



**Higher Learning Commission**  
A commission of the North Central Association

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May 6, 2013

Dr. John S. Erwin  
President  
Illinois Central College  
One College Drive  
East Peoria, IL 61635-0001

Dear President Erwin:

Attached is the report of the team that conducted Illinois Central College's Quality Checkup site visit. In addition to communicating the team's evaluation of your compliance with the Commission's Criteria for Accreditation and the Commission's Federal Compliance Program, the report captures the team's assessment of your use of the feedback from your last Systems Appraisal and your overall commitment to continuous improvement.

We hope you will read and study the report carefully, because the team invested heavily in preparing for and conducting this visit, and its perceptions and advice are valuable to your institution. Please consider distributing it widely throughout your institution, since its positive feedback can be helpful in strengthening and broadening involvement in your quality improvement efforts.

A copy of the report will be read and analyzed by the AQIP Panel that reviews institutions for Reaffirmation of Accreditation at the time your review is scheduled. Prior to that review, we will send you a listing of the materials the Panel will consider, and give you an opportunity to update or supplement them if you so desire.

Please acknowledge receipt of this report within the next two weeks, and provide us with any comments you wish to make about it. Your response will become a part of the institution's permanent record.

Sincerely,

Mary L. Green  
AQIP Accreditation Services

QUALITY CHECKUP REPORT

# Illinois Central College

Peoria, Illinois  
March 20-22, 2013

**Quality Checkup team members:**

**Dr. Dana Grove**  
President  
Morton College, IL

**Dr. Daniel J. Phelan**  
President  
Jackson Community College, MI

## **Background on Quality Checkups conducted by the Academic Quality Improvement Program**

The Higher Learning Commission's Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) conducts Quality Checkup site visits to each institution during the fifth or sixth year in every seven-year cycle of AQIP participation. These visits are conducted by trained, experienced AQIP Reviewers to determine whether the institution continues to meet The Higher Learning Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*, and whether it is using quality management principles and building a culture of continuous improvement as participation in the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) requires. The goals of an AQIP Quality Checkup are to:

1. Affirm the accuracy of the organization's online Systems Portfolio and verify information included in the portfolio that the last Systems Appraisal has identified as needing clarification or verification (System Portfolio Clarification and Verification), including review of distance delivery and distributed education if the institution is so engaged.
2. Review with organizational leaders actions taken to capitalize on the strategic issues and opportunities for improvement identified by the last Systems Appraisal (Systems Appraisal Follow Up);
3. Alert the organization to areas that need its attention prior to Reaffirmation of Accreditation, and reassure it concerning areas that have been covered adequately (Accreditation Issues Follow Up);
4. Verify federal compliance issues such as default rates, complaints, USDE interactions and program reviews, etc. (Federal Compliance Review); and
5. Assure continuing organizational quality improvement commitment through presentations, meetings, or sessions that clarify AQIP and Commission accreditation work (Organizational Quality Commitment).

The AQIP peer reviewer(s) trained for this role prepare for the visit by reviewing relevant organizational and AQIP file materials, particularly the organization's last *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* and the Commission's internal *Organizational Profile*, which summarizes information reported by the institution in its *Annual Institutional Data Update*. The report provided to AQIP by the institution is also shared with the evaluator(s). Copies of the Quality Checkup report are provided to the institution's CEO and AQIP liaison. The Commission retains a copy in the institution's permanent file, and will be part of the materials reviewed by the AQIP Review Panel during Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

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**Clarification and verification of contents of the institution's *Systems Portfolio***

In the team's judgment, the institution presented satisfactory evidence that it met this goal of the Quality Checkup. The institution's approach to the issue, documentation, and performance were acceptable and comply with the Commission's standards and AQIP's expectations. Specifically, the Quality Checkup Visiting Team reviewed the May 2010 Illinois Central College (ICC) Systems Portfolio before arriving on campus. Both of the Team members were also on the System Portfolio Appraisal Team. Along with the Quality Program Summary, Compliance Report, Index to Criteria, and Evidence for Criteria, ICC generously provide to the team an electronic Comprehensive Resource Room of 65 individual documents. Over the March 20-22, 2013, visit, the Team sat in on a total of 16 sessions that addressed the following topics:

Participation by ICC Stakeholders at the Quality Checkup Visit Sessions, March 20-22, 2013.

