



Board Monitoring Report

Accreditation & Certification

May 2024



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Executive Summary

As identified in the College purpose statement (B1000), Shawnee Community College's purpose is to provide high quality and affordable higher education services to the citizens of Alexander, Johnson, Massac, Pulaski, Union, and parts of Jackson Counties in Illinois, which advance individual economic mobility, personal growth, and the local economy, at a cost commensurate with the value of services provided. As part of providing high quality higher education services, the College is committed to ensuring programs are accredited and aligned with industry standards and certified, as appropriate.

According to the Board's Professional Programming Strategic Outcomes policy (B1011), the College is committed to continuously improving the quality of its programs and services identified in Board's [purpose statement](#). The College is further committed to demonstrating that its programs and services meet assurance standards set forth by professional organizations, the Illinois Community College Board and the Higher Learning Commission, the College's regional accrediting body.

Students benefit from professionally recognized and peer-reviewed education programs and services; students benefit from regional accreditation that allows them to access government financial aid and grants; students benefit when their courses transfer to other regionally accredited institutions; students benefit when their courses and programs are aligned with professional standards that allow them to obtain industry-recognized credentials.

The College benefits when its programs and services are validated through benchmarking, audits, and other means of inspecting the quality by professional organizations. The College benefits from a systematic [assessment](#) framework that allows for thoughtful evaluation and improvement of programs and services. The College receives value when programs and services are recognized for professional excellence by peer organizations.

The community benefits by the assurance that tax dollars are spent wisely.

To achieve these benefits, the Board directs the President to ensure sufficient resources, planning, and accountability are in place for achievement and ongoing maintenance of required institutional and desired supplemental program accreditations and certifications. Further, the Board directs the President to adhere to the accreditation guidelines set forth by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) under the Open Pathways accreditation model. In addition, the Board directs the President to periodically provide information regarding alternative accreditation models provided by the HLC, if available, so the Board may review its accreditation options.



Some areas of focus for 2023-24 included the following:

- Completed transfer of OTA program and ACOTE accreditation from SICCM to SCC. (G1O2ST)
- Completed and submitted the ICCB Recognition Self-Evaluation. (G4O1SJ)
- Began the HLC Assurance Argument using the Shared Governance process. (G4O1SJ)
- Completed the competency-based education (CBE) program for Welding. (G1O2SP)
- Began planning for a Respiratory Therapy program and COARC accreditation. (G1O2SU)
- Began planning for a Paramedicine Program (related the EMR/EMT pathway) in a manner that can eventually lead to accreditation. (G1O2SV)
- Began working on ways to improve the relevance of the Health Information Technology program. (G1O2SL)



Institutional Accreditation & Recognition

HLC Accreditation

Shawnee Community College is on a 10-year cycle of accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission, with the most recent reaffirmation of accreditation in 2014-2015. Since the College is on the Standard Pathway of Accreditation, a comprehensive evaluation and visit must occur in years 4 and 10, with year 10 serving as the comprehensive evaluation for reaffirmation of accreditation.

10-year Comprehensive Evaluation (Reaffirmation of Accreditation)

The College's 10-year comprehensive evaluation visit will take place on January 27-28, 2025. The Shared Governance Teams have taken an active role in writing the response for the HLC Criteria. Teams were assigned HLC Criterion and Subcomponents based on the Shared Governance Teams' charges. The ALO, Dr. Kristin Shelby, is leading a Steering Committee that began training in September 2023. The Steering Committee developed a timeline and a step-by-step guide to writing the argument. The Steering Committee then built an evidence repository and working draft folder in Google Drive containing HLC Criterion links, videos, and other valuable resources. In January 2024, the Shared Governance team chairs were trained and an HLC Kickoff Assembly was held. Teams began collecting evidence and drafting arguments in February 2024. As they complete their drafts, teams log their evidence on an evidence matrix, submit the evidence and final drafts to Google folders in the Google Drive. The Steering Committee meets regularly for progress check-points and contacts Team Chairs with questions as needed. The Steering Committee has work days planned throughout the summer to read and finalize each argument. One member of the Steering Committee has the primary role of formatting the evidence and tagging it according to HLC specifications. The consultant that was used for the 2018 argument has been hired to read this submission, as well. The final Assurance Argument draft submission to the President is on target for November 1, 2024. The Assurance Argument lock date with HLC is December 30, 2024.

ICCB Recognition

In the summer and fall of 2023, the College conducted the mandatory 5-year Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) recognition self-evaluation. The self-evaluation includes all of the standards found in four categories: 1) Academic, 2) Student Services/Academic Support, 3) Finance/Facilities, and 4) Institutional Research/Reporting. The completed self-evaluation was due to ICCB by December 2023 and was submitted a few weeks early. Upon receiving the self-evaluation, ICCB takes time to review the submission, asking us for additional information or clarification. This review is followed by a site visit to the College. The ICCB Recognition visit was to occur in spring 2024; however, ICCB has informed us they are running behind and will contact the College with a visit date once they have had time to review our submission.



