procedures are regularly reviewed based on the Standards of Good Practice set by The Forum on Education Abroad, on International Education Abroad trainings and publications from the Association of International Educators, and through [SUNY Global](#) and its Council on International Education, a network of study abroad faculty within SUNY. All faculty trip leaders receive training in basic first aid and in risk management, and all participating students are required to attend a pre-departure orientation in which they receive country-specific information on health, safety, and behavior abroad.

While study abroad opportunities are often mentioned by students as one of the things that attracts them to the College, they also say that they find the ability to finance study abroad as the greatest barrier to their participation. Another barrier to student participation in study abroad opportunities is a lack of awareness. According to the 2016 Student Opinion Survey (2.5), 61.5% of students (n=246) were either not familiar with study abroad opportunities at the College or didn’t know. Partially because of these trends, the majority of study abroad community courses run with just the minimum number of students. The Global Initiatives Office staff works with faculty to strategize on ways to better promote study abroad as personal relationships with faculty are believed to be one of the greatest motivators for students to consider participating in a study abroad program.

Pathways Program

The College’s [Pathways program](#) is designed to meet the specific needs of adult students (24 years and older) from the tri-county area. Its mission is to provide financial, academic, and emotional support with the end result of earning an Associate’s Degree. The program began in 2008 with nine students and has grown to serving 81 students in 2017. Pathways supports students by providing them with academic advisement, connection to vital campus and community resources, and regular check-in meetings to ensure the proper level of support for their academic success in addition to providing a scholarship averaging \$7,000 funded by local philanthropist Arthur

Kuckles' foundation grant. Students in the Pathways program have a 90% semester-to-semester retention rate, and over 80% are in good academic standing each semester. Many Pathways students go on to achieve higher degrees, often with full funding.

Scholars shared incredible stories of resilience and achievement at the Pathways Scholarship for Adult Students recognition ceremony in October. A panel of scholars presented their stories of personal discovery and triumph. The message: Going back to school is possible. Pathways provides full scholarship opportunities to adult students.

The panel, led by Dr. Montague (far left), featured, from left, Kyle Allington, Randi Darling, Molly Rutan, and Sheena Veney.



Innovative Programs

The College also provides two notable formal opportunities for students to support one another's academic success and adjustment to college life. The first is the [Purpose, Engagement, Evaluation, Resonance, and Synthesis program](#) (PEERS). PEERS provides student-led reading support for any required reading assignment to first-year students enrolled in developmental level courses.

The second program is the [Vector Scholars Program](#). While assessing graduation rates for various cohorts, the College its lowest family income students (defined as by the Federal Poverty Level) had a 16 to 17% rate of success compared to an overall rate of 23%, a gap that appeared somewhat independent of academic preparedness. And the number of first-time full-time students in this group at the College had increased from 20% in the fall of 2008 to 38% by the fall of 2014.

In addition, if students who were not successful in their first semester and were placed on probation, they are "40 percent less likely to return for their second semester than... students in good academic standing". The College recognized that there were no current programs focused specifically on addressing the needs of this traditional age low income group. As a result of these data and in an effort to improve retention, graduation rates, and overall levels of student success, in 2015 the [College developed the Vector Scholars Program](#) (TC15) with the objective of guiding "low-income students... in the development of academic success skill sets, identification of a clear academic direction, and navigation of a pathway to completion". The program assists participating students in their transition during their first semester of college by providing connections with family, staff, and peers; cultivating academic success skills and habits through formal and informal learning activities; providing opportunities for basic skills review and the acceleration of remedial coursework; and pairing them with both peer and faculty or staff mentors to guide them during their first semester at the College. Following success with a small pilot group in Fall 2015 (68% were in good academic standing at the end of their first semester (compared to the comparison group's 44%), the program accepted more students in Fall 2016 and was expanded to provide on-going support throughout enrollment. Thirty seven students began Fall 2016 in the Vector Scholars program; 76% finished the first semester in good academic standing (compared to 52% of the comparison group), 70% completed two semesters in good academic standing (compared to 43%), and 73% were retained to Fall 2017 (compared to 40%). A new full cohort of 40 students began in Fall 2017.

[College Initiative Upstate](#) (CIU) is another innovative program on campus, focused on providing access to a highly underserved population. CIU works with the College to facilitate college education among ex-offenders who have served time in prison. It also works with defendants in the court system to offer education in lieu of community service, and in some cases in lieu of incarceration. CIU's continuum of support services are student-centered and designed to give people involved with criminal justice the tools, knowledge, relationships, and skills necessary to begin and complete a college education, become gainfully employed, informed citizens, and community leaders. In Fall 2017 the College offered a section of developmental reading/writing tailored specifically to this population. The College is also giving these students Accuplacer testing, and placement assessments for Math and Reading/Writing prior to college enrollment as well as facilitating the application/enrollment process in many important ways. Looking ahead, the College's involvement with CIU could become a model and inspiration for engagement with community for other SUNY Institutions throughout New York State.

In addition to the support services discussed in some detail above, the College also provides students with a variety of other types of support including various infrastructural resources such as science labs, media and broadcasting facilities, a food bank, a [culinary teaching facility](#) and bistro ([Coltivare](#)), and the [College farm](#).



Standard IV: Support of the Student Learning Experience



Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and fosters student success.

Introduction

Tompkins Cortland Community College prioritizes entry/first-semester services and ongoing support for all students to undergird the successful learning experience of a rapidly changing student population. The [College's MVV](#) and student success goal guide its decision making and actions with regard to the student learning experience – from recruiting and admitting students to their retention through to their completion by graduation and/or transfer to a four-year institution. In this chapter, we will discuss how the College's policies, procedures, and business practices ensure that the MVV and student success goal are met at every stage of the student experience. The College website and printed materials provide accurate and comprehensive information on the institution's [admission standards](#) and [application procedures](#), [tuition and other academic costs](#), [academic standards](#), and [financial aid](#). Upon admission to the College, students are [guided through a system](#) of [placement testing](#), [advisement](#), registration, and [orientation](#). This support of the student learning experience is further enhanced as students engage in classroom instruction, live in [campus housing](#), participate in [extracurricular activities](#), and otherwise acclimate to the College environment.

Admissions Process

Application

The [application process](#) is clearly stated on the College website and is easily accessible from the homepage by selecting “Admissions.” The [Financial Aid office](#) works to promote the application process, to convey student eligibility for various federal, state, and institutional financial aid programs, and to award aid equitably within governmental and institutional guidelines. The College website provides a significant amount of information related to financial aid, including the eligibility criteria for the most common federal and state aid programs, descriptions of various grant, loan and work-study programs, academic standards required to retain aid eligibility, an explanation of verification requirements, [a list of downloadable forms](#), the [full cost of tuition, fees, housing, and meal plans](#), and our [refund policy](#).

The cost of attendance is the basis for eligibility for most federal student aid programs, and the College has two costs of attendance in any given year – one for commuters and other one for on/off campus students. The standard cost of attendance includes tuition, fees, books and supplies, housing, meals, transportation, and personal expenses. Tuition is a variable component of the cost of attendance based on a student’s actual enrollment and residency status. Housing and meal costs vary based on the student’s living arrangements.

Students seeking federal and/or state aid must file the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#) (FAFSA) in order to initiate the application process. Upon receipt of the FAFSA, the College mails eligible students award letters that list and provide broad explanations of the grant, loan, and work programs available to them based on eligibility criteria and available funding. The letter refers students to the College website for more detailed descriptions of specific financial aid programs. If a student’s application file is missing any documentation preventing the awarding of financial aid, he or she is mailed a missing information letter. The Financial Aid office staff review this missing information as it is received, and once verification requirements have been satisfied, the student is awarded aid and mailed an award letter. Overall, students are satisfied with the information, assistance, and services provided by the Financial Aid office. According to [Student Opinion Surveys](#), satisfaction with “Financial Aid Services” has increased from 3.64 in 2010 to 3.75 in 2013 to 3.77 (all out of 5) in 2016.



Entry-Level Advisement & Course Placement

As an open-access institution, Tompkins Cortland accepts all students who have earned a high school diploma, General Education Diploma (GED), or [Test Assessing Secondary Completion \(TASC\)](#). In order to determine students' level of college preparation in key subject areas, the College requires placement testing for all students who have not earned previous college credit in English composition or math courses. The [Student Success and Advisement Services Office](#) uses The [College Board's Accuplacer](#) test to measure student aptitude in first semester college English composition, reading, and mathematics courses. Student Success and Advisement Services staff then uses these results to determine an individual student's need for developmental coursework in the three subject areas, and students meet with an advisor to align their career goals with academic programs and to register for classes.

This entry-level student advisement process is continually evolving in response to student needs and a rapidly changing student population. The Student Success and Advisement Services Office meets annually with faculty in the English, reading, and math areas to review student data, grade trends, and course completion percentages and use this information to make recommendations for changes in the placement and entry-level advisement processes. For example, in 2015, after an extensive review of new student transcripts and math course placement data, the College implemented changes in the process for determining the Accuplacer math test students would need to take based on their GED/TASC scores in math, high school grades on NYS Regents exams, and high school math coursework, ultimately impacting the minimum course placement for math. The College also made changes for reading and English placement. Within the area of reading, the College eliminated a "decision zone", which allowed the student and his or her advisor to choose between Active Literacy (RDNG099, a developmental, non-credit bearing active literacy course) and College Reading and Study Skills (RDNG116, a college-level, credit bearing reading and study skills course), lowering the minimum score for placement into RDNG116. For English, the College set baseline scores for appropriate student placement in ENGL049, now listed as ENGL098: Accelerated Writing Skills for ENGL100, a course that allows students identified as needing some development of college-level writing skills to enroll in college-level composition with ENGL098 as a supplemental writing skills workshop course. Additional changes to placement processes and procedures are likely to be forthcoming as the College's institutional Strategic Priorities (1.3-1.10) are focused on the first semester. A group of faculty and staff are currently reviewing first-semester course placements and discussing how to use various data, including information from high school transcripts, NYS Regents exam scores, SAT/ACT scores (if submitted) in concert with placement test scores to determine the most suitable course placements. Out of these discussions new placement practices are being implemented. In addition, the Accuplacer system will be implementing the "Next Generation" texts in the near future. These changes will contribute to the College's continuous assessment of placement testing procedures to help ensure student success.

In Spring 2014, the College shifted from a Pre-Enrollment Orientation group presentation model to an individualized model called [Student Transition, Advisement, Registration, and Testing \(START\)](#), targeted to the specific needs each student. Based on a 2016 review of data, the College further honed the START model by separating what had been one day-long orientation session, combining all aspects of the entry-level registration process, into two distinct sessions – one for placement testing and one for academic advisement and registration. The College made additional changes to provide more flexibility in testing, including alternate testing sites closer to the student's home and expanded testing opportunities later in the day and on weekends.

The START process allows the College to create tools that match each student’s career goals with educational goals, degree completion, and successful transfer and/or job placement. Prior to new [student advisement](#), students complete a Pre-Advising Questionnaire designed to gather information about their career aspirations and transfer plans. These questionnaires, coupled with degree program requirements, allow entry-level advisors to create a degree completion plan for each student using [DegreeWorks](#) (for more discussion of DegreeWorks, please see the chapter covering [Standard III](#)). Beginning in the Fall of 2017, the College will also provide a mobile app through Full Measure Education, which will integrate information from DegreeWorks, financial aid, and [Career Coach](#) and allow students to see and monitor their academic plan. The app will also provide a primary platform for communication to and from multiple offices and services across the College. Students use and value these information and planning tools. On the 2016 Student Opinion Survey (2.5), students rated the “Availability of advising tools” such as DegreeWorks at 3.84 (out of 5).