<u>Day</u>	<u>Session</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Participants</u>
1	1	Discussion with Board/Executive Staff	16
	2	Support Labs and Services	12
	3	Annual HLC Information	6
	4	Six Sigma Black Belts	3
	5	Outcomes Assessment	20
	6	AQIP Contacts	5
2	7	Compliance	6
	8	Open Staff Meeting	53
	9	AIP Steering Committee	13
	10	Students	10
	11	Orientation/Advising	3
	12	Distance Learning	11
	13	Open Faculty Meeting	20
3	14	Open Community Meeting	15
	15	Strategic Planning	1
	16	Closing Remarks	6

By reviewing all of the documents provided by the College and in interviewing the various faculty, staff, students and community members it encountered during the visit, the Visiting Team verifies that the

content of the May 2010 Systems Portfolio does accurately portray ICC. The Team was especially interested in three areas noted in the Portfolio. First, strategic planning was of a concern. In the Portfolio, there was no clear distinction made between the strategic planning and the annual budgeting processes. During the visit, the Team discovered that, because this lack of distinction was mentioned in the Feedback Report, the College launched an ambitious three-year strategic initiative called the “Blueprint for the Future.” This Blueprint maintains that “By 2016, we [ICC] will be nationally recognized for student success among community colleges.” Six specific goals with measurable targets become the key performance indicators to determine the success of the plan.

The second area that the Team scrutinized closely was the ICC outcomes assessment program since it was designated as an Opportunity in the Feedback Report. The Team found a fully operational assessment program at the College. An Action Project has been entered into which revisited the general education outcomes. Once these new outcomes were adopted, assessment began in earnest among all faculty. Writing and oral communication artifacts are collected from faculty teaching capstone and second year of the program curriculum. Random samples of these artifacts are reviewed yearly using agreed upon assessment rubrics. Results of the assessments are shared with faculty as a whole for ongoing conversations within departments and programs. In addition, the team found evidence that some of the suggestions for improvement made as a result of the assessment process have made their way into the budget process, thereby closing the assessment loop. Assessment experience is a preferred characteristic mentioned in faculty job descriptions, and the faculty contract maintains that all faculty must participate in assessment activities. . The College Administration noted that additional work remains to be done in this area, and meetings with faculty did indicate this work was in process. The team concluded that outcomes assessment at ICC is commendable.

Finally, the team was very curious to review the operational implementation of Six Sigma at the College. Six Sigma was initiated in 2003 as a means to have a common approach to work on issues facing the College in a consistent way. The Administration wanted to use data to guide the organization by looking at process improvement across the institution. The Portfolio asserted that Six Sigma is integral to the functionality of ICC, and the Visit confirmed this. Today, the Six Sigma implementation is deeply enmeshed within College operations and within the culture of the College. All employees are offered yellow-belt training with a majority of the full-time faculty and staff having been trained in Six Sigma at either the yellow or green-belt levels. They utilize the tenets of Six Sigma to engage in departmental projects and generally to do their own job in more efficient and effective manner . Willing

employees are selected by the president's executive committee for Black Belt training. Once they become Black Belts, they leave their former positions in order to work on and lead institutional initiatives for an agreed upon period of time. During this period they address AQIP Action Projects and strategic and departmental projects in order to affect change. Once their tenure is completed, they are guaranteed to move back into their former positions or into comparable positions at the institution. The level to which ICC is dedicated to Six Sigma is admirable and has had an unquestionably positive affect on college operations. Additionally, the College is a member of the national Continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN), and sustains a large Institutional Research Office, as further evidence of their commitment to data-informed decision making and institutional improvement. In this regard, ICC is truly a national model for how this Continuous Quality Improvement philosophy can inform the functional infrastructure of an institution of higher education.