Program Accreditation & Certification

Table 1. Program Accreditations and Certifications

Program	Certification or Licensure Examination	Credentials obtained upon completion of examination	Credentialing or Accrediting Body/bodies	Currently Accredited/ Seeking Accreditation
All Nursing, Allied Health, and Career and Technology programs			Higher Learning Commission Illinois Community College Board	
Practical Nursing, Associate Degree Nursing	Practical Nursing - National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-PN)	Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)	Illinois State Board of Nursing/ Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation	PN -Accredited
	Associate Degree Nursing- National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN)	Registered Nurse (RN)	Accreditation Commission on Education in Nursing	ADN - Accredited
Certified Nursing Assistant	State of Illinois Nurse Aide Competency Examination	Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)	Illinois Department of Public Health	N/A
Medical Assistant	National Certified Medical Assistant Examination	National Certified Medical Assistant (NCMA)	National Center for Competency Testing	Seeking
Medical Coding Specialist	Certified Coding and Billing Specialist examination (CBCS)	Certified Coding and Billing Specialist (CBCS)	National Healthcare Association	Seeking
Phlebotomy	National Certified Phlebotomy Technician examination	National Certified Phlebotomy Technician (NCPT)	National Center for Competency Testing	New Program
Medical Laboratory Technology (SICCM)	Medical Laboratory Technician Certification – MLT (ASCP)	Medical Laboratory Technician Certification (MLT)	National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences	Accredited
			American Society of Clinical Pathologists Board of Registry	
Occupational Therapy Assistant (SICCM)	National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) Certified	Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA)	Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation	Accredited
			Accreditation Council	



	Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA) examination		for Occupational Therapy Education of the American Occupational Therapy Association National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT)	
Surgical Technology (SICCM)	National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) Certifying Exam for Surgical Technologists.	Certified Surgical Technologist (CST)	Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) Accreditation Review Council for Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA)	Accredited
Emergency Medical Technician (coursework; no program)	National Registry Emergency Medical Technician cognitive examination and state approved psychomotor examination	Emergency Medical Technician - Basic (EMT-B)	Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT)	N/A
Cosmetology Nail Technician	Pre-Graduation Licensed Cosmetology Exam	Illinois Licensed Cosmetologist	Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR)	N/A
Truck Driving	Commercial Driver's License written and skills exam	Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)	N/A
Automotive Technology	(Not required in Illinois) but the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence	ASE certification	National Institute for Automotive Excellence	Seeking
Welding	American Welding Society certification	AWS certifications	American Welding Society	N/A



Allied Health Programs

Both SCC Practical Nursing (PN) and Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) programs are accredited through the Accreditation Commission on Education in Nursing (ACEN). While it was required for the ADN program to achieve accreditation by December 2022, the Practical Nursing program was also accredited to signify quality and excellence in SCC's PN program as well as the ADN program. Both programs achieved ACEN accreditation on October 7, 2022. The PN program is the only accredited PN program in Southern Illinois, with only 9 other accredited programs in the state of Illinois. Annual accreditation fees for the next 5 years are estimated to be \$4500 per year. The ACEN accreditation process identified that our programs were very strong and successful, with improvement needed only in tracking graduate outcomes, such as job placement data. The nursing department has already started scheduling graduate surveys to collect needed data. For May 2023, the PN program has sent and received 100% of the practical nursing graduate surveys related to job placement/ education continuation into the ADN program. The ADN program resulted in 100% job placement upon graduation. Additionally, it is recommended that our open staff positions be filled. We still have one open tutor position and an open simulation coordinator position, both of which have been difficult to fill (G1O2SB).

Due to the dissolution of SICCM partnerships, SCC transitioned the Occupational Therapy Assisting (OTA) program to SCC ownership and accreditation was transferred successfully. A Program Director and Academic Fieldwork Coordinator have been hired and the facility upgrades at the Union County Center should be complete by the end of July for an August start date of the first class (G1O2ST).

Future accreditation plans include initiating the process to achieve Medical Assistant program accreditation through The Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP). This will be started in FY 2024 with application submission and the start of the self-study report, as SCC has had consistent faculty for one academic year. The projected cost of CAAHEP accreditation is \$2500 (G1O2SF).

Future program planning includes the addition of a full Emergency Services program, to include a paramedicine program. Programmatic accreditation with the Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the Emergency Medical Services Professions (CoAEMSP) will be sought after the implementation of the program is complete. A Respiratory Therapy program is planned for development and will be accredited through the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC). This accreditation process will begin during the program development as provisional accreditation will be necessary to begin the program.

