



# Policy

**Policy Title:** Accreditation & Certification

**Number:** B1011

**Policy Type:** Board - Strategic Outcome

**Responsible:** President

**Related Policies:** [B1002](#)

**Linked Procedures:** None

**Related Laws:** None

**Related Standards:** None

**HLC Criterion:** All

## Policy Statement

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 institutional accrediting body.

Students benefit from professionally recognized and peer-reviewed education programs and services; students benefit from institutional accreditation that allows them to access government financial aid and grants; students benefit when their courses transfer to other 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.

**Key Monitoring Activities:**

As noted in the *Monitoring College Effectiveness* policy, accreditation and certification activities are essential elements that validate the quality and support the achievement of the College’s purposes. The Board recognizes that the key performance areas associated with the assessment framework noted in the Monitoring College Effectiveness policy are generally integrated into the assessment activities employed by external accrediting or certifying organizations. As such, the Board will monitor the College’s progress on the Accreditation and Certification Strategic Outcome using additional reporting methods.

Specifically, the Board directs the President to submit an annual monitoring report detailing activity and progress related to institutional and professional program accreditations and certifications. The report shall include the strengths and opportunities for improvement identified by the accrediting organization, performance improvement initiatives to address the opportunities for improvement, continuation or expansion of strengths, and recent progress toward achieving planned improvements.

The report will include results from any ICCB Program Review process and/or any result from an ICCB recognition visit.

The report will also inform the Board of the College’s relative standing with accrediting bodies, and its status in the accreditation renewal cycle. Further, the report will identify changes to accreditation expectations or standards and detail how those changes might affect College operations.

Key measures to be addressed in the report include accreditation status, special filings, and program plans and goals. Potential indicators might include the number of objectives in the College’s strategic plan that are aligned with accreditation criteria; the number of eligible programs receiving external program recognition; and the number of eligible courses receiving external program recognition.

**Change Log**

<b>Date of Change</b>	<b>Description of Change</b>	<b>Governance Unit</b>
03-07-22	Initial Adoption	Board of Trustees
06-15-23	No longer regional, but rather institutional	Board of Trustees
06-20-24	Annual Review, No Updates	Board of Trustees