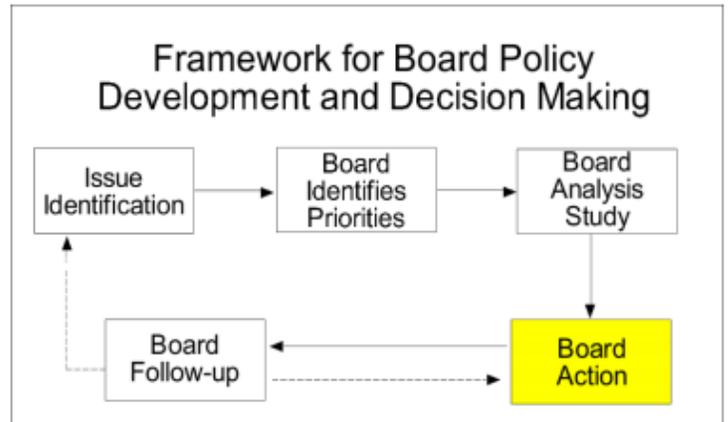


Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

May 7, 2020



- Agenda Item:** Kirkwood Community College (KCC) Comprehensive Accreditation Report—Fiscal Year 2020
- State Board Priority:** Supporting Future Ready Iowa
- State Board Role/Authority:** Iowa Code section 260C.47(3) grants authority to the State Board of Education to determine whether the programs of a community college shall remain accredited.
- Presenter(s):** Chris Russell, Consultant
Bureau of Community Colleges
- Attachment(s):** One
- Recommendation:** It is recommended that the State Board grant continued accreditation for Kirkwood Community College. A state interim visit will be conducted in fiscal year 2024.
- Background:** Attached is a report of the evaluation of Kirkwood Community College for continued state accreditation as an associate degree-granting institution. The Department of Education conducted the on-site portion of the evaluation on February 25-26, 2020. This report reflects the review team’s observations and determinations made during Kirkwood’s comprehensive visit. As mandated by Iowa Code section 260C.47, the accreditation team, including two external peer reviewers, assessed Kirkwood’s compliance with eight Iowa State Accreditation Standards via a structured process of document review and on-site interviews. The team also reviewed the most recent Higher Learning Commission (HLC) regional accreditation report to ensure that any findings have been addressed. Iowa’s process has been designed not to duplicate the HLC accreditation process.

Accreditation Report
Comprehensive State Evaluation

Kirkwood Community College
February 25-26, 2020

FY 2020



**COMMUNITY COLLEGES &
WORKFORCE PREPARATION**
PROSPERITY THROUGH EDUCATION

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Kirkwood Community College
Comprehensive Accreditation Evaluation
FY 2020 (Academic Year 2019-2020)**

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Kirkwood Community College (Kirkwood) Comprehensive State Accreditation Evaluation FY 2020 – Conducted February 25-26, 2020

Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of this review was a scheduled accreditation evaluation of Kirkwood Community College (Kirkwood) by the Iowa Department of Education as mandated by Iowa Code Section 260C.47.

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

College History¹

Kirkwood is a publicly-supported college that serves Benton, Cedar, Iowa, Johnson, Jones, Linn, and Washington counties in eastern Iowa. Kirkwood operates under the regulations of the Iowa Department of Education and is governed by a publicly-elected, nine-member board of trustees.

In January 1965, a steering committee conducted a study to establish a vocational school to serve parts of eastern Iowa, then known as Area X. Soon after this local study, the Iowa General Assembly approved legislation that created a system of community colleges throughout the state.

On July 1, 1966, Kirkwood was officially established, originally called "Area X Community College." The college immediately assumed responsibility for the federally-funded vocational/technical programs the Cedar Rapids Community School District had provided since 1964. The college added the Arts and Sciences, Student Services, and Community Education divisions a year later. In 1969, the college board of trustees decided on a new name, "Kirkwood Community College," to honor Samuel J. Kirkwood, Iowa's governor during the Civil War years.

In 1982, Kirkwood became a board member of the League for Innovation in the Community College, a consortium of 20 of the nation's finest two-year colleges.

Serving nearly 20,000 students annually, Kirkwood awards Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees that transfer to four-year colleges and universities. Graduates in Applied Science and Technology programs are prepared to enter specialized technical careers.