**Review of the organization's quality assurance oversight of its distance education activities.**

In the Team's judgment, Illinois Central College has presented satisfactory evidence that its distance education activities are acceptable and comply with the Commission's standards and expectations. ICC The Team verified that ICC offers four online degree and ten certificate programs for students ranging from business administration to E-Commerce with about 21% of the total credit hours offered at the College being generated by online enrollments (i.e., 32,357 credit hours) or about 2,000 distinct students. The College has established a web-based "Virtual Campus" for student use with specific "helps" for students and related on-line resources. Of particular mention is the College's promotion to students of how to "Succeed in Online and Hybrid Classes at ICC." This document addresses themes ranging from instructor interaction, use of library resources, help desk support, email practices via Gmail, and "Netiquette."

From a student success perspective, the College makes use of a data warehouse for multiple purposes, not the least of which is for the assessment of the distance education program's effectiveness.

The data warehouse package is solid and incorporates multiple metrics. Noel-Levitz has been utilized as part of the development process. The College seeks to have the system tied to an early warning system. The College provides support online for students seeking assistance in its Academic Support Labs and Studio writing labs. Students provide feedback by Blackboard email or through Skype Meetings. However, conversations with faculty and administration indicated that students were not making effective use of online tutoring. This is an area that the College will continue to focus upon as they address student success.

Instructionally, about half of the College's faculty teach online and participation is purely voluntary. Faculty have multiple online instructional resources (i.e., web tools) available to them including templates, learning objects, audio and video embedding assistance, etc. The College also makes use of the Illinois Online Network (ION) and Illinois Virtual Campus' Quality Online Course Initiative (QOCI) rubric, a rather unique tool for online self-assessment, course design, development, course observation, and review. The ICC faculty and staff acknowledged that they are currently revising the QOCI rubric in order to making it more efficient for course developers and reviewers.

The College also provides other faculty supports through its association with the Illinois Online network. The College make available to faculty, a Master Online Teacher Program. Currently, 14 of the College's faculty are Master Online Teachers. Additionally, the College encourages faculty use of the Higher Learning Commission's Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education (On-line Learning) as the basis for evaluating quality and efficacy. Course-level and program-level assessments share the same goals as their on-the-ground courses. Online assigned faculty are part of an online learning task force. Meetings with faculty confirmed the College's commitment to professional development for online faculty.

The Visiting Team did note that the College does experience some challenge with student success rates with online courses. Student persistence rates are at a level inconsistent with the College's goals. Discussions with faculty and staff confirmed the belief that some online enrolled students should not be registered due to the faculty assessment of the student's likelihood of success. As part of its consulting role, the Team recommended the use of a "screening survey" and/or a mandatory online orientation designed to assist the likelihood of student success geared around a number of behavior, motivational, and educational factors. Additionally, the Team recommended that, given the advancing use of online teaching, the College may benefit from re-establishing communications to restore ILCCO (Illinois Community Colleges Online) consortium so as to leverage existing resources, provide professional development, etc.

**Review of the organization's quality assurance and oversight of distributed education  
(multiple campuses, additional locations, off-campus course sites)**

Aside from the main campus in East Peoria, ICC offers classes at three other additional locations. The newest and largest of the three is called ICC North. Comprised of nine buildings, it is the home to ICC's Culinary Arts Program, the Health Careers Institute, the Therapeutic Message Program, and the Public Services and Human Services Programs. A number of community agencies also have their homes here. ICC North also hosts a number of community education non-credit classes for the general public. Academic services include a library, learning lab, writing studio and math lab. Student services include registration, testing, advisement, and access. Also, at the site are open computer labs, a cafeteria, a bookstore, and campus safety and security.