As an additional part of the admissions process, the Admissions Office reviews high school and any college transcripts to determine which credits meet the institution’s policies for acceptance, transfer credits, and other relevant college-level coursework or experience. New York state Regents scores on certain General Education requirements may allow a student to opt out of placement testing and immediately enroll in college-level coursework. Students can also use past employment and experience to apply to the Dean of Instruction/ Associate Provost for [Experiential Learning credit](#). The College Registrar is currently reviewing and updating current transfer equivalencies.



Program Advisement, Career & Transfer Planning, and Counseling Services

Once students have completed the entry-level advisement, registration, and orientation processes, they require additional services to support their success at the College, including continuing academic, program-based advisement, career and transfer planning, and counseling. Along with the [Office of Student Success and Advisement Services](#) and the [Counseling, Career, and Transfer Services Office](#) (discussed below), [faculty advisors](#) work with students to provide support and advisement from the point of registration through graduation and/or transfer. Faculty advisors carry a load of advisees and have advisement responsibilities in accordance with the specifications of the [Faculty Contract Agreement](#). The minimum requirements for faculty advisors include but are not limited to providing defined office hours, attending new student program orientation, contacting advisees with important updates, deadlines, or to reach out to students who may be struggling in classes, meeting with advisees prior to Registration Day to plan the upcoming semester, following up with unregistered students after Registration Day, providing additional office hours prior to and on Registration Day and during finals week, and attending advisement training meetings in order to stay current with updates, technology, and other changes. The College additionally compensates faculty who choose to serve as entry-level advisors during summer and winter new student registration. Students consistently rate the College's academic advisors highly. In the [Student Opinion Survey](#), on a scale of 1 to 5, students rated "Information provided by academic advisors" at 3.73 in 2006, 3.74 in 2010, 4.0 in 2013, and 3.92 in 2016. Student satisfaction with "Availability of advisor" similarly increased from 3.75 in 2006 to 3.99 in 2016.

The Office of Counseling, Career, and Transfer Services (CCTS) offers individual counseling and group sessions that focus on personal, educational, and career development issues, and consistently seeks opportunities to promote student success and retention at the College. Counselors regularly present in classes on a variety of topics such as career planning and exploration, stress management, and transfer. In response to assessment data and student needs, CCTS has implemented a number of programs in recent years. The "Hitting the Wall" Project began during the 2013-14 academic year and is an interactive program for which counselors and staff interview students about how they are coping with midterm. Students identify strategies for managing stress, and the CCTS staff creates a mural based on these strategies. CCTS implemented the "Picture Yourself a Grad" program in 2013. This program provides students with the opportunity to wear graduation regalia in order to themselves as a Tompkins Cortland graduate, and each student is given a certificate with a photograph and their own written response about why they want to complete their degree. The "Picture Yourself a Grad" program earned the 2015 SUNY Career Development Organization (SUNYCDO) Award for Excellence in Programming. CCTS works with students on career and [transfer planning](#) as well. Beginning in 2014, CCTS staff began using [Career Coach](#), a web-based tool allowing students to connect their career interests with available degree programs at the College. Staff use this tool when working individually with students as well as in group programs. Additionally, CCTS recently implemented [CareerTrack](#), a comprehensive web-based career management system through which students are able to access employment opportunities, take advantage of career preparation tools, and manage their job searches. The CCTS's Peer Career Coach program stemmed from a recognized need for a peer leadership program within the department. Peer Career Coaches are CCTS student employees who work with fellow students to identify and develop their career goals. The coaches are involved in a variety of campus events, workshops, and one-on-one sessions to help students with career planning and readiness. According to the [2015 – 2016 Graduate Profile](#), the Tompkins Cortland graduates of career programs who were choosing to join the work force had a 95% employment rate and the remaining 5% were actively seeking employment. This marks an overall increase in career program employment as 58% of these graduates were employed in 2011-12 and 87% were employed in 2013-2014. Ninety-six percent of graduates were employed in 2014-15.

In serving students' transfer needs, CCTS's goal is to connect with students early in their education at the College and to supply them with the resources they need to plan for a successful transfer to a baccalaureate institution. Transfer Services responds to the diverse needs of students by providing a variety of opportunities for students to engage in the transfer process. For example, CCTS has increased the number of class presentations related to transfer opportunities and the number of weekly Transfer Walk-In hours. The Peer Career Coaches also assist students by providing initial transfer information, and the revised "Transfer Services" component of the CCTS website provides easy access to current transfer information. The CCTS created a "TC3 Transfer" Twitter account in 2013 as another mode of delivering transfer information and advice. The number of colleges participating in the [College's Spring Transfer Fair](#) has increased 138% between 2006 (21 colleges) and 2015 (50 colleges). The number of college representatives visiting campus to promote transfer has increased 21% between 2013 and 2016. According to data collected through the [2013 – 2016 Graduate Profiles](#), 65-68% of Tompkins Cortland A.A. and A.S. degree program graduates were continuing their education at transfer schools.

CCTS recognizes that for students to be successful in higher education, they need to learn how to effectively identify and manage stress, behavioral problems, and mental health disorders, and the Counseling Center provides [mental health and wellness](#) interventions intended to strengthen student learning, retention, and completion. The Center is staffed with three full-time New York state Licensed Clinical Social Workers. Counseling Center clinicians provide more than 1,000 individual sessions annually. Besides these traditional therapeutic sessions, they contribute to student experience and success through other programming and collaborations across campus. For example, the Center provides mental health assessments of and support for students referred through [Judicial Affairs](#), the [Committee on Academic Status](#), Student Success and Advisement, [Campus Police](#), Residence Life, Access and Equity Services, and the [Students of Concern](#) Committee. Center staff provide mental health and wellness focused trainings during [student orientation](#) and to special student populations such as Peer Mentors, Peer Career Counselors, [athletes](#), and [Nursing program candidates](#). Additionally, clinicians facilitate student referrals for counseling and psychotropic medication assessment and management, assist students with negotiating [Medical Withdrawals](#) related to mental health, and provide emergency response and mental health hospitalization to students in crisis. On the 2016 Student Opinion Survey (2.5), 37.4% of students responded that they were satisfied with personal counseling services while only 4.3% were dissatisfied. The remaining 58.3% had not used services or were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with services

Student Information and Records

In providing the above services, the College collects a large amount of student information and records, and it commits a great deal of resources to the management and protection of this information. Each edition of the College's online catalog clearly states a [student's rights and responsibilities under FERPA](#) and as well as the institution's policy and procedures regarding the disclosure of education records. The College may disclose directory information – defined as information that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, such as but not limited to student name, address, date of birth, dates of attendance, and program of study – without the written consent of the student. All other non-directory information may only be disclosed only with the written consent of the student.

[Academic Records](#) is responsible for collecting written student consent and for notifying other offices when a student either has opted to [withhold directory information](#) or has authorized the release of non-directory information.

The release of non-directory information requires the student to indicate in writing and what information is to be released and to whom. Students have the right to view their educational records, and the online College catalog outlines the procedures a student must initiate to gain access to or to amend their academic records. The College's FERPA policy allows for a limited disclosure of educational records to college employees with legitimate educational interests, parents, certain governmental agencies, accrediting organizations, and law enforcement personnel. Law enforcement records maintained by the [Office of Public Safety/Campus Police](#) are not considered educational records and may be disclosed to any person.

The College has an [Information Security Protocol](#) designed to ensure the safety and confidentiality of personal information, to protect against any anticipated threats to the security or integrity of such information, to guard against unauthorized access to or use of such information that could result in substantial harm or inconvenience to any person, and to comply with the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act and the rules promulgated by the Federal Trade Commission. The College's Chief Information Officer and Registrar share responsibility for coordinating efforts related to this protocol. Additionally, all college employees whose jobs require access to student information, including student workers, interns, and co-op students, must undergo training in the proper use of confidential information, meet with the Registrar or her designee to review the institution's Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) policy, and meet with the Chief Information Officer or his designee to review institutional security, confidentiality and integrity of personal information within their assigned department or office. All employees and student workers must complete and sign an [Administrative Network/Data Access Form](#) that discusses FERPA, confidentiality, and security standards for handling personal information. New York state and SUNY policies on information security require that all personnel with access to sensitive information periodically undergo [security awareness training](#). This training focuses on working with student data both on and off campus and the measures employees are expected to take to protect the College from cyberattacks and security breaches. The clinical staff maintains protection of students' rights through careful adherence to [National Association of Social Workers ethical standards](#), New York state professional licensure requirements, and federal protections such as FERPA and Title IX. As employees leave their positions at the College, Human Resources ensures that they are not leaving with any College data/information or any computer equipment.

The College has digitized most of its paper records, and the remaining paper records are stored in locked containers, cabinets, or rooms when unattended. All personal information recorded on paper is shredded and/or stored in a secure area until an approved shredding service collects it. All data are erased when disposing of computers, diskettes, magnetic tape, hard drives or any other electronic media that contain personal information. The College promptly disposes of outdated personal information in accordance with state and federal regulations.



Athletic, Student Life & Other Extracurricular Activities

The Faculty Student Association (FSA) is a separate not-for-profit 501(c)3 corporation with its own governing board. The College contracts with the FSA to provide non-academic services to students, including [Student Activities](#), [Student Government Association \(SGA\)](#), [Residence Life](#) and [Judicial Affairs](#), [Athletics](#), [Recreation](#), [College Card](#), [Child Care Center](#), and the [Health Center](#). The President of the FSA is the Dean of Student Life, and the FSA Treasurer is the Dean of Operations. This organizational structure serves to integrate the activities of the FSA with those of the College and ensure that consistent policies and practices are established and followed. The above areas all report to the same budget office as the rest of the College and are held to the same standards. Each goes through the annual department planning process (1.11) consistent with other areas of the College and conducts a review every three years using outside benchmarking tools to determine its effectiveness in assessing learning outcomes. Most departments use Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education standards as well as any relevant field-specific standards for benchmarking. Each area completes a yearly department plan in which it addresses how it supports the student learning goal of the College, what areas are being assessed in the given year, and what changes have been made based on previous assessments. Changes based on recent assessments include CCTS creation of the Peer Coach program, Health Services replacement of faxed health forms with electronic ones, and Residence Life and Judicial Affairs creation of [gender-neutral apartment options](#) for students living in campus housing.

Students participating in programs of the FSA follow requirements and responsibilities of the [College Student Code of Conduct](#), the [Residence Life Handbook](#), [guidelines for student organizations](#), and [National Junior College Athletic Association \(NJCAA\)](#) official guidelines, as applicable to their individual extracurricular activities. Each of these policies is reviewed annually and revised as needed to meet student needs and concerns.



Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment



Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution's students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their program of study, degree level, the institution's mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher learning.

Tompkins Cortland Community College is committed to rigorous and ongoing assessment of student learning and achievement – both General Education requirements and degree program requirements. In this chapter, we will discuss the policies and procedures through which the College develops educational goals, assesses student achievement of those goals, and uses that assessment data to make improvements in order to increase student success.

Institutional & Program Learning Goals/Outcomes

Creation of Goals/Learning Outcomes

Student learning outcomes (3.2) are determined by the program chair and faculty in consultation with a program advisory board that includes practitioners in the field and faculty from other local colleges where our students transfer. Outcomes address four sets of complementary goals. The ability to function successfully in the chosen field and the completion of the [College's General Education requirements](#) apply to all students. Students in A.S. programs must also prepare to transfer successfully, and meet seven of the 10 SUNY General Education requirements (3.1).

Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Like the development of the outcomes themselves, assessment of learning outcomes at the College is faculty-driven. Program chairs, often in collaboration with departmental faculty, are responsible for assessing one student learning outcome at the end of each academic year. These assessments include quantitative assessments looking at program majors' specific performance indicators: evaluation of exam questions, student writing assignments designated specifically for such assessment, and student interviews. Program chairs submit their assessment reports to the Provost and Vice-President of the College. The reports are also reviewed by the College's Program Outcome Assessment Coordinator, who documents the assessment results and provides constructive feedback to the chairs about the assessment process and results. In any given year, most program chairs conduct student learning outcome assessments. The exception to this is when chairs conduct their (TC16) [SUNY Program Review](#) (discussed below).

In his annual summary memos, the Program Outcome Assessment Coordinator provides reflections on the assessment process itself and often suggests changes to the process that might make student outcome assessment more valuable for program faculty and for overall student success. For example, in 2014, the Program Outcome Assessment Coordinator identified several key weaknesses (5.1) in both the outcomes themselves and the processes by which they have been assessed. These weaknesses included outcomes that were dated and difficult to assess, insufficient data for thorough assessment, ambiguous assessment results, potentially unreliable results, and a lack of documented action to improve student learning following each assessment. To address these weaknesses, the Program Outcome Assessment Coordinator suggested that in lieu of a formal outcome assessment at the end of the 2015-16 academic year, chairs instead meet with program faculty and advisory boards to revise student learning outcomes in order to both update outcomes and to do this with specific assessment methods in mind, including the types of data collected. This process would directly address the first two weaknesses the Coordinator identified and indirectly address the second two. As a result of this initiative, seventeen program chairs (41.5% of all programs) “substantially” engaged in the revision process by reviewing and/or revising program outcomes. Another eleven program chairs (26.8% of all programs) engaged in the process and either revised outcomes or, following this engagement, decided against making changes.

While this College-wide revision of student learning outcomes at the program level has helped to address four of the five weaknesses outlined in the Coordinator’s 2014 memo (5.1), the fifth, insufficient follow-up, is being addressed. The Coordinator suggested that the College consider altering the schedule of the assessment process by implementing a two-year cycle for the assessment of a program learning outcome in which the second year would assess specific changes made within the program to address obstacles to students’ achievement of the outcome identified in the first year. This would permit programs to more effectively close the loop in the assessment process by implementing changes and reflecting on their effectiveness.

The College is still working on a permanent solution to the weakness identified by the Coordinator. The Coordinator is a member of the faculty union and, per the faculty contract, cannot evaluate the quality of assessment reports or supervise chairs’ engagement or participation in the assessment processes, potentially weakening the value of the assessment process. The Coordinator recommended that the College consider assigning at least some of his current duties to an administrative office with the ability to more formally evaluate and supervise the assessment process on the program level. The College has decided to include this supervisory work into the job description of the new associate provost position (3.3) so someone in an administrative position would have the responsibility of reporting directly to the Provost without the issues raised by the faculty contract.

For 2016-17, the Library Director (a position outside of the faculty association) had the responsibility of working with program chairs on assessment of the SUNY GE Requirement of Information Literacy (5.2 – 5.7) and of reviewing [each program’s assessment report](#) (TC21). The Director will continue to serve in this capacity during 2017-18 as degree programs assess a second SUNY GE Requirement, Critical Thinking. The current Program Outcome Assessment Coordinator will continue to carry out the position’s duties as related to program-specific student learning outcomes.

The assessment of student learning outcomes is a dynamic process that requires a significant amount of reflection and informed action on both the program and institutional levels, and while the College continues to address weaknesses in its current assessment processes, its active engagement in identifying and addressing these weaknesses and implementing solutions illustrates its deep commitment not only to meaningful assessment but also to student success.

Program Review Process

The College engages in an ongoing process of program and curricular review. The first part of each [program review](#) (TC16) completed by the program chair, discusses curriculum and provides an overview of the program's mission and goals, the program's specific student learning outcomes, evidence-based rationales for these goals and outcomes, and any reflection on changes that have been made or may be needed in the future. The second part of the program review requires chairs to review the program's primary means of achieving its goals with reference to program coursework, structure, and design, including a curricular map. In the third portion of the program review, chairs reflect upon assessment of student learning, including assessment of student achievement of SUNY General Education outcomes, Tompkins Cortland General Education Outcomes not specifically overlapping with SUNY outcomes, and the programs' own specific student learning outcomes. In the case of each of these goals, the College requires that each program will identify how the curriculum supports the goal and how each is assessed within the program, including discussions of the goals themselves, the means of assessment, results of assessment, and changes or improvements resulting from assessment results (5.4).

This program review process is taken seriously by the College and programs make effective use of the opportunity. In a survey of completed program reviews, the College found that each program did articulate curricular goals and provide evidence-based rationales for these goal, including justifications such as industry and/or professional standards as well as requirements for success in both career and transfer institutions. In their narratives and supporting materials, chairs articulated the ways in which programs were designed in such a way as to support student success and their attainment of the programs' stated curricular goals, and they discussed their programs' assessment processes and how they informed and contributed to the program itself and to the promotion of student success.

Assessment of Student Preparation for Life, Career, and Further Education

The College also collects and uses data from a variety of sources to assess students' preparation for life, career, and further education. These sources include the Community College [Survey of Student Engagement](#) (CCSSE), the [SUNY Student Opinion Survey](#) (SOS), the annual Tompkins Cortland Community College [Graduate Profile](#), the [Voluntary Framework for Accountability](#) (VFA) outcome measures, the [Student Achievement Measure](#) (SAM), and SUNY Excels (5.8). The CCSSE and SOS are administered on campus and primarily reflect the student experience at the College, while the VFA, SAM, and SUNY Excels use student record data to assess various measures of success, including retention, completion of some form of degree or credential, employment, and transfer. Additionally, the College's annual Graduate Profile is based on a survey of recent graduates and provides a more detailed look at students at the College who graduate in any given year.

The CCSSE measures colleges' performance on five benchmark measures: Student-Faculty Interaction, Support for Learners, Active and Collaborative Learning, Student Effort, and Academic Challenge. According to the [2015 CCSSE](#), Tompkins Cortland compares favorably to both other SUNY community college students and a national cohort of community college students. On the benchmarks of Support for Learners, Active and Collaborative Learning, Student Effort, and Academic Challenge, the College's performance is within two percentage points in either direction of both SUNY and national cohorts. In Student-Faculty Interaction, the College outperforms the other cohorts by approximately seven percentage points, which is important because "the more contact students have with their teachers, the more likely they are to learn effectively and persist toward achievement of their educational goals... . This reflects a persistent important area of strength for the College".

Tompkins Cortland Community College participates in the SOS every three years. According to results from the 2016 SOS (2.5), the majority of students at Tompkins Cortland (65%) intend to transfer, while 21% intend to seek employment, and 15% indicated they were undecided or had other goals. When asked if the College had helped them attain their goals, 69% responded positively. These results are congruent with the CCSSE data and indicate that the College is actively engaged in helping students achieve their goals and that students benefit from these efforts.

The College's [Graduate Profile](#) includes a variety of demographic information as well as information about graduates' future plans. According to the results of the last several years, the majority (an average of 60%) intend to transfer while the other 40% intend to seek employment. Among graduates who earned an AAS or certificate in a career program, an average of 71% indicated that they had found employment related to their field of study.

According to SUNY Excels data (5.8), the College's three-year graduation rate from 2009 to 2014 averaged 22.5%, 2.4 percentage points higher than the national three-year graduate rate from public community colleges during the same period. The SAM data include a longer time frame and reports completion for part-time students. According to these data, between fall 2009 and 2015, 38% of the cohort had completed a degree or certificate at the College, and 32% had transferred

VFA data report the percentage of students who earned a credential from the College and whether or not they transferred after earning a degree, prior to earning a degree, are still enrolled at the College, or have left the College. These data are then compared to national data. VFA data show that Tompkins Cortland students outperformed the national cohort in terms of both transfer and completion, with lower percentages still enrolled.

Although it is difficult to directly infer whether or not the College has prepared students for meaningful lives, copious research supports the fact that college-educated people earn more money, have lower rates of unemployment, report higher levels of satisfaction with both their jobs as well as their health and lives, have a longer life-expectancy, and have children who are themselves more likely to attend college) than people without a college education. Given this, that the College consistently exceeds national comparison data in terms of both completion and transfer would seem to imply that this goal is being met along with those regarding successful careers and further education.

Tompkins Cortland is committed to using assessment results at both the program and institutional levels in order to improve overall educational effectiveness and student success by assisting students in improving their learning, improving pedagogy and curriculum, reviewing and revising academic programs and support services, planning, conducting, and supporting a range of professional development activities, planning and budgeting for the provision of academic programs and services, informing appropriate constituents about the College and its programs, improving key indicators of student success, and implementing other processes and procedures designed to improve educational programs and services.



Assisting Students in Improving Their Learning

The College regularly supports pilot programs anticipated to improve student learning. For example, members of the math faculty reported that nationally 60-70% of students test into pre-college math courses, and of those, 80% never finish those courses. Tompkins Cortland is no exception. These trends lead to lower retention, completion, and graduation rates and has left math faculty looking for ways to help more students succeed more quickly in their pre-college math courses. In response, the College has undertaken a significant redesign of the pre-college math courses drawing on the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching [Quantway Program](#) and involvement with a new SUNY sponsored Quantway initiative. The Quantway Program uses critical thinking exercises incorporating mathematical concepts. Based on national data from the last five years, colleges using Quantway have seen the success rate of students in passing their first pre-college math class as high as 68%.

A course developed specifically to assist students in understanding various aspects of the college experience and provide resources for student success is Academic Success-Continuing Students ([ACAD175](#)), each a one-credit, college-level course, which assists continuing students in developing personal strengths and identifying strategies for academic success. The College has also made use of its Learning Community model to enhance student learning. Learning Community classes allow students earn credit for two paired classes, each taught by a faculty member from a different discipline (for example, Active Literacy, RDNG 099, a non-college credit course, paired with Personal Psychology, PSYC101, a college credit course). These opportunities allow students to more directly apply the skills they are learning in their pre-college coursework to an academic area and while simultaneously earning college credit for the non-developmental class.

As noted above, [Open Educational Resources](#) (OER) are teaching and learning materials that may be used and reused, at low cost or without charge. In 2011, Tompkins Cortland was the first SUNY campus to use Open Educational Resources (OER) in selected psychology and math courses. Tompkins Cortland Community College is now a nationally recognized OER pioneer and is the [OER leader in SUNY](#). These efforts led to the College winning The Chair Academy's Exemplary Leadership Award. Tompkins Cortland's success and leadership has been instrumental in launching and supporting a statewide OER initiative within SUNY, which has now expanded to CUNY. Tompkins Cortland Community College offers nearly 100 OER sections per semester and is the only SUNY campus to date to offer a complete degree program using OER.

OER ensures that all students have access to course materials for free, reducing potential financial barriers to student success. According to the College Coordinator of Learning Services, the College has seen “moderate to significant improvements in Intermediate Algebra, CAPS [Computer Applications] courses, business courses, and Intro to Psychology since moving to OER ... [including] increases in percentages of students receiving a C or better, reductions in numbers of student receiving less than a C, and increases in retention rates when compared to terms prior to OER.” Some classes have shown as much as a two-point increase in the percentage of students earning passing grades since the implementation of OER.