Institutional Profile²

Cedar Rapids Main Campus. Kirkwood Community College's main campus is located in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, a metropolitan area of approximately 150,000 residents. The main campus location features 1.85 million square feet of learning space, a working 635-acre farm, a 1.5-acre vineyard and winery, an operational wind turbine, and one of the only full-service teaching hotels in the country. Each year Kirkwood's Cedar Rapids location provides students with academic and career-focused advising, tutoring and writing help, mentoring and counseling services, an on-campus bookstore and library, close to 100 student-focused clubs and organizations, and other amenities. Kirkwood has 135 CTE, transfer, certificate, and diploma award options and ranks 2nd in number of credit students and first in number of non-credit students. They are 7th in the credit and non-credit penetration rate of their regional population. Kirkwood ranks 14th in joint enrollment number of students, 12th in number of students who have taken one or more online courses, and 13th in the state in number of credit awards granted.

Iowa City Location. Kirkwood's Iowa City location gives students the opportunity to experience a big-university environment, combined with Kirkwood's unique and individualized approach to success. The Iowa City location brings together academic excellence, first-class facilities, and a convenient location together to serve its growing student population. Services include academic and transfer advising, personal

counseling, financial aid, tutoring, a fitness center, library, and a full-service bookstore.

Center Locations. In addition to the main campus in Cedar Rapids and the Iowa City campus, Kirkwood has locations in Benton, Cedar, Iowa, Johnson, Jones, Linn, and Washington counties. Kirkwood centers offer college credit courses, continuing education classes, and high school completion programs to students of all ages. Students can complete all the required courses to earn an associate of arts degree through local Kirkwood centers. Classes at each center are delivered through traditional face-to-face classroom instruction, interactive video classrooms, and are also available online. Local Kirkwood centers offer the same services available to students at the main campus in Cedar Rapids, including placement testing, academic advising, tutoring, wireless computer access, and more.

¹ Information for this section was obtained primarily from the Kirkwood website.

² Information for this section was obtained from the Kirkwood Website and the Community College 2018 Profile Report.

SPECIAL TOPIC SUMMARY – Co-Curricular Assessment

Kirkwood requested a discussion of co-curricular program assessment strategies that are utilized by colleges across the state. Kirkwood offers a wide variety of co-curricular activities to support and enhance learning outside of the classroom and contribute to the overall educational experience. For example, Kirkwood has a popular and highly regarded study abroad program available for students. The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) requires colleges to assess co-curricular programs and offerings as well as academic outcomes. In particular, HLC's Criteria 3E, states that co-curricular programs are to be "*suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students*." Additionally, Criteria 4B states that *the institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for curricular and co-curricular programs.*" To fulfill this special topic request, the Department arranged for several colleges to share their co-curricular programming processes. Iowa Lakes Community College (ILCC), Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC), North Iowa Area Community College (NIACC), Iowa Central Community College (ICCC), and Southeastern Community College (SCC) participated in the discussion.

The conversation among the colleges centered on the questions about how co-curriculars are defined, when they are scheduled for assessment, what assessment processes are used, which artifacts are collected, and how the co-curricular outcomes are connected to academic program outcomes. Some of the guest colleges presented how their processes tie into HLC expectations and definitions of co-curricular. The colleges each shared how the rotation of co-curriculars was scheduled and which college staff reviewed these programs. A few of the colleges shared that co-curriculars are tied to one or more academic programs and assessed as a part of the regular CTE program evaluation schedule. An example of this relationship would include the career technical student organizations (CTSO's) that are related to each program. ICCC is utilizing WEAVE software to collect data on all program evaluations, and NICC is utilizing Brightspace to collect their assessment data. All colleges mentioned that developing faculty buy-in to the process was important. Each college shared various program review materials for the participants to review and use. At the close of the session, Kirkwood staff stated that the topic was helpful for their own process development.

ASSURANCE SUMMARY STATE STANDARDS

Compliance with Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Criteria

The Iowa Department of Education's state accreditation team (DE team) reviewed the most recent report and information from the HLC available at the time of this evaluation. Kirkwood Community College's most recent HLC accreditation letter provided adequate evidence that the college has continuing regional accreditation with no issues, concerns, or findings documented. The college is now following the Standard Pathway for accreditation after being one of the first colleges to adopt the AQIP accreditation pathway about twenty years ago. Prior to the last HLC visit, Kirkwood worked with the HLC to better document their Composite Financial Index (CFI) to accurately reflect the situational reality of the college's financial health which was found to be growing.

The DE team found that Kirkwood has a strong working relationship with the HLC and treats it as a partnership. It is clear that accreditation requirements and processes are a part of the college's day-to-day operations.