ICC Downtown in Peoria consists of two building housing health occupations and allied health programs. This location features a library and learning lab, enrollment, testing, advising and access services, and an open computer lab, bookstore, and campus safety and security. GED classes are held at ICC downtown as well. ICC South is located in Pekin, Illinois, about ten miles south of Peoria. It consists of a single building where general education and GED classes are offered. This site features an open computer lab, enrollment, testing, and access services, and has campus safety and security.

One of the major initiatives sated in the Blueprint for the Future is to consolidate the Downtown site into ICC North, making ICC North into a comprehensive campus.

The Visit team verifies ICC's quality assurance and oversight of its distributed education programs at these three additional sites.

In the Team's judgment, the institution has presented satisfactory evidence that its distributed education activities (operation of multiple campuses, additional locations, and off-campus course sites) are acceptable and comply with Commission's standards and expectations.

### **Review of specific accreditation issues identified by the institution's last Systems Appraisal**

In the Quality Checkup Team's judgment, Illinois Central College , presented satisfactory evidence that it met this goal of the Quality Checkup. The institution's approach to the issue, documentation, and performance were acceptable and comply with Commission and AQIP's expectations. This judgment is evidenced by the following observations:

The Team reviewed the September 30, 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The report reviewed ICC's compliance with the Higher Learning Commission's Criteria for Accreditation. The System's Appraisal team considered any issues where the College had not yet provided evidence that they meet the Commission's Criteria for Accreditation. As a result of that appraisal, the Systems Appraisal Team concluded that Illinois Central College presented evidence that it complies with each of the Five Criteria for Accreditation and each of their Core Components.

**In addition, and as part its preparation for the visit to ICC, the reviewed prepared documents that outlined all "OO" and "O" notations from its 2010 AQIP Systems Appraisal Feedback Opportunities Worksheet. The 17 pages of the report covered 99 opportunities for improvement. Though not all highlighted opportunities noted a "completed" or "addressed" response from the College, in every case, each entry included commentary as to the measures taken. In some cases, the efforts were significant rising to the level of an Action Project, while others were deemed a low priority by the College and will be addressed at some future point. Unfortunately, a few of the entries were cryptic and unclear as to what the institution intends to undertake, if anything. Meetings with College representatives, as well as with the AQIP Steering Committee, confirm their commitment to attending to the resolution of the opportunities.**

**Review of the institution's approach to capitalizing on recommendations identified by its last Systems Appraisal in the Strategic Issues Analysis.**

The Team considered Strategic issues as those most closely related to the College's ability to succeed in achieving its mission, vision, strategic plan, and quality improvement goals. To that end, in the Checkup Team's judgment, the institution presented satisfactory evidence that it met this goal of the Quality Checkup. The institution's approach to the issue, documentation, and performance were acceptable and comply with Commission and AQIP's expectations.

This judgment is evidenced by the following observations:

The Quality Checkup Team noted from the Systems Appraisal Team's report noted a few strategic issues for Illinois Central College to address. The Team stated that could see significant gains in performance should attendant strategies be undertaken. It was further suggested the College could consider these areas as possible vital Action Projects that could "...help encourage the administrators, faculty, and staff to turn these strategic goals into real accomplishments. Knowing that ICC will discuss these strategic issues, give priority to those it concludes are most critical, and take action promptly."

The Team noted that ICC has begun to address all four strategic issues identified in the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report (March 2010) as evidenced below:

1. **Topmost Strategic Challenges.** ICC has worked to improve student engagement at many levels. Specifically, the College has sought out specific strategies data-informed to recruit and retain the home schooled student and have demonstration their intentionality about reaching out. Through students meetings, the Visiting Team heard from students remarking as to how students, from all walks of life, felt included with no acts of discrimination. Many of the students mentioned favorably how ICC compares to other, larger, more prominent IHEs. The Team also had the opportunity to visit with a number of international students who likewise expressed a feeling of engagement and support. The College has partnered with Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and has likewise used the comparative data from the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP) to advance work around student engagement.