Assessment and the Development and Improvement of Pedagogy, Curriculum, and Academic Programs

As described above, the College engages in a variety of activities designed to develop and support assessment of student achievement, from internal processes such as [program review](#) (TC16) and learning outcome assessment to participation in external measurements. The results of these assessments are routinely shared with a variety of stakeholders, including program advisory groups which represent employers, community members, and representatives from transfer institutions; the College's Board of Trustees; faculty, staff, and students through public postings, presentations, and College-wide meetings; national accrediting bodies such as the Accrediting Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) and the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP); and regulatory bodies such as SUNY, the NYSED, and the federal government.

Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement



The institution's planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.

Introduction

Tompkins Cortland Community College faces financial and resource challenges as do most institutions of higher education. The College works diligently to use the resources it has to fulfill its MVV and student success goal, through its programming, assessment, resource allocation, and decision-making processes. While it must face the reality of these challenges on a regular basis, the entire College community maintains its commitment to student success and continues to seek opportunities for growth and innovation. In this chapter, we will discuss the College's financial planning and budgeting process, its use of financial and other resources, its enrollment challenges and the impact of those challenges, the [Master Plan](#) (TC17) and its impact on institutional infrastructure and facilities, and the role that assessment plays in assisting the College in working within its economic and educational context.

College Objectives and Goals

The College keeps its MVV and student success goal at the center of all of its decisions and actions, from the institutional level to the departmental level to the level of the individual employee. (For a detailed discussion of the College's MVV, student success goal, and new Strategic Priorities and goals at the institutional level, please see [Standard I](#). For discussion of how these are incorporated into degree programs, student services, and departments throughout campus, see [Standards III](#), [IV](#), and [V](#).)

Fall Day and Midwinter Day

Twice a year the College cancels classes and closes its doors to provide a dedicated time for all faculty and staff to participate in a full day of planning and [professional development](#) (TC4). Depending on what issues are most pressing, the focus may be on assessment, strategic goals, new directions for the College, or dealing with current challenges. This provides a unique opportunity for interaction across professional lines, and a chance to provide feedback and new ideas or insights.

Financial Planning and the College Budget

The College's budgeting process begins with the institution's MVV, student success goal, and Strategic Priorities (1.3-1.10); department heads then make budget requests based on their role in fulfilling those fundamental priorities. Department heads are tasked with supporting their budget requests with evidence of the ways in which their department's goals and needs align with and support those priorities. One important aspect of the budgeting process (1.11) is an analysis of current staffing and how particular positions support the College's student success goal, either through direct support of students or through operations and institutional support. This is also benchmarked using Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems (IPEDS) (6.1) data on comparable colleges. The budget also includes a similar analysis of campus facilities and resources. Senior administrators review and modify the draft budget, and the President presents it to College employees at an open meeting to answer questions and provide transparency and open communication. The budget is then presented to the Board of Trustees for approval, and, once approved by the Board, is submitted to both Cortland and Tompkins counties.

Enrollment and Finance Trends

Tompkins Cortland Community College continues to face fiscal challenges with limited public support, increasing levels of accountability, and growing numbers of high-need students coupled with overall enrollment challenges. State FTE operating aid continues to be restored at a modest level after the 21% cut experienced from 2011-2012. The College's current operating aid rate of \$2,747 per FTE in 2017-2018 has finally surpassed the \$2,675 rate per FTE in 2007-08. It is unlikely that the College will see state support grow to the level of funding that it has experienced in past years – and larger portions of state funding dollars are likely to be tied to student success and completion rates.

[Core enrollment](#) (fall, spring, summer, and winter courses generally held on campus or online) has dropped from a high of 3,057 FTE's in 2011-2012 to 2,116 FTE's for 2016-17 – a 30% decline. Projected enrollment for 2017-18 in core enrollment is 1982 FTE's, a 6.3% decline from the prior year. The most significant decline from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017 in core enrollment was in new students (12%) which was higher than anticipated, however transfer students increased fall to fall offsetting the overall enrollment decline. The core enrollment continuing student population continued to decline fall to fall, however, at a rate that was closer to anticipated. Enrollment projections for 2018-19 show a continued decline in core enrollment while we are projecting a slight improvement for 2019-20 and 2020-21.

Due to Tompkins Cortland Community College's diverse enrollment populations, overall FTE enrollment for the same period (11-12 to 16-17) went from 4,000 FTE's to 3,479 FTE's – a 13% decline. This is due to the consistent growth in the Concurrent Enrollment program with area high schools and the International/Global Connections Programs with colleges and universities in other countries. Overall enrollment is projected to decline in 2017-18, and recover gradually through 2020-21 with a projected 3,588 FTE's for 2020-21. This is still about 412 FTE's or 10% less than the peak of 4,000 FTE's in 2011-12. Virtually all growth is due to concurrent enrollment and international program efforts.

There are numerous factors driving these enrollment trends: a weak economy which has a disproportionate effect on lower-income students; changes in financial aid eligibility standards; media hype about the value (or lack thereof) of higher education; changes in academic standards; and four-year colleges going deeper into applicant pools. Several years ago, the College conducted a [market research study](#) (TC18) to understand better how prospective students, current students, alums, and local business and community leaders perceive the College. These data have allowed staff to develop a deeper understanding of target markets enabling the College to target messages more effectively. It is believed that these efforts will enhance the College's ability to meet projected enrollment goals.

Looking at how the College is currently funded, 86% of revenue is directly tied to enrollment. In the College’s 2017-18 Operating Budget, 49.9% of revenue is from students; 25.7% is from state operating aid; and 10.1% is charges to other counties – all derived directly from FTE enrollment. 11.4% of the Operating Budget is cash support from sponsors, 1.0% from reserves and surplus and a modest 1.9% comes from other miscellaneous revenue sources. There are two basic approaches to growing and/or stabilizing revenue in the future: increase enrollment and seek other nonpublic sources of funding – both of which the College is actively pursuing.

Three-Year Enrollment & Fiscal Trend Data

Fiscal Year	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
FTE Students	3634	3693	3479
Students	\$18,283,345	\$19,244,816	\$18,970,297
State	10,046,807	10,160,283	10,457,656
Local	10,525,779	11,212,329	10,657,606
Total	\$38,855,931	\$40,617,428	\$40,085,559

Because enrollment is the primary factor in determining the majority of operating revenues for Tompkins Cortland, the operating budget has changed proportionate to enrollment over the past three years. The above chart depicts student, state, and local share for the last three years as defined by our NYS funding model.

Total state operating aid has grown 4% over the last three years; the state aid rate has also increased an average of 3.6% each year during the same time frame. The increase in state operating aid dollars is due to the growth in the College’s concurrent enrollment program, which has stabilized the otherwise declining enrollment and the small annual increases in state aid rate per FTE. State operating aid as a percent of total revenue has averaged 25.6% for the last three years. Ideally, state aid would be at least 33% of total operating revenues.

Local support includes the cash support of our two sponsoring counties, nonresident tuition, use of reserves and surplus, billings to other counties in New York state for residents attending Tompkins Cortland Community College and other revenues. As a percent of total operating revenues, local share has averaged 27% over the last three years.

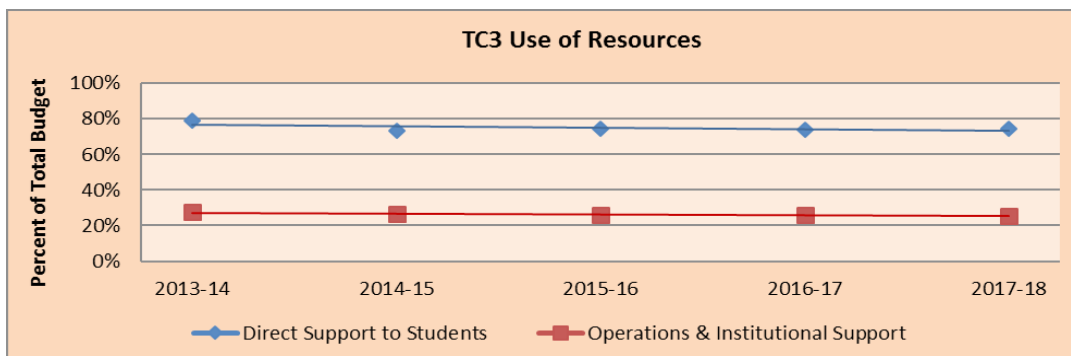
Total student revenue has grown 3.8% from 2014-15 to 2016-17, primarily due to modest increases in the tuition rate. As a percent of total operating revenues, student revenues have remained at 47%. The decrease in enrollment over the past three years, as well as marginal increases in funding from the state and sponsoring counties has contributed to the trend of student tuition revenue funding the greatest share of the College operating budget.

Three-Year History of Expenditures

Total spending for College operations has increased 4.7% over the last three years. Costs for personnel and benefits as a percent of total spending have decreased 3.7% while total contractual costs have increased by 3.6%. The most significant changes in contractual spending relate to contractual offsets (which are displayed discretely). Contractual offsets reflect instructional and student services expenditures in concurrent enrollment and global connections programs. Increases in other contractual spending is primarily related to facility rental costs and services agreements.

Expenditures by Object	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Personnel	\$ 20,318,557	\$ 20,130,118	\$ 20,057,764
Equipment	43,364	226,180	83,712
Contractual	4,784,703	5,043,727	4,966,295
Contractual Offsets	5,082,074	6,358,124	6,829,749
Benefits	8,557,627	8,360,022	8,653,017
	\$ 38,786,325	\$ 40,118,171	\$ 40,590,537
Expenditures by Function	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Instruction	\$ 19,703,916	\$ 20,732,187	\$ 21,223,907
Academic Support	3,100,102	3,122,834	3,139,552
Student Services	5,687,878	5,910,545	5,736,854
Public Service			
Maintenance & Operations	3,896,261	3,852,984	3,800,567
General Institutional Support	6,398,168	6,499,621	6,689,657
	\$ 38,786,325	\$ 40,118,171	\$ 40,590,537

It is important to note that with the minimal increase in state funding over the past three years, approximately 15% in operational spending cuts were made across all College departments. This has resulted in the College having to be more strategic in its decision making and take a hard look at how things can be done differently or more efficiently in such a way that it would have the least impact on student success and learning. Still, with all of the challenges in funding, Tompkins Cortland Community College continues to consistently invest well over 70% of its resources in direct support to students.