Compliance with Iowa State Accreditation Standards

In the interim state accreditation report of 2014, Kirkwood had two interim accreditation findings: a need for faculty qualifications process improvements, and broader, consistent nondiscrimination statement inclusion. The DE team found that the college has improved its documentation of faculty qualifications but has additional work to do in the area of nondiscrimination statement consistency and comprehensiveness in college publications.

Faculty Qualifications

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

The DE team provided a random list of 30 faculty members who taught credit courses in the previous year for whom Kirkwood provided personnel files regarding qualifications, with supporting documentation such as college transcripts, employment applications to illustrate related work experience, and third-party licensure/certification, if applicable. Members of the DE team then examined the files to determine whether the qualifications of each faculty member complied with current Iowa Code faculty standards for the courses he or she taught during FY 2019, i.e., fall term 2018 and spring 2019).

Following a thorough review of the random faculty personnel files, members of the DE team met with the Kirkwood human resources director and associate VP of academic affairs to learn about the college's faculty qualification review process and to discuss a few concerns raised during the review. There were a few qualification forms where there was not enough specificity to observe which specific classes within an approved discipline prefix were allowable. In these situations, the college is **recommended** to list the exact courses when the full prefix does not match the faculty's educational and experiential background, and this was completed for the forms in question by Kirkwood staff while the DE team was on the visit. In addition, the college should have a process to regularly review the faculty qualification forms for any updates that are needed. Attention to these details will help any state or HLC reviewer be able to follow Kirkwood's qualification processes more easily and efficiently in future reviews.

Kirkwood's planned move to a software solution to record and document approved courses for each faculty is a good step for the college to take for better documentation.

Finding: No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

Faculty Teaching Load

The teaching loads of full-time instructors must not exceed the faculty load limits set forth in Iowa Code. This is the case for CTE instructors, as well as for college parallel (arts and sciences) instructors (Iowa Code, Section 260C.48). To check compliance with this standard, the DE accreditation team reviewed the instructional loads of a random sample of 20 faculty members for whom Kirkwood provided documentation of their FY 2019 (fall 2018 and spring 2019 terms) teaching loads. There were no load issues found within the selected faculty, although it appeared that a few faculty had overload assignments. The team was not able to determine how faculty gave consent to overload as this was not documented in the desk review or through the interview responses. The college needs to have clear policy and formal documentation of the "mutual consent" process for those instructors where overload is in place. As part of state required review, this documentation needs to be verified.

Finding: No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation. However, the college will provide a copy to the IDOE of the policy and process that Kirkwood utilizes to document faculty and college "mutual consent" for overload by **June 1, 2020**.

Special Needs

Community colleges shall provide equal access to the full range of program offerings and services including, but not limited to, recruitment, enrollment, and placement activities for students with special education needs or protected by state or federal civil rights regulation. Students with disabilities shall be given access to the full range of program offerings at a college through reasonable accommodations (Iowa Administrative Code 24.5(3)), with information regarding how to access such accommodations provided in a disability statement. In addition, community colleges shall have nondiscrimination statements ensuring access to educational programs and employment for state and federally protected classes. This nondiscrimination statement must: list all state and federally protected classes; provide the name/title and contact information of the person(s) designated to coordinate equity, Title IX, and Section 504 compliance; and provide contact information for the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) in Chicago, Illinois. The nondiscrimination and disability statements may be separate, or the college may choose to combine them.

The DE accreditation team conducted a desk review prior to the onsite visit in which they reviewed Kirkwood's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and nondiscrimination policies, statements, and practices in marketing and recruitment publications, handbooks, the college catalog, the college website, and sample course syllabi. During the onsite visit, the team reviewed additional documentation and conducted interviews with faculty, students, and staff associated with student special needs and disabilities services to ensure compliance with this standard.

During the onsite visit, the DE team saw evidence of numerous collegewide efforts to create a welcoming environment for all students, provide accommodations for students with special needs, and provide opportunities for underrepresented students in particular programs of study. Some of the evidence of these efforts were observed in the following:

- Students had all positive things to say about Kirkwood including describing their experiences with: TRiO, library, clubs, regional centers, the accommodation process, the honors program, and diversity courses/clubs. Students had no changes to the college that they would recommend and many were thankful for Kirkwood's supportive and helpful staff.
- A pervasive and strong philosophy of a focus on students is evidenced through interviews with administration, faculty, staff, and students.