With respect to state support, the College, as well as other community colleges in the State, experiencing significant delays in State aid payments. In the case of ICC, Illinois Community College (ICCB) and other state support represents about 25% of its overall revenue stream. Unfortunately, ICC finds itself with a delayed payment of approximately \$4 million. State apportionment component is projected to continue in its decline through FY 2014 at about \$7.7 million. Still, the College maintains a very healthy fund balance. For FY'13 the fund is expected to be at approximately 43% (without Public Building Commission Funds) or about 5 months of operating expense in reserve. It is commendable the ICC strives to keep its fund balance between 25% and 50% of its annual operating budget, particularly in an unstable fiscal environment.

2. **Comparative Data and Benchmarks.** The College embraces the value of benchmarking and using comparative and normed data to regularly evaluate its efficacy relative to others. When asked how the trustees knew that their College was achieving its mission, members remarked quickly about public feedback from the community, institutional comparisons at conferences, as well as a progress review of the "Blueprint for the Future" document. Trustees noted the importance and use of data and measurement with respect to outcomes. Additionally, Trustees noted that in addition to their inspection, the Administration has shared data as part of strategic planning reporting efforts. Indeed, the President provides regular updates at board meetings. And, as

noted previously, the College incorporates comparative data from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP), as well as utilizing data from other Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) and IPEDS data sets

3. **Comprehensive Systematic Process.** At the Quality Checkup Team reviewed all materials in advance of the Site Visit, particularly with respect to the Index to the Revised Criteria for Accreditation, it was clear that the College has, in fact, been attending to clearly defined processes for its quality initiatives. At times, as noted in employee interviews, issues and challenges are addressed immediately according to the skill sets of the employees involved. In other cases, if deemed significant, continuous quality improvement, or Six Sigma practices are deployed. In significant cases, the College may choose to initiate an Action Project around the problem or opportunity. There is a clear culture of quality improvement at ICC, and the College has regularly demonstrated its resolve to consistently utilize quality tools in its work.,
4. **Determining and Maintaining Partnerships.** The Quality Checkup Team was unable to validate this particular strategic element as an issue, in fact, the Team's experience was quite the opposite. Team members interviewed community members comprised of employers, local schools, economic development and chamber officials and learned that the College is a significant resource in the community, well-regarded, and they were keenly complementary of the College's many partnerships and cooperation. One employer noted how the College continues to work with them closely on apprenticeship training, internships, and employment/placement. Some of the community members interviewed served on advisory committees of the College and had even donated instructional equipment for the College's use. Yet, as another example, the College has had a long-standing partnership with Caterpillar, who not only makes use of their graduates, but they provided leadership in training ICC on the use of Six-Sigma, even conducting related training for College employees.

Still, and as noted previously, the College has an opportunity help re-engage its colleague organizations across the state by establishing a Distance Learning Consortia. It may be a matter of reconstituting the Illinois Community College Online or Illinois Virtual Campus organization, but given ICC's growth in distance learning, and projected growth levels, the College would be well-advised to leverage the resources of other organizations so as to remain competitive in this area.

### **Review of organizational commitment to continuing systematic quality improvement**

ICC's dedication to Continuous Quality Improvement can no better be demonstrated than by reviewing its institutional commitment to Six Sigma. Since 2003, the College has trained a total of 922 Yellow Belts, 178 Green Belts, and 10 Black Belts. A total of 57 Six Sigma projects have been completed at ICC, focusing on an extraordinary range of college operations, and several AQIP Action Projects have benefited from Six Sigma leadership. During its visit, the team experienced no adverse reactions to the incorporation of Six Sigma at ICC, and campus faculty and staff recognize it as an avenue to build inter-departmental cooperation and as a common language by which to communicate. The identification, training, and employment of the Black Belts is particularly intriguing, and the College's promise to return the Black Belts to positions similar to their prior positions once their Black Belt service has been completed to Six Sigma demonstrates commitment. ICC should be proud of its incorporation of Six Sigma into its campus operations, and it should consider broadcasting its Six Sigma history and message to other institutions of higher education nationally, for it truly is a model to emulate.