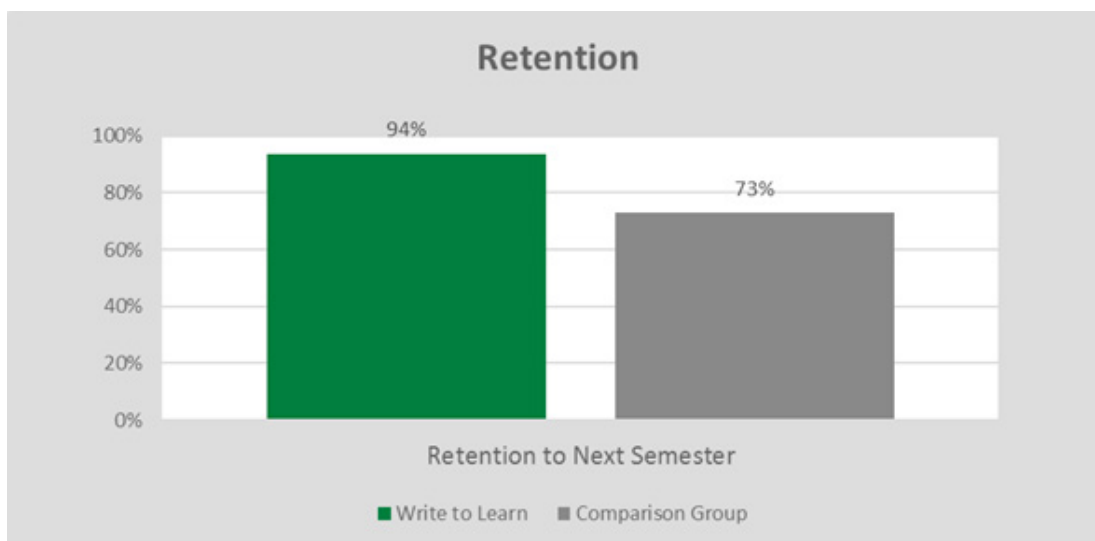
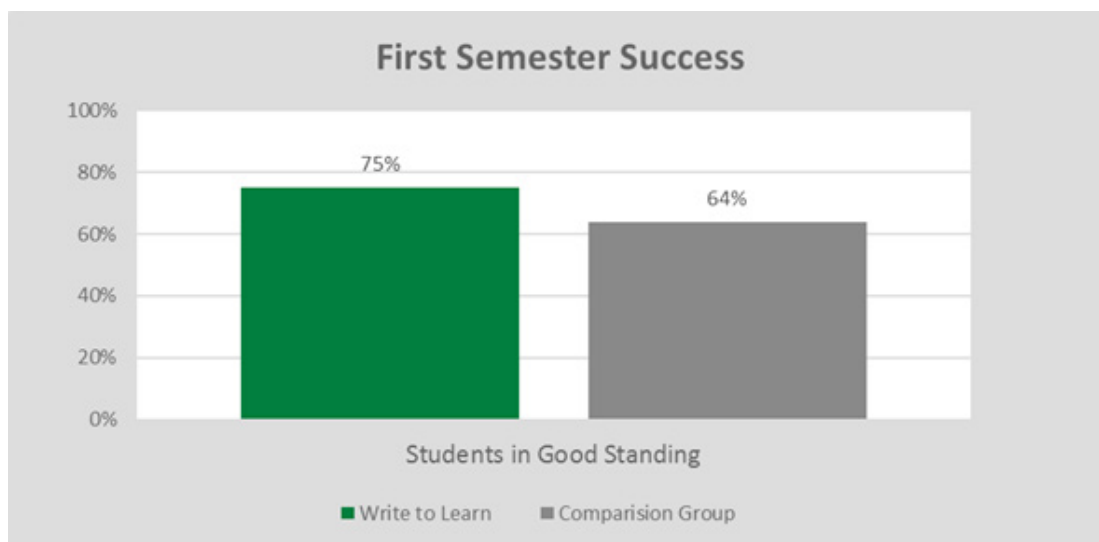
Strategic Priorities

As mentioned previously, the College is predicting a continued decline in core enrollment through 2018-19, with a small recovery and stabilization expected in 2019-20 and 2020-21. Continued growth is also expected in our concurrent enrollment and international programs at a modest level. The expectation of enrollment stability by 2019-20 is due to a variety of student success and retention initiatives at the College. In addition to the College's overall continuing goal of Student Success four new Strategic Priorities (1.3-1.10) were adopted in fall 2015:

The first semester matters: enhanced transition and first semester success

This has been the theme of many recent college-wide discussions, all of which, coupled with extensive research, have pointed to the need for increased understanding of the barriers students face. Framing the conversation as “students should . . .” is not sufficient. How can the transition and first semester experience be redesigned to increase the success of more of students?

One of the initiatives targeted for first semester success is the Writing to Learn program. Several faculty members go through intensive training in Writing to Learn pedagogy at Bard College, and then employ those methods in their classroom teaching. So far, the program shows promise:



Ongoing support for all students, especially high-risk groups

While support for the transition to successful student and academic citizen during the first semester is important, the research is also clear that the need for support and guidance does not end there. The College must design and integrate policies, programs, and practices that provide ongoing support and development to students, particularly those who bring or find significant barriers to success.

Marketing

There is a need to approach the concept of marketing holistically, understanding that it is inclusive of curriculum, academic rigor, support services, campus life, and outcomes. It is not just advertising. What are the key strategies that will strengthen the Tompkins Cortland Community College experience in ways that will resonate with current and prospective students?

Enhanced evidence-based decision making

Historically, the [President's Annual Report](#) has included a summary of current initiatives and also demonstrated how evidence has been used in a wide range of ways to advance the College's mission and inform all aspects of programming. How can creation, sharing, and use of meaningful information be strengthened to provide guidance to decisions related to planning and resource allocation?

These strategic initiatives are well under way and it is they hope that they will be positively impacting enrollment and retention as well as providing the kind of data and accountability needed to satisfy various constituencies.

Below is a list of specific initiatives that illustrate activities expected to enhance enrollment and revenue:

- Organizational Realignment – The new alignment (6.2) of administrative positions and responsibilities affirms a focus on enrollment management, as supported by enhancements in the quality of students' experience.
- Enrollment Services – Expansion of the instant admission process, including financial aid, and commitment to continuing the expansion of Saturday and evening registration options.
- Retention Initiatives – A number of recent innovations – including the development of ENGL 098/100 and the Quantway project in developmental mathematics – have produced positive early results and are being scaled up to include greater numbers of students. In addition, the College's potential participation in SUNY's guided pathways (6.3) project would enhance work with first-time, full-time students.
- International Students – the Global/International Office has been actively recruiting students for fall/spring enrollment, with specific attention to students from Asia. There has been a significant increase in applications from international students for Spring 2018.

[Articulation Agreements](#) – Agreements have been reached on articulation and/or dual admission with Wells College, LeMoyne College, SUNY Cortland, and [SUNY Buffalo](#) that should make Tompkins Cortland an especially attractive starting point for those who wish to pursue a baccalaureate at one of these partner institutions.

Academic Offerings – Exploration of the potential for offering a small evening or off-cycle Nursing program has begun, and the College is in the early stages of developing a degree program in cybersecurity.

Online Offerings – Several members of the faculty and administration have participated in an Institutional Readiness process designed both to improve all dimensions of the College’s online offerings and to secure the endorsement of Open SUNY as a provider of online courses and programs.

Open Educational Resources – In little more than five years, the College has moved from engaging in an experiment in the use of [Open Educational Resources](#) to being acknowledged as the [leader in the SUNY system](#). As the College achieves critical mass in the use of [OER](#), faculty will be able to use that expertise as a means of recruiting and retaining students.

Extension Centers – The College will soon be engaged in a marketing research project designed to determine demand for certain academic programming and alternative means of providing it at the Cortland Extension Center.

Residence Life – To support the quality of the student experience to which the College aspires, the [Foundation](#) will be making investments in needed repairs and facilities upgrades.

Web Site – The College’s website is under revision this year and the new site will be ready for implementation in May 2018.

Tompkins Cortland Community College has also embarked on a new strategic approach to increase revenue from nonpublic sources. The Board of Trustees and Foundation Board have adopted new fundraising priorities, several of which are already funded and/or in progress. Included in these fundraising priorities are initiatives related to: first semester student success, diversity staffing (2.4), [child care](#) and collaborative student projects involving new technology. Thus far, the College has had success in funding all or a portion of the four initiatives with private dollars. Fundraising activities will continue in the areas of first year student success and childcare with the hope of establishing endowments to support the programs well into the future.



Financial Forecast

Revenues

The following are enrollment and revenue projections for 2017-18 and the forecast for the subsequent three years. Key assumptions are listed first and then calculated revenue. At this time, forecasted revenue is fairly conservative. Enrollment is projected conservatively with many initiatives underway that have the potential to yield increases. State aid increases are based on what we have historically received from the legislature (between \$50 and \$100 per FTE). Tuition rates are being held to the current 2017-18 levels, and county sponsor support is not assumed to increase.

Revenues Proportions	Projected	Forecast		
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Student Share	47.2%	47.0%	47.0%	46.4%
State Share	25.8%	26.3%	26.5%	26.7%
Local Share* * includes nonresident tuition & Other Revenues	27.0%	26.7%	26.5%	26.9%

The proportions of revenue derived from student, state, local and other sources of revenue are displayed below. As indicated by the chart below, student share of revenues will average 47%, state share 26.3% and local share 26.7%.

Revenue Assumptions	Projected	Forecast		
	2017-18	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
FTE'S	3,475	3494	3538	3588
Tuition Rates				
Full-time	4,590	4,950	4950	4950
Part-time	181	181	181	181
Chargeback Rate	2,830	2,890	2870	2840
State Aid Rate	2,747	2,822	2897	2972

Expenses

The following are spending projections for 2017-18 and the forecast for the subsequent three years.

Projected Expenses	Projected	Forecast		
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Personnel Services	\$19,378,095	\$19,359,692	\$19,359,692	\$19,359,692
Equipment	\$61,714	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
Contractual Services	\$5,364,218	\$5,391,734	\$5,450,674	\$5,510,958
Contractual Offsets	\$7,378,509	\$7,514,294	\$7,653,604	\$7,795,082
Employee Benefits	\$8,681,011	\$8,413,471	\$8,685,954	\$8,813,819
Total	\$40,863,547	\$40,879,191	\$41,249,924	\$41,679,542

Currently, there is no projected change in personnel services from 2018-19 to 2019-20 and 2020-21 as all bargaining unit contracts currently end August 31, 2019 and are scheduled to be negotiated in Spring 2019. In addition, the College is currently in negotiations with our newly recognized adjunct association. The first contract is expected to be in place before the end of the Spring 2018 semester. Significant equipment funding in 2016-17 and 2017-18 has been provided by the College Foundation. However, going forward, it is anticipated that the Foundation will need to invest available unrestricted funds in student success and retention initiatives other than equipment.

The table below shows the proportions of expense by natural categories. Also shown are cost per FTE and projected surplus or deficit. There is a current deficit showing for 2017-18 of \$260,388, which incorporates the Fall 2017 semester enrollment results and a number of spending reductions put in place for 2017-18. Cost per FTE is calculated based on anticipated spending. In order to address anticipated budget deficits going forward, the College has eliminated a number of positions for the 2018-19 academic year and is holding contractual spending to 2016-17 levels wherever possible. Further reductions in spending are being considered and the College is currently working with each of our bargaining units in order to achieve necessary savings to balance the 2018-19 budget.

Expense Proportions	Projected	Forecast		
		2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Personnel Services	47.4%	47.3%	46.8%	46.4%
Equipment	.1%	.5%	.5%	.5%
Contractual Services	13.1%	13.2%	13.2%	13.2%
Contractual Offsets	18.1%	18.4%	18.5%	18.7%
Employee Benefits	21.3%	20.6%	21.0%	21.2%
Cost Per FTE	\$11,758	\$11,700	\$11,659	\$11,618
Projected Surplus (Deficit)	(\$260,388)	(\$586,960)	(\$601,785)	\$191,717

There are many challenges that the College faces with declining enrollment, the need to continue improving student success and retention, and declining public support. Many of our recent successful student success initiatives (such as [Pathways](#), [Network Peer Mentors](#), and [Vector Scholars](#)) have been made possible by private dollars.

The budget forecasts depicted above represent significant cuts in spending and fairly conservative revenue projections. There are many factors that will ultimately determine how we achieve a balanced budget scenario. For example, SUNY is recommending a change in the community college state funding formula. If approved, this would provide approximately \$200,000 in additional state aid (beyond our current budget estimate) for 2018-19.