- Students reported the process for setting up accommodations was straightforward and easy to work through. They stated the accommodations office was very helpful and faculty were supportive in providing prescribed accommodations.
- A strong accommodations process to help faculty in their teaching requirements is in place.
- The strategic plan includes two special needs areas of focus: increase the diversity of staff/faculty and become a more welcoming organization to all stakeholders. There are key performance indicators in place within the strategic plan to measure these areas of focus including a measure to move the demographics of staff closer to a 1-to-1 ratio with student demographics.
- More than 40 training events in diversity content have been completed by over 850 employees in the past few years. This includes a specific training event to learn about the incarcerated population and focused trainings on unconscious bias / implicit bias training.
- The move to Maxient software for consistent and data-rich documentation of student complaints is commendable.

Students and some staff were not aware of the name of the educational equity coordinator on staff. The college is **recommended** to include this information in orientation and in other trainings for students and staff. The DE team found that Kirkwood continues to have some work to do in the publication and use of the nondiscrimination statement. The board policy nondiscrimination statement does not match the nondiscrimination statement in a sample of publications provided. In particular, the board policy includes the required category of "actual or potential family, parental, or marital status: but in other reviewed publication statement documents such as the catalog, this category was missing. The board statement also does not include the segment of "employment practices" but we did find that in a different board policy under employment. The shortened link to the statement should be rarely used and then only when there is no room for the full statement such as on a student mailed postcard.

Also, in both the Continuous and Annual Nondiscrimination statements, an email address should be included as one of the contact options for the Vice President of Human Resources (who is serving as the education equity coordinator for students and staff). Some colleges are using a generic email such as equity@kirkwood.edu so that the college does not have to change names with personnel or job duty changes. An equity email address contact should also be in the board policy. Also, the Annual Nondiscrimination Notice should list all college CTE program offerings and give students access to any different admissions criteria by program. The OCR contact information is required on all continuous and annual nondiscrimination statements.

The DE team did not find the nondiscrimination statements on any of your desk review student recruiting pieces such as "At-A-Glance" or "Wrappers" where there appears to be room for the full statement and contact information. The DE team did not find the statement within some major publications such as the strategic plan (FY 2020-2023), the Quality Faculty Plan, or the Concurrent Enrollment Policies and Practices handbook. The statement is also difficult to find in the faculty and student handbooks (on the webpages) and should be near the front page or back page in the faculty handbook and as a separate breakout in the student handbook web listings. One of the syllabi provided (CIS171) did not include the statement as it may be an old version. Per the DE guidance from November 2018, the continuous notice of nondiscrimination is to be included in all major publications. The college is required to include a continuous notice of nondiscrimination in any bulletins, announcements, publications, catalogs, application forms, or other materials designed for recruitment that are made available to the public, students, applicants, or employees. The continuous notice should be prominently displayed in these publications.

Finding: The continuous nondiscrimination statement must be prominent, complete, and consistent on the college's website and in major publications, including board policy, handbooks and all admissions, academic, housing, financial aid, and student services material directed at students and within employment information directed at employees. The DE team will review this standard again after **September 15, 2020** to ensure that:

1. the continuous statement is prominent in all major college publications and student recruiting material, including handbooks and course syllabi;
2. both continuous and annual notice statements are consistent and contain all required classes, the employment segment, an educational equity email contact, and consistent OCR contact information;
3. the annual statement includes information for students on admissions differences among career and technical programs.

CTE Program Evaluations and Timelines

There are a variety of state standards related to the offering of (CTE) programs included in Iowa Code, Chapter 258, 281—IAC 46.7(4), and 281—IAC 24.5(4). These standards include numerous requirements related to program and award length, program content, labor market demand, articulation, advisory committees, and more. All CTE programs (including new programs and changes to existing programs) must be approved by the DE. Standards for CTE programs are included in the *Program Approval: Guidelines for Iowa Community Colleges* and in the *State Accreditation Guide* on the DE website.

The DE utilizes a web-based platform (CurricUNET) for its CTE program approval process and maintains a database of approved programs and courses. This platform performs compliance checks on all CTE programs offered by each college. The DE accreditation team reviewed this compliance check for Kirkwood's CTE programs to ensure compliance with the state program standards. For the standards regarding program advisory committees' composition, roles, and responsibilities, the DE team reviewed a random sample of CTE advisory committee membership lists and meeting minutes to ensure compliance.