The current Medical Coding Specialist, Medical Billing, and Medical Coding programs are being looked at for transition to a Registered Health Information Technology (RHIT) associate of applied science (AAS) degree which will require accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation for Health



Informatics and Information Management (CAHIIM). The projected cost for initial CAHIIM accreditation is \$16,500, which includes application and registration fee, candidacy fee, and program evaluation fee. The current Medical Coding Specialist certificate can continue as-offered to allow stackable credentials with a 1-year program that leads to a RHIT AAS degree. This will prepare graduates for American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) certification for RHIT (G1O2SL).

The Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and Phlebotomy programs and Emergency Medical Technician - Basic (EMT-B) courses are not currently accredited, however, those programs and courses are aligned with industry standards and allow students to acquire certifications or licensure for employment. CNA certification and EMT-B licensing are required by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). Phlebotomy certification is not required; however, a certification ensures individuals meet IDPH standards and can increase employment opportunities.

CTE Programs

The Cosmetology Program provides a one-year certificate credentialed through the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR). The 50-hour semester program gives students the skills needed upon completion to successfully pass the IDFPR Cosmetology Examination. Passage of the exam is required for licensure by the State of Illinois. The Cosmetology Instructor Training program is designed to provide experienced licensed cosmetologists with the required hours (24 minimum), skills and knowledge needed to become a licensed instructor. Upon completion of the program, the student must pass the IDFPR Cosmetology Instructor exam.

The Truck Driving Program is designed to familiarize the student with all aspects of safe tractor trailer operation and with completion of the internship, provides supervised over the road driving experience. Upon completion of the 16-credit hour/450 contact hour course, students will be prepared to take the state of Illinois Commercial Driver's License (CDL) exam. The exam encompasses a pretest that identifies components of the equipment. The driving exam tests the students on operating the truck (Manual or automatic transmission) on the roadways. The CDL exam and test is administered by the State of Illinois and the Program adheres to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). Plans for this program include offering a non-credit hour course to businesses for employee training in a condensed period of time this summer through the ICCB Non-Credit Workforce Training Initiative Grant (G1O2SA). If successful, we will discuss ways to continue to offer this through our Workforce Development office.

The Automotive Technology Program offers less than one-year certificates in auto body and automotive maintenance. The Automotive Technician Assistant one year certificate and Automotive Technology AAS degree provide the student with the knowledge and skills for employment as an automotive technician assistant, line technician, diagnostic technician factory representative or factory technician. No formal accreditation is required in Illinois but programs can align to standards set forth by the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE). Such alignment with ASE standards and recognition



by the ASE is beneficial to the Program and students as it is widely recognized within the industry. SCC is working toward ASE accreditation and recognition. Our instructor is in the process of becoming a credentialed instructor through the ASE. Equipment and program standards were upgraded in 2023 to align with the ASE accreditation (G1O2SC). The entire automotive lab was upgraded in summer 2023 for new paint and flooring. Individual student tool kits were purchased to mirror approved tool lists set forth by the ASE.

Approval of the Welding as a Program of Study by the ICCB in June 2023, allowed Perkins Funds to use for equipment upgrades and purchases. Welding programs do not have to be approved by an accrediting body but SCC is striving to meet American Welding Society standards. This includes significant equipment purchases made in 2023 and spring of 2024. Several state and federal grants have been used for equipment purchases. (G1O2SP)

Actions and Recommendations

- Complete the HLC Assurance Argument and submit in November 2024 (G4O1SJ).
- Work with ED of PI&M and ED of HR on a recruitment strategy for the open nursing faculty position and simulation coordinator position (G1O2SB).
- Complete the facility upgrades for OTA by end of July 2024. (G1O2ST).
- Start the application submission and self-study report for Medical Assistant, CAAHEP (\$2500) (G1O2SF).
- Begin the transition of Medical Coding Specialist, Medical Billing, and Medical Coding programs to Registered Health Information Technologist (G1O2SL).
- Begin developing programs for Respiratory Therapy and Paramedicine (G1O2SU).
- Promote a non-credit (1.6) offering of EMR to lead to the credit-bearing EMT program. Target those 16 and older who do not yet have a high school diploma, including our Adult Education students. (G1O2SV, G2O3SB).
- Offer a night class in FY25 for Truck Driving and explore ways to provide an industry course through Workforce Development (G1O2SA, G2O3SB).
- Implement the first non-credit hour offering to businesses for employee training in a condensed period of time for Truck Driving (G1O2SA).
- Complete the instructor credentialing through ASE by December 2024 (G1O2SC).
- Submit the Welding competency-based curricula to ICCB and HLC this month (G1O2SP).