Another change in funding policy that has impacted community colleges is the methodology for calculating out of the county chargeback rate. The 2018-19 is the expected to be the first year of the new methodology – this negatively impacts our rate calculation by about \$220 per FTE which amounts to over \$300,000 in lost revenue. However, this change in methodology has been delayed for several years and could potentially be delayed again.

Continued spending curtailment and realignment of staffing to create more efficient and effective delivery of services to students will also be critical to our efforts. As salaries and benefits amount to almost 70% of our spending budget, much also depends on the outcome of contractual negotiations with the College's four bargaining units.

Although not anticipated, additional local support would make a big difference in the College's financial projections. However, our local county sponsors are also experiencing a high degree of fiscal stress not unlike our own. It seems that the most likely path to sustainability is in growing enrollment and continuing to seek other sources of revenue such as private funding and grant funding.

Independent Auditing

The College budget, revenues, and expenses are audited annually by a qualified, independent auditing agency. The audit process provides testing and review for internal controls, testing processes for Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), and working with employees to ensure that management is making proper decisions in use of College funds. The auditors are provided with access to all institutional policies and procedures. After the completion of the audit, the firm shares its findings with the Board of Trustees. This report is then shared at a Board meeting, which is open to the public.

While the audit may have a positive outcome, represented in an unmodified opinion, the firm may offer suggested improvements. For example, in the 2014-15 fiscal year, the auditors stated, "the College's audit report received an unmodified/clean opinion. Audit findings related to prior period adjustments and Title IV funds were discussed and auditor recommendations on the development of policies and procedures have been accepted and responded to appropriately." The recommendation shared in this report was addressed by the Director of Budget and Finance and the Dean of Operations and Enrollment Management. While this is just one example, the College regularly engages in addressing such recommendations in order to maintain fiscal responsibility and effectiveness.

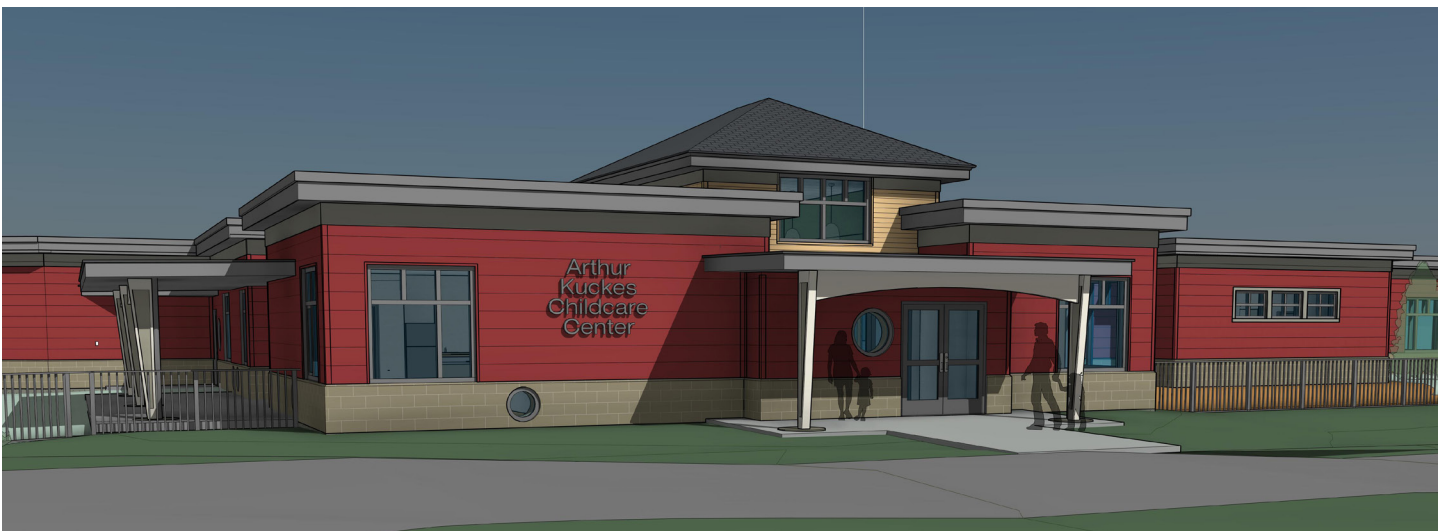
College Master Plan

Despite the financial challenges described above, Tompkins Cortland Community College continues to maintain and improve its facilities through its Campus Master Plan created by the Master Plan Group. The Master Plan Group includes the College Deans, the Associate Dean of Institutional Research, and the Director of Student Activities and is responsible for comprehensive planning for facilities and infrastructure. The Deans are responsible for bringing their departmental needs to the group, and the group uses surveys, subcommittees, and other groups to gather information about campus needs. For example, the classroom committee regularly surveys faculty regarding their classroom needs.

The most recent Campus Master Plan was completed in 2011 and addresses instructional and student support space needs, building maintenance, site work, and technological infrastructure. In 2015, the College completed construction of a 10-acre [solar array](#), which produces approximately 90% of the power used by the Dryden main campus facility. [Coltivare](#), the College's culinary center in downtown Ithaca, and the [farm](#) in Dryden have also been completed and serve degree programs in Culinary Arts, Sustainable Farming and Food Systems, Wine Marketing, and Hotel and Restaurant Management. The College has [begun the process](#) of constructing a new stand-alone childcare facility (6.4) on campus that will support infant care and expand [current childcare services](#) to include toddlers and pre-school aged children.

In addition to directly benefiting students who are parents of younger children, the facility will also serve as a learning lab for students in a variety of degree programs, including Early Childhood Education. Beyond the completion of the childcare center, the current plan has been temporarily put on hold while the College addresses other needs, such as an emergency roof replacement. The College expects to begin the planning process for the next Master Plan during the 2017-18 fiscal year.

The College's Technology Advisory Group (TAG) is responsible for the [Strategic Plan for Technology](#). (TC19) TAG is chaired by the Chief Information Officer and includes representatives from the faculty, the library, the administration, and other areas of the College. In addition to its planning duties, TAG also advises the Campus Technology Department in its day-to-day operations and long-range planning, including the planning and implementation of its budget and ongoing initiatives such as equipment replacement cycles. TAG is also charged with working with faculty to explore practice, theory, and use of technology in education.





Institutional Assessment and the Use of Assessment Data

The College has a robust, pervasive, and long-standing administrative assessment process. All administrative departments are required to develop outcomes and assessment plans as part of the annual department planning process. These outcomes are tied to the College's Strategic Priorities and are reviewed and approved by the Executive Council. On an operational level, the Guidelines for Department Plans (1.11) is used by academic and non-academic departments to ensure that department activities support the college-wide goals and Strategic Priorities (1.3-1.10). When academic and administrative program chairs prepare budget request narratives, they link requests to the College's continuing goal of student success and our Strategic Priorities.

Both administrative and academic departments use the conclusions drawn from their assessment results to modify and develop strategies, create programs, and improve practices and policies. The assessment results are also used to develop and modify strategies. For example, the library, as part of their routine assessment practices, determined that the circulation of new books selected by librarians was low. As a result, the library incorporated a purchase-on-demand model, which helped guide the selection process, significantly improving future selection and circulation of materials.

In addition to the routinized assessment processes, the Institutional Research office has tracked (6.5) all ad-hoc requests for data for the last ten years, and sends a follow up survey after each request has been completed, to ascertain how the information provided was used. If it was used as part of an assessment, what programmatic changes were made based on the data? Through this tracking mechanism we can pinpoint the "closing of the loop" in College assessment practices and ensure that improvements in both the academic and administrative arenas are made based on solid evidence. As just one example, the Tutoring Center sought grades (6.6) for students in remedial and entry-level math courses who used or did not use the Tutoring Center's service, to look at the impact of tutoring on student success. The tutors then used that information to work with the math department to ensure alignment between tutoring services and course content, as well as to affirm the impact of tutoring to students and tutors.

In a similar vein, the chair of the Graphic Design and New Media programs requested transfer information on recent graduates of those programs. He was able to use those data to evaluate the program outcomes and make sure they aligned with the programs at the colleges to which the graduates were transferring. This is just a snapshot of a few assessment initiatives to underscore the primacy of assessment-aligned decision making across the campus.

Evaluation of the College's Assessment Processes

To ensure oversight of planning and assessment as well as to support assessment across the institution (1.1), the College created the College Planning and Assessment Council (CPAC) in 2006. CPAC was responsible for developing institution-wide objectives, planning, and assessment, working in concert with cross-functional teams (inter-departmental committees) and other entities (academic and non-academic) at the college. In 2011 it became clear that CPAC's charge was too broad for it to be effective, and it was replaced by the Institutional Effectiveness Council (IEC), as a more focused assessment body, building on the work of CPAC. IEC's charge is "to provide coherence and general direction to our collective and individual efforts that contribute to both overall institutional effectiveness and the assessment of those efforts" by taking a macro-level approach to assessment at the College, surveying what is currently being done in assessment across all levels and departments, and then making specific recommendations for improvement in assessment processes across the College. The IEC is comprised of three assessment committees: Academic (academic programs, general education, and advising), Capacity Builders (resource development, human resource development, culture, and organizational alignment), and Co-Curricular (student life and transition programming). Over the course of the 2011-12 and 2012-13 academic years, these committees formed working groups and evaluated the College's assessment and quality-improvement processes, analyzed that information, and formalized recommendations (6.7). The IEC "oversees the assessment efforts of the three committees, and based upon their findings, makes recommendations to the Executive Council or other appropriate bodies for action. By keeping an eye on the entire assessment cycle and ensuring assessment evidence is acted upon, the IEC is charged with "closing the loop," and making data driven institutional improvements."

The [IEC's report](#) (TC20) describes the thorough and robust processes used by various departments throughout the College to assess effectiveness and improve quality. These include academic program assessment (for both internal and external purposes), annual reports completed by faculty and reviewed by the Provost, periodic evaluations of faculty by both the Provost or his designee and by students, non-academic department plans, and surveys of the campus community.

A common theme in all of these methods of evaluation is ongoing quality improvement. Department plans all include the department's mission, how it works to fulfill that mission, its indicators of success, its metrics for measuring those indicators and/or other measures of success, its progress on the recommendations and resulting changes from the previous year's plan, and any new recommendations for changes or new initiatives for the coming year.

To support these assessment processes, the Institutional Research Department conducts (internal) and facilitates (external) surveys of the College community. The department then makes the results of these surveys available, along with analysis of what the information means and how it can be used for improvements at the College. In the appendices to the IEC report, the committees provided detailed descriptions of the data sources used as well as the analysis and supporting evidence on which they based their final conclusions and recommendations.

The IEC submitted its report and recommendations to the College's Executive Council, the Board of Trustees, and, ultimately, the entire College community. Each recommendation was assigned to a member of the Executive Council for follow-up and an implementation timeline was created. The Executive Council then reported back to the IEC on strategies and actions taken in response to each recommendation. The Provost and the Executive Council have committed to keeping the IEC and the College community updated on these initiatives (6.8) as they are evaluated and modified as necessary in the future. The Executive Council provided updates on the progress of the initiatives. The IEC is scheduled to reconvene and review those recommendations and the assessment processes at the College in 2018.