Additionally, community colleges are required to review at least 20 percent of their CTE programs annually, standards for which are provided in the aforementioned program approval guideline on the DE website. The DE team reviewed Kirkwood's CTE program review process, schedule, and a random sample of recent CTE program reviews to ensure compliance with the CTE program review standards. Several process strengths were noted, including:

- Use of a Program Annual Update (PAU) process which promotes follow-up on action plans and concerns on a regular basis as opposed to waiting for the next 5-year review.
- Metrics found in program review are related more closely to Strategic Plan key performance indicators.
- The online review system which allows for consistent reporting and documentation, as well as easy access to all reviews by Kirkwood personnel. There are resources available to help those both in putting together the review and for those who are reviewers. The review team involves faculty and deans from various departments.
- Program demographic reports which are comprehensive and beneficial. They give the instructor and advisory committee some much needed data regarding the community need for the program. The DE team would like to see more examples of the sub-demographic reports, to use and/or share as a model resource for other colleges' program review processes.

The DE team found a few areas where Kirkwood can improve the current review process. The DE team **recommends** the college involve advisory committee members earlier in the review process where appropriate to gather feedback/input into program strengths and areas of opportunity. The college could benefit from creating an advisory committee agenda template and minutes template for consistent discussion of the key issues around programs as well as for documentation of advisory actions taken.

The DE team **recommends** that the Kirkwood program review process find clearer ways to emphasize the required state review components such as cost proportionality and budgets, student service availability, and how academic skills incorporation and general education decisions occur within each program.

Finding: No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

Catalog/CurricUNET Review

The DE quality program consultant conducted a manual comparison of Kirkwood's approved CTE programs in CurricUNET's database with those provided in their college catalog. During this comparison, it was found that the college had a few program items of compliance to fix and the college has already completed those items. Kirkwood has more program options in CurricUNET META to keep track of than other colleges in the state (135) and shows remarkable compliance and consistency with very few discrepancies. However, the DE team **recommends** that Kirkwood explore solutions to efficiently streamline the process of updated curriculum from the approval level to the catalog and website listing level because portions of the current process are manual in nature and more prone to mistakes. The DE team also **recommends** that Kirkwood determine how to report/market the newly approved transfer majors within the catalog and in relationship to other advising options for Kirkwood's meta-majors, approved programs, and guided pathways.

Strategic Planning

Community colleges are required to update their strategic plans at least every five years as a guide for the community and its decision-making (Iowa Code section 256.31(4)(a)). The DE accreditation team reviewed Kirkwood's most recent strategic plan and interviewed selected staff to ensure compliance with this standard. Some of the strengths of Kirkwood's strategic planning process include:

- The college recognized that staff and faculty had planning fatigue from the college's recent quality initiatives and that they had a clear need to move to a data-driven, deliberate use of resources.
- Several key performance indicators (KPIs) for each strategic goal are in place including KPI specifically focused on student and employee diversity. The college has plans to move the institution to reflect the diversity of its learners and community.
- A \$400,000 Innovation Fund has been created to encourage and maintain Kirkwood's tradition and spirit of innovation.
- The Kirkwood Foundation's mission has been expanded to address more students' needs besides scholarships, such as emergency expenses.
- There is campus-wide sharing of information and communication across departments. For example, a data retreat day folds into financial planning and budget preparation. Separate sharing retreats are held to review KPI data help to hold individual departments accountable.

Through interviews with staff, the DE Team saw an example of how department tactics are developed and connected to related KPI and metrics. The desk review materials did not stress that portion of the plan and the DE team **recommends** Kirkwood add more about that component in the plan description for communication purposes for both external and internal stakeholders. The team **recommends** more involvement of external partners be a part of the development in the next round of the strategic planning process. The team recognizes that Kirkwood's focus for this plan was necessarily on internal needs, and that the college is already working to be more inclusive of external partners in the strategic plan with several listening tours ongoing in the community.

Finding: No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

Physical Plant and Facilities

Each community college must present evidence of adequate planning, including a board-approved facilities plan. The community college's plan must meet state and federal requirements as outlined in the state accreditation guide. The DE accreditation team reviewed Kirkwood's facilities plan and interviewed the Kirkwood staff regarding the college's facility planning process and decision-making structure to ensure compliance with this standard.