The College's recent decision to adopt a multi-year strategic planning approach is also an indication of its commitment to CQI. ICC has designed a 12 step planning process that begins with a review of mission, vision, and values and progresses through the identification of core competencies and incorporates a demographic analysis. Once outcomes are identified, the institutional plan cascades outward to the division, department and program levels. The planning process is inclusive also, embracing student faculty, staff, and community voices. Progress made on attaining the strategic goals is regularly tracked and published, and a celebration of learning annually highlights strategic successes. Overall, this planning process is both well-conceived and well-executed.

Another way that ICC demonstrates its commitment to CQI is in its intentional approach to interweaving the tenets of the AQIP itself into the fabric of the institution. Indeed, it should be acknowledge that ICC simultaneous prepared its AQIP Systems Portfolio at the same time it made application to, and received the Lincoln State Quality Award. The way that the College addresses Action Projects is particularly notable. ICC has completed eight Action Projects since it has been accepted into AQIP and has four more that are current. Action Projects are selected from the Opportunities Worksheet which derives from the Systems Portfolio Feedback Report. The College's decision to identify Action Projects that are manageable with respect to scope has been effective in making for their timely completion. Indeed, the College administration noted that they have intentionally broken down Action Projects into "chunks" has helped with their overall progress and completion. It is evident that AQIP is endorsed and

practiced across the campus.

Outcomes Assessment, of course, employs CQI operationally, so the College's expanding Outcomes Assessment Program is another demonstration of its commitment to Continuous Quality Improvement. Though not all full-time faculty embrace assessment activities, they all do participate in them as is specified in the faculty contract. A large number of faculty volunteer to be a part of a team scoring assessment artifacts, and deans and directors consistently remind faculty to assess in "Every course, every time." Assessment results are then publicized and discussed among faculty, and recommendations have begun to be budgeted and implemented for the continuous improvement of student learning. The ICC Outcomes Assessment Program has become an essential part of academics at the College, and it continues to expand.

Finally, as previously noted, the fact that ICC was awarded the 2010 Silver Award for Progress toward Excellence, the highest level ever given to any institution of higher education by the Lincoln Foundation for Performance Excellence, is an external confirmation of its commitment to quality. Based on the Malcolm Baldrige Award criteria, this award rates various areas of the College on implementing CQI processes and systems. In addition, ICC has sent a total of 20 employees for training in order to become Illinois Performance Excellence Award Examiners.

In the Team's judgment, the institution presented satisfactory evidence that it met this goal of the Quality Checkup. The institution's approach to the issue, documentation, and performance were acceptable and comply with Commission and AQIP's expectations.

**Other AQIP issues (specify)**

- ICC currently supports an advising function that is both centralized in the Student Services area and decentralized in the instructional departments. It may benefit the College to review its advising structures and practices to determine what model works best for students.
- Communication is always an area of any institution that can be improved. The College may wish to enter into a conversation of ways that it may improve communication, especially between the administration level and the faculty/staff level.
- There seems to be a certain degree of unclarity about the ranks and titles of some of the administration and how those ranks and titles are obtained and changed. Perhaps the College

should consider contracting with an external firm to execute a classification/compensation/organizational structure study to address these unclarities.

- The Team found it evident in its conversations with the various employee groups that the crucial concept of “Shared Governance” is defined differently across campus. ICC should seriously consider entering into a healthy conversation of what shared governance is and how it can best serve the advancement of student learning.
- The Team provided some consultative assistance to the College with respect to retention initiatives, as well as on their work with a new student complaint process. The Team recommends that ICC continue its work in these area, perhaps even grafting this work into a mini-action project.

## Appendix A

### Worksheet for The Evaluation Team on Federal Compliance Requirements

*Instructions: The team reviews each item identified in the Federal Compliance Guide and documents its findings in the appropriate spaces below. Generally, if the team finds in the course of this review that there are substantive issues related to the institution's ability to fulfill the Criteria for Accreditation, such issues should be raised in appropriate sections of this AQIP Quality Checkup Report. This Worksheet must be completed for all Quality Checkup visits after January 1, 2012.*

#### **Institutional Materials Related to Federal Compliance Reviewed by the Team:**

In addition to the advance materials provided, the Team reviewed the student loan default rates from FY '05 through FY '10, provided by the College.