Assessment and the Development and Improvement of Support Services

College support services are also routinely assessed and revised. (In addition to the examples and discussions below, use of assessment data for the development and improvement of the College's support services is discussed in the chapters on [Standards III](#) and [IV](#).) For example, Enrollment Services, which includes the offices of Admissions, Financial Aid, Registration and Billing, Student Success and Advisement, and Academic Records, uses data from the prior year to plan for each upcoming enrollment cycle. Using the process described above, the Enrollment Services department plan outlines examples of this for Financial Aid, Admissions, and Registration and Billing under the section "Use of Assessment Results." As a group, the staff routinely engage in debriefings after major events and enrollment cycles (such as Registration Day) to get feedback for future planning. Enrollment Services holds bi-weekly all-staff meetings to discuss upcoming events and to get feedback about how things are going in all areas of the department. The department periodically invites guests to the meetings to discuss challenging issues or to provide training in specific student services.

Every other week, the Associate Dean for Enrollment Management chairs a meeting of the leadership team in Enrollment Services. During these bi-weekly meetings, they address operational issues in the Center, and plan for upcoming cycles, and discuss student specific issues and challenges as well as bigger picture strategic thinking to constantly improve the services they provide and effectively communicate with students. The Associate Dean for Enrollment Management also chairs a meeting of the Enrollment Management Group bi-weekly. This group is a broader College-wide group that includes all of the functions in Enrollment Services as well as: CollegeNow, Global, Institutional Research, Dean of Student Life, External Relations, Athletics, and Campus Housing. They use a standard agenda every meeting to create a consistent communication protocol for every area. This keeps them on task, while allowing for follow-up with issues identified during the reporting

Health Services assesses its operations with benchmarks using both internal and external data, including the Health Services electronic medical record/patient scheduling system, Student Opinion Survey, data from the Student Success Office, the National College Health Assessment, and the American College Health Association/Healthy Campus 2020 guidelines. Tracking progress of interventions geared toward reaching the established benchmarks is achieved through continued internal data collection and use of the NCHA survey national data at periodic intervals. Health Services follows the College's lead by providing evidence-based accessible and confidential health care services, education, as well as community-based programming focused on prevention and promoting healthy behaviors that contribute to student success.

Tutoring Services [conducts a survey](#) (TC12) every semester of all students who have used tutoring services during the semester. Through the survey, students have the opportunity to explain what they liked or didn't like about individual professional and para-professional tutors as well as the offerings in general, the hours, physical space, noise level, etc. Tutoring staff then use this information to make changes to the services they provide to students.

The Library analyses usage data of its information resources to help guide purchasing decisions. Library staff routinely consult faculty to determine the sufficiency of library materials, down to the assignment level. Quick delivery purchase-on-demand and interlibrary loan services are available to ensure students and faculty have access to the materials they need. Librarians are also assigned subject areas to maintain, keeping the collection relevant and in line with the curriculum.

All Student Life functions, including residence life, counseling, daycare, student activities and multicultural services, participate in the College-wide department plan process. These areas demonstrate each year how their services support the College mission and provide data in relation to this. Any service not found to effectively support the mission is reviewed and changed accordingly. In addition, as a outcome of the IEC recommendations each area undergoes an in-depth [departmental review](#) (TC22) on a five-year rotating basis.

In summary, planning and budgeting of academic programs and student support services at the College is intimately tied to the use of assessment data. With student success the overriding goal, the College's 2017-18 Guidelines for Department Plans (1.11) for department heads and budget managers specifies that the resource allocation be guided by the College's Strategic Priorities (1.3-1.10). In addition to identifying how requested resources will support their department plans, budget managers must also describe their department's mission and how it directly supports student learning, how their department supports the Strategic Priorities, and any previous departmental successes supported by evidence. This evidence must be based on the assessment of department initiatives and/or success indicators and may include data from individualized surveys conducted by departments, the [Student Opinion Survey](#), the [Community College Survey of Student Engagement](#), and the College Faculty and Staff Survey (Ex. 4). Additionally, each department must identify all initiatives for the next fiscal year and describe how they support upcoming trends or research in the budget manager's discipline as well as the College's Strategic Priorities.

Deb Mohlenhoff, center, Director of Student Activities and the student center, was honored by Feeding America's 2017 Member of the Year, the Food Bank of the Southern Tier, as one of the organization's 10 Mobile Food Pantry Champions.

Deb was instrumental in setting up the Mobile Food Pantry on the Tompkins Cortland campus that supports our students and community and directly addresses local and campus issues with food insecurity.



Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration



The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with governmental, corporate, religious, education system, or other unaccredited organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.

Introduction

Tompkins Cortland Community College has a clearly articulated and transparent governance structure consisting of groups with overlapping but clearly delineated areas of responsibility. This structure allows staff to play multiple roles in influencing the governance of the College. The institutional leadership and administrative structure consists of a ten-member Board of Trustees, a Chief Executive Officer in the form of the College President, and two vice presidents (one of whom additionally serves as the Provost). The leadership additionally consists of the President's Executive Council and the Provost Council. The College also incorporates a system of shared governance, which includes the [Forum](#), the Curriculum Committee (Ex. 3), and the [Student Government Association](#). In this chapter, we will discuss the leadership and administration of the College and the avenues available to faculty, staff, and students within the institution's system of shared governance.

Leadership and Administration

Board of Trustees

The [Board of Trustees](#) is responsible for establishing governing policy for the College. The Board follows [by-laws](#) defining policies relative to its activities and function, including but not limited to, its authority, composition, quorums, rules of order, officers, and committees. The Board concentrates on establishing policies governing the College and delegates responsibility for the administration and execution of those policies to the College President. The Board is a member of the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) and the New York Community College Trustees organization (NYCCT) and receives newsletters from both groups, which provide critical updates and information. Several Board members attend the NYCCT annual conference and regional meetings, and one of the long-standing members acted as President of NYCCT for a two-year term from April 2014 to April 2016. These gatherings provide opportunities for learning about Board practices and benchmarking.

The Tompkins Cortland Community College Board comprises 10 voting members, nine appointed by government entities and one elected by the student body. The College can influence the selection of Board members, but the New York state Governor and the College's sponsoring county legislatures ultimately control appointments. The Governor appoints four of the trustees (two residents from each of the College's sponsoring counties), the Cortland County Legislature appoints two trustees, and the Tompkins County Legislature appoints three trustees. The appointments are made with an effort to consider diverse Board representation, especially with regard to gender and race/ethnicity. The student trustee is elected by the study body pursuant to New York state education law and regulations. The election process requires that interested students submit an application and go through an interview process before the top two or three students go through an election by the student body. This has produced very engaged and invested student trustees.

To ensure that they are well informed about the College, the work of the Board, and the responsibilities of Board members, new members meet with the College President, Vice President/Provost and the Chairperson of the Board. New members also receive a [resource packet of orientation materials](#) (TC23) and attend the NYCCT Institute for New Community College Trustees. In order to ensure strict impartiality on the part of trustees in their decision-making, the Board has clearly delineated policies based on legislation and regulations that address conflicts of interest and related matters. (For a more detailed discussion of these policies, please see Standard II.)

The Board meets on the third Thursday of each month with the exceptions of August and November and the December meeting, which takes place on the first Thursday. The Board has an annual retreat in the early fall and has recently added an additional retreat in the spring. Retreat agenda items typically include discussions and review of the [President's annual evaluation, Board self-assessment](#), (TC23) and discussion of dialogue topics for the upcoming year. The last several retreats also provided opportunities for the Board to work with a facilitator in preparation for the previous President's retirement.

The Board of Trustees serves the College in an academic, financial, and planning and assessment capacity. The Board assumes an important advisory role in academic matters, but it delegates considerable responsibility to the President and to the Vice President/Provost of the College, who present academic related updates at each Board meeting. The College President provides a comprehensive [written report to the Board each month](#), and the Vice President/Provost's presentations highlight items included on the agenda along with updates on major initiatives dealing with relevant academic issues including faculty hiring, new academic initiatives, general education outcomes, and international and diversity initiatives. The Board also considers specific program needs and trends raised by the President and/or Vice President/Provost. According to the current chair of the Board, Board members have a high level of confidence in these College officials. The Board provides an academic oversight role with regard to the addition or discontinuation of degree programs. The Board also actively participates in discussions concerning faculty position needs and qualifications and formally approves administrative, faculty, and staff hires.

The Board is extensively involved in financial management of the College. The Board Treasurer reviews major expenditures, and the Board reviews the Treasurer's report at its monthly meetings. The Board conducts a budget hearing the month before approval of the College budget, at which time the Board asks for any necessary clarification or explanation and suggests changes. The Board also participates in a joint meeting of the two sponsoring county legislatures for presentation of the proposed budget and is very involved in resource development, with one trustee serving as a liaison to the [Tompkins Cortland Community College Foundation](#) Board. Board members relay information about the College and its needs to county legislators through their community affiliations, and some members are involved in the annual lobbying day or write letters to the Governor and/or legislature as needs arise. Trustees also make significant personal contributions to the College's annual campaigns, capital campaigns, and planned giving programs.

Finally, the Board plays a vital role in the College's goal-setting and planning process. In 2015-16, the Board dedicated four dialogue sessions to the four new Strategic Priorities, and it conducts an annual assessment of the College President. Administrative leaders and academic program chairs provide status reports to the Board as requested, and currently, presentations focusing on the College's student success goal are made to the Board monthly.

The Board conducts an annual self-assessment that involves each trustee responding to a series of questions. This survey is conducted and tabulated using an online survey tool, and the Board reviews the results at the annual fall retreat. These annual assessments and reviews have led to changes in meeting times and the addition of regular dialogue sessions to Board meeting agendas.



Chief Executive Officer

Tompkins Cortland Community College's Chief Executive Officer is the President, who is appointed by, evaluated by, and reports to the Board of Trustees in its capacity as the College's governing body. The President does not chair and is not a member of the Board. Both the previous and current President holds the appropriate credentials (7.1) and professional experience to execute the duties of the College President in a manner consistent with the mission of the College. In addition, the President is guaranteed the authority and autonomy required to fulfill the responsibilities of the position, as detailed in the [Board of Trustees Policy Manual](#) and [by-laws](#), including developing and implementing institutional plans, staffing the organization, identifying and allocating resources, and directing the institution toward attaining the goals and objectives set forth in its mission. Additionally, it is the President's duty to establish procedures for assessing the College's efficiency and effectiveness. These procedures include, but are not limited to, the [President's Annual Report to the Board of Trustees](#), the Faculty and Staff Survey (Ex. 4), and the Executive Council's review of the [annual Departmental Plans](#) (TC24).

At the July 21, 2016, Board of Trustees meeting, President Carl Haynes announced his intention to retire in August 2017. After some discussion, the Board determined that it would be in the best interests of the College to engage the services of a professional executive search firm to assist with the of hiring a new president. The College developed a request for proposals and distributed it to qualified firms. After reviewing the proposals, the College provided the Board with a list of qualified search firms, and the Board selected and interviewed three finalists. The Board chose the firm Diversified Search, and after an extensive process involving the entire campus community, the College hired [Dr. Orinthia Montague](#) as the fourth president in the history of Tompkins Cortland Community College.

Administrative Structure

Tompkins Cortland maintains a decentralized administrative structure that facilitates a fluid mission-centered decision-making process. In 2008, the College reorganized the executive structure, transitioning from the structure of a president and three deans to one of a president, two vice presidents (one of whom is also Provost), and six deans [for more discussion of this reorganization, please see the College's [2013 Periodic Review Report](#) (TC25)]. The purpose of this initiative was to broaden leadership and cooperative partnership in the achievement of the student success goal.