The Kirkwood campus tour was highlighted by visits to the new agricultural lab in Washington Hall, and the classrooms and labs in other buildings such as in Johnson and Jones Halls. The facilities at Kirkwood are impressive and the campus is beautiful. The visit highlighted these issues:

- Even though Kirkwood possesses a large campus, students and staff find it easy to get around buildings. The CTE programs are close for students, such as the farm fields for the agriculture program.
- Students reported feeling safe on campus and that campus security was accessible and easy to contact if needed.
- Building expansion based on strategic planning is evident. The 2017-2022 master plan includes: major building pieces approved through bond efforts; longer-range deferred maintenance needs; space planning/resource management efforts to handle space issues for a growing college; and IT infrastructure and needs. The college has a systematic process in place to review all facility needs and requests.
- A Resource Use Group (RUG) committee is utilized to look at proposed projects to fund that most closely follow a clear business plan. The college is encouraged to tie these projects into the KPI of the strategic plan.
- The technology plan looks at equipment utilization, cost-savings, and stakeholder accessibility to determine priorities for service. Kirkwood is working to simplify processes for users through technology.
- The college has moved increasingly to utilize MyHub software as a one-stop place for faculty, students and community to access Kirkwood course, activity, and personal data.

The DE team **recommends** that Kirkwood continue working on their plan to map all Kirkwood assets as well as their plan to phase in replacement facilities/equipment after they get to end of life expectancy. In addition, Kirkwood should continue working through the 65 recommendations for safety that came through a vendor consultation to help prepare the college for various scenarios. Kirkwood is also making progress with updates to the college website and related applications with the goal to improve accessibility requirements and concerns.

Finding: No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

Quality Faculty Plan

Iowa law establishes the process for community colleges to plan for the hiring and professional development of faculty. Institutional quality faculty plans (QFP) are required to meet the standards of 281-IAC 24.5(5). The DE accreditation team reviewed Kirkwood's QFP and interviewed members of the QFP Committee to ensure compliance with this standard. The DE team found that the committee has a good rotation of veteran and new faculty and the committee is fulfilling their main duty of reviewing new faculty plans for development. New faculty go through a comprehensive three-year new teacher master teaching program which the faculty interviewed said was intensive and valuable to their positions. The team heard about strong faculty professional development offerings including collaborative learning days, endowed faculty chairs, healthy professional development funds, (including funds for adjuncts), and the Kirkwood Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, (KCELT) which is a great resource for professional development.

Kirkwood's QFP was last approved by the Board in 2015 when they made a major revision to the plan. Based on this date, as well as the board minutes, the board involvement in regular plan review and approval lacks engagement. The Board's role is to *consider and approve changes* to the plan so the DE team **recommends** Kirkwood include more regular and interactive review of the plan with their Board of Directors. The annual minutes of the QFP meetings reflect a gathering of members to discuss plan needs and shows resulting activities/decisions primarily for new instructors. The DE team **recommends** that the QFP committee also review the continuous faculty development of faculty (after the probationary period) so that those processes and opportunities can also be continuously improved. Finally, the DE team **recommends** that the QFP committee review the Kirkwood QFP adjunct requirements and follow-ups for a clearer understanding.

Finding: No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

Senior Year Plus Programs

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

Kirkwood's concurrent enrollment program is named College Credit in High School (CCHS). Based on the review of documentation and through interviews with both CCHS staff and concurrent enrollment students, the program is well managed. Kirkwood has a strong commitment to serving school districts and high school districts across their region. Their regional centers give students opportunities across every county. Kirkwood's latest NACEP re-accreditation went smoothly with only a few minor suggestions from the NACEP review team. The college utilized an "all-hands-on deck" approach for the visit which ensured all standards received ample attention.

Kirkwood also has a strong concurrent enrollment faculty onboarding process that utilizes a comprehensive checklist for documentation and provides a multitude of professional development opportunities for new and returning faculty. The college uses the TALON learning management system (LMS) shell to aid new faculty orientation and LMS training topics.

Financial commitment to the concurrent program is also evident. There has recently been a focus on reducing textbook cost of concurrent enrollment to both the college and partnering school districts. For example, the college has an initiative to place students into courses using Open Educational Resources (OER), and the college has recently instituted a book repository process for concurrent enrollment courses in conjunction with the Kirkwood library which are both creative, money-saving ways to solve cost issues.

Finding: No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

Compliance with Non-Accreditation State or Federal Requirements

Finding: No non-accreditation compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

Evaluation Team Recommendation

The Iowa Department of Education community college accreditation team recommends continued accreditation for Kirkwood Community College. A state interim accreditation evaluation is scheduled for FY 2025 (i.e., Academic Year 2024-2025).