#### **Evaluation of Federal Compliance Program Components**

**1. Credits, Program Length, and Tuition:** *The institution has documented that it has credit hour assignments and degree program lengths within the range of good practice in higher education and that tuition is consistent across degree programs (or that there is a rational basis for any program-specific tuition). New for 2012: The Commission has a new policy on the Credit Hour. Complete the Worksheet in Appendix A and then complete the following responses. Attach the Worksheet to this form.*

#### **CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE THAT REFLECTS THE TEAM'S CONCLUSIONS:**

  X   The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

\_\_\_\_\_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.

\_\_\_\_\_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.

\_\_\_\_\_ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

Additional Monitoring, if any:

**2. Student Complaints:** *The institution has documented a process in place for addressing student complaints and appears to be systematically processing such complaints as evidenced by the data on student complaints for the three years prior to the visit.*

CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE THAT REFLECTS THE TEAM'S CONCLUSIONS:

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.

The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

Additional Monitoring, if any:

**3. Transfer Policies:** *The institution has demonstrated it is appropriately disclosing its transfer policies to students and to the public. Policies contain information about the criteria the institution uses to make transfer decisions.*

CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE THAT REFLECTS THE TEAM'S CONCLUSIONS:

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.

The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

Additional Monitoring, if any:

**4. Verification of Student Identity:** *The institution has demonstrated that it verifies the identity of students who participate in courses or programs provided to the student through distance or correspondence education and has appropriate protocols to disclose additional fees related to verification to students and to protect their privacy.*

CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE THAT REFLECTS THE TEAM'S CONCLUSIONS:

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.

The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

Additional Monitoring, if any:

**5. Title IV Program and Related Responsibilities:** *The institution has presented evidence on the required components of the Title IV Program.*

- **General Program Requirements:** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about the fulfillment of its Title IV program responsibilities, particularly findings from any review activities by the Department of Education. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area.*
- **Financial Responsibility Requirements:** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about the Department's review of composite ratios and financial audits. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area. (Note that the team should also be commenting under Criterion Two if an institution has significant issues with financial responsibility as demonstrated through ratios that are below acceptable levels or other financial responsibility findings by its auditor.)*

- **Default Rates.** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about three years of default rates. It has a responsible program to work with students to minimize default rates. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area.*
- **Campus Crime Information, Athletic Participation and Financial Aid, and Related Disclosures:** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations.*
- **Student Right to Know.** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations. The disclosures are accurate and provide appropriate information to students. (Note that the team should also be commenting under Criterion One if the team determines that disclosures are not accurate or appropriate.)*
- **Satisfactory Academic Progress and Attendance.** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations. The institution has demonstrated that the policies and practices meet state or federal requirements and that the institution is appropriately applying these policies and practices to students.*
- **Contractual Relationships:** *The institution has presented a list of its contractual relationships related to its academic program and evidence of its compliance with Commission policies requiring notification or approval for contractual relationships (The institution should review the Contractual Change Application on the Commission's Web site for more information. If the team learns that the institution has a contractual relationship that may require Commission approval and has not completed the appropriate Commission Contractual Change Application the team must require that the institution complete and file the form as soon as possible.)*
- **Consortial Relationships:** *The institution has presented a list of its consortial relationships related to its academic program and evidence of its compliance with Commission policies requiring notification or approval for consortial relationships (The institution should review the Consortial Change Application on the Commission's Web site for more information. If the team learns that the institution has such a consortial relationship that may require Commission approval and has not completed the appropriate Commission Consortial Change Application the team must require that the institution complete and file the form as soon as possible.)*

CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE THAT REFLECTS THE TEAM'S  
CONCLUSIONS:

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.