Since the writing of the 2013 Periodic Review Report, the College has undergone additional organizational changes. The institution moved to a structure of one president, one Provost and vice president, five deans, and one dean-level position titled Chief Information Officer (CIO). In addition, with the retirement of the Vice President for Global Initiatives, the College restructured the Global Office and created the position of Senior Global Officer, which reports to the Provost/Vice President but does not occupy a seat on either the Executive Council or Provost Council. The College also added a position to the Student Success Office, which has been integrated into the Enrollment Services Center in order to create a more centralized service for students. In 2016, the College added the role of Chief Diversity Officer to the existing Director of Diversity Education and Support Services position. Due to the dual roles of this position, it reports to both the Provost/Vice President (in the role of Chief Diversity Officer) and the Dean of Student Life (in the role of Director of Diversity Education and Support Services).

The Executive Council meets every two weeks for two hours and is chaired by the President of the College. Its membership consists of the Assistants to the President and Provost, the Provost/Vice President, and the executive staff. The Council's focus is primarily on external issues, though it may deliberate on any issue brought before it. A key responsibility of the Council is finalizing the proposed College budget prior to its presentation to the Board of Trustees and the sponsoring counties.

Note that under the direction of the new president, the leadership structure described above is currently in transition. A new Vice President for Student Services position has been created to help further the increased emphasis on the student experience at the College. Other positions are being reworked from two to one title (Associate Dean of Institutional Research and Dean of Academic Affairs will be combined as Associate Provost), while others may ultimately be eliminated to meet changing demands and budget needs.

The College's Human Resources Department has a written protocol manual that is used by each screening committee (2.6) as part of the executive and administrative staff hiring process. The manual contains procedures, guidelines for committee members, interviewing and selection guidelines, and tools such as an Affirmative Action Flowchart, Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Expectation Guidelines, Lawful and Unlawful Questions, and a Non-Continuation Chart. A representative from the Diversity and Equity Action Council (DEAC) now serves on every search committee to ensure that diversity is a priority factor in the hiring process. College staff that are aligned with or in an area of impact are considered for search committee membership. The Director of Human Resources and the Vice President/Provost meet with each search committee prior to the interview process. The process provides opportunities for candidates to meet others in the College community, such as open breakfast meetings. Student leadership is also provided with opportunities to meet with candidates. The search committee determines the skills of the candidates by qualifying/quantifying minimum criteria, followed by preferred qualifications and then rating factors and other metrics. Whenever the College has a staffing vacancy or anticipates a vacancy, the department in question reevaluates the needs of the department and the position. (For additional discussion of the hiring process, please see [Standard II](#).)

Shared Governance

Tompkins Cortland Community College provides faculty, staff, and students with several opportunities to engage in the shared governance of the College, including the College Forum, the Curriculum Committee, and the Student Government Association.

The College Forum

The [College Forum](#) has the broadest scope of the entities making up the College's shared governance. Its membership is college-wide, and its meetings are announced to and open to all members of the College community. The Forum's purposes are to provide a structure for recommending and influencing institutional policy (most specifically those operational decisions that have significant impact on the College's MVV and student success goal), to provide an opportunity for discussion of issues of broad institutional concern, and to provide input on such issues to decision-makers. In addition, it serves the important function of disseminating information about the above to the College community, ensuring that the community as a whole is aware of new and developing College policy.

The [Forum's by-laws](#) specify the elected membership as follows: three members from the teaching faculty, three from the classified staff, three from the non-teaching faculty and administrative staff, two from the Faculty Student Association, and seven members who are elected at large. The by-laws also include provisions for two adjunct/contract employee members and up to three student members. In recent practice, members volunteer instead of being elected, and a number of participants have repeated as members. In addition it has been particularly difficult to get students involved. In the last four years, all of the seats have been filled except those reserved for students and adjuncts.

The Forum conducts bi-weekly meetings and distributes agendas and meeting minutes to all faculty and staff via email. Recent issues considered by the Forum include the college-wide smoking policy, a discussion of initiatives for reducing budget expenditures at the College, discussions of upcoming College events such as Fall Day and Midwinter Day, and the current Middle States accreditation process. Recent practice is that issues discussed by the group are generally identified by the co-chairs. However, as outlined in the Forum by-laws, members of the College community may formally petition or otherwise bring forth issues for the Forum's consideration. One recent example of this was the college-wide smoking policy. The Forum is also involved in coordinating the selection of the recipients of the Chancellor's/Trustees Awards. In addition, the Forum routinely reviews the budgetary aspects of new academic programs and makes recommendations to the President and the Board of Trustees.

Perspectives on the Forum and its effectiveness vary. The Forum's co-chairs attend Board meetings and regularly report to the Board of Trustees, and from the perspective of trustees, the Forum plays a meaningful role by presenting the Board with the will of the College staff and ensuring that by the time issues reach the Board for consideration, they have already been thoroughly discussed throughout the institution. Those who currently serve on the Forum or have in the past have a different perspective. A recent survey of current and past members indicates that most agree that the Forum's purpose is to provide a venue for the discussion of issues that affect the College community, and many respondents praised the Forum for providing an opportunity for people from different perspectives or parts of the College to discuss issues of shared interest. However, respondents also expressed widespread doubts about whether the Forum exercises any real power within the institution with nearly half answering in the negative when asked if they felt that their time on the Forum was well spent. In addition, the most recent Faculty and Staff survey (Ex. 4) found that while those who consider the Forum to be very or somewhat effective, over half of respondents believed that the Forum was neither effective nor ineffective, said they didn't know, or respondent that the question didn't apply.

The Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee (Ex. 2) is a permanent subcommittee overseen by the Provost/Vice President, charged with the consideration of all proposals for additions or changes to the curriculum of the College, including the review of all curricular changes, new course and program proposals, and all proposed changes to courses and programs.

Its members are responsible for disseminating information to and collecting feedback from program and departmental faculty about new and revised curricula, including academic program requirements and courses. Any changes defined by the Committee as having a broad curricular impact (for example, new programs or changes to broad-based curricular requirements) are brought before the entire full-time faculty for a written-ballot vote.

The Committee consists of thirteen voting members – two full-time faculty representatives elected/appointed by the full-time faculty of each of the College’s academic departments (Business, English/Humanities, Math/Engineering/Technology and Sciences, Nursing, and Social Science) and one representative each from the librarians, the Counseling, Career, and Transfer Services professionals, and other non-teaching professionals. Voting members are elected or appointed for staggered two-year terms. Representatives may be re-elected/re-appointed are not permitted to serve for more than two consecutive terms. All elections/appointments of new members for the following academic year must be completed before May 1. The Provost/Vice President, the Dean of Instruction/Associate Provost, and the Registrar serve as non-voting, ex officio members. The Registrar now serves as Committee chair.

Student Government Association

The primary entity for students to voice their needs and to participate in campus governance is the Student Government Association (SGA) whose mission is to “[serve] as the voice of the student body to create a better campus community for the students, by the students.” The SGA has two executive members – the Student Body President and the Vice President of Finance/Treasurer – who are elected by the student body in the spring to serve in the following academic year. Candidates for these positions run as a single ticket and are required to collect an appropriate number of signatures in order to appear on the ballot. Additionally, the Student Body President co-chairs the Faculty Student Association (FSA) while the Vice President of Finance/Treasurer serves as the co-treasurer of FSA. Three additional executive members – the Vice President of Communications, the Vice President of Student Services, and the Vice President of Student Involvement – are selected through an application process each fall. Students who are active members of the SGA for two consecutive semesters are automatically appointed as Senators-At-Large.

The SGA provides student representation to the College Forum, is responsible for providing student representatives to the FSA, and supports a Student Finance Committee, which allocates funds for student clubs and organizations. The SGA also selects a student representative to the Board of Trustees. This individual also serves as a non-voting, ex officio member of both the SGA and the SGA Executive Committee. SGA meetings are open to any student at the College.

Assessment of Governance, Leadership, and Administration

The College has built annual assessment of administrative departments into the Department Plan process (2.3). All departments are required to prepare an annual plan, which includes a departmental mission statement, a statement about how that mission is fulfilled, a statement about how the department supports the College's student success goal, a list of selected indicators of success, a list of the prior year's initiatives, a list of initiatives for the next fiscal year, an analysis of how both plans for continuing projects and plans for new initiatives have been influenced by an analysis of indicators of success, and a statement of how the department has identified and implemented best practices followed at other community colleges and appropriate businesses/institutions.



Vision Statement

In 2018, Tompkins Cortland Community College celebrates its 50th anniversary as an institution of higher education. Over this period, the College has experienced good times and bad. It has celebrated successes and worked to overcome obstacles. Some of what the College has experienced has been common to similar academic institutions while others have been more specific to Tompkins Cortland's context, but in all of its decisions and actions, the College has worked to keep its students and their success at the center of all of its efforts. As the College celebrates this 50-year milestone, it does so in an uncertain economic and educational environment, and it must continue to evolve not just in response to this environment but also to the ways it impacts the institution's community and student populations.

To this end, the College is currently undergoing an organizational (6.2) and policy restructuring under new President Dr. Orinthia Montague, which will move the institution forward. As part of Tompkins Cortland's continuous effort to be flexible and responsive to the changing higher educational needs of our communities and students, the College will reevaluate course offerings and degree programs in order to better align them with workforce needs and four-year transfer goals. Importantly, the institution will not pursue this in a vacuum. The College will be recommitting itself to its sponsoring counties, actively pursuing community input regarding educational and employment needs and ideas for how the College can work with the people, organizations, and businesses of both Tompkins and Cortland Counties in order to better serve their populations.

At the same time, Tompkins Cortland Community College understands that it is part of the larger, increasingly globalized and interconnected world. The modern world is increasingly characterized by a smorgasbord of interpersonal interconnectivity via technology, and while this has created a “world without borders,” there remains great value in engaging with others in direct ways. In order to provide opportunities for such engagement, the College has integrated efforts to increase its international student population into its future vision in order to support our students’ engagement with others. This is especially important for Tompkins Cortland’s student population – many of whom lack the financial and time resources necessary to commit to studying abroad as part of their educational experience. Additionally, the College will continue to work to create new channels and strengthen existing ones for recruiting a broad, diverse range of students from within not only New York state but also from its surrounding states and throughout the United States. In coordination with these efforts, the institution is revamping its policies, procedures, programming, and educational and support services to address changing student demographics and increasing cultural diversity. Community requires communication and communication requires tools and knowledge, and the College is committed to providing these tools and knowledge to its students, its faculty, its staff, and the communities it serves.

Nevertheless, these are uncertain times for the College community. The College is facing fiscal challenges as it attempts to address declining enrollment, reductions and changes in state and federal educational funding, and the direct impacts these have on the institution’s operations, resources, and its ability to fulfill its Mission. While many within the College community are excited about innovations and changes across the institution, others look back to the “good old days” of the past as the solution. This is only natural within any institution requiring immediate responses to a rapidly changing environment. Under the vision and direction of President Montague and her new leadership team, the College will prioritize reassuring members of the campus community that change is necessary and crucial to advancing the institution’s Mission and will work vigorously to involve voices from within the entire campus community in these changes.

While this transformation will not be easy, the College has the advantage of consisting of a group of caring, committed people who, regardless of disagreements about how to adapt and evolve, all place student success at the very center of their lives and their understandings of how to move the College forward. This provides unity, community, and a resource upon which Tompkins Cortland Community College can draw in its continued commitment to excellence and innovation in teaching and learning and, even more importantly, to working towards the highest degree of student success possible. These are challenging times and it is likely that there are more challenging times ahead, but this is also an exciting time – for innovation, for evolution, and for coming together as a College community as we work as one to embrace the future.

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