The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

Additional Monitoring, if any:

**6. Institutional Disclosures and Advertising and Recruitment Materials:** *The institution has documented that it provides accurate, timely and appropriately detailed information to current and prospective students and the public about its accreditation status with the Commission and other agencies as well as about its programs, locations and policies.*

CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE THAT REFLECTS THE TEAM'S CONCLUSIONS:

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.

The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

Additional Monitoring, if any:

**7. Relationship with Other Accrediting Agencies and with State Regulatory Boards:** *The institution has documented that it discloses accurately to the public and the Commission its relationship with any other specialized, professional or institutional accreditor and with all*

*governing or coordinating bodies in states in which the institution may have a presence. Note that if the team is recommending initial or continued status, and the institution is currently under sanction or show-cause with, or has received an adverse action from, any other federally recognized specialized or institutional accreditor in the past five years, the team must explain the action in the body of the Assurance Section of the Team Report and provide its rationale for recommending Commission status in light of this action. In addition, the team must contact the staff liaison immediately if it learns that the institution is at risk of losing its degree authorization or lacks such authorization in any state in which the institution meets state presence requirements.*

CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE THAT REFLECTS THE TEAM'S CONCLUSIONS:

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.

The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

Additional Monitoring, if any:

**8. Public Notification of an Evaluation Visit and Third Party Comment:** *The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comments. The team has evaluated any comments received and completed any necessary follow-up on issues raised in these comments. Note that if the team has determined that any issues raised by third-party comment relate to the team's review of the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation, it must discuss this information and its analysis in the body of the Assurance Section of the Team Report.*

CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE THAT REFLECTS THE TEAM'S CONCLUSIONS:

The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

\_\_\_\_\_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends follow-up.

\_\_\_\_\_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends follow-up.

\_\_\_\_\_ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments:

Additional Monitoring, if any:

## Appendix B Credits and Program Length

*Instructions: The team reviews the “Protocol for Peer Reviewers Reviewing Credit Hours Under the Commission’s New Policies” before completing this Worksheet. This Worksheet must be completed for all Quality Checkup visits after January 1, 2012.*

### A: Answer the Following Questions

#### *Institutional Policies on Credit Hours*

- Does the institution’s policy for awarding credit address all the delivery formats employed by the institution? (Note that for this question and the questions that follow an institution may have a single comprehensive policy or multiple policies.)

Yes                       No

Comments:

- Does that policy relate the amount of instructional or contact time provided and homework typically expected of a student to the credit hours awarded for the classes offered in the delivery formats offered by the institution?

Yes                       No

Comments:

- For institutions with non-traditional courses in alternative formats or with less instructional and homework time than would be typically expected, does that policy equate credit hours with intended learning outcomes and student achievement that could be reasonably achieved by a student in the timeframe and utilizing the activities allotted for the course?

Yes                       No

Comments:

- Is the policy reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

Yes                       No

Comments:

#### *Application of Policies*

- Are the course descriptions and syllabi in the sample academic programs reviewed by the team appropriate and reflective of the institution's policy on the award of credit? (Note that the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

Yes                       No

Comments:

- Are the learning outcomes in the sample reviewed by the team appropriate to the courses and programs reviewed and in keeping with the institution's policy on the award of credit?

Yes                       No

Comments:

- If the institution offers any alternative delivery or compressed format courses or programs, were the course descriptions and syllabi for those courses appropriate and reflective of the institution's policy on the award of academic credit?

Yes                       No

Comments:

- If the institution offers alternative delivery or compressed format courses or programs, are the learning outcomes reviewed by the team appropriate to the courses and programs reviewed and in keeping with the institution's policy on the award of credit? Are the learning outcomes reasonably capable of being fulfilled by students in the time allocated to justify the allocation of credit?

Yes                       No

Comments:

- Is the institution's actual assignment of credit to courses and programs across the institution reflective of its policy on the award of credit and reasonable and appropriate within commonly accepted practice in higher education?

Yes                       No

Comments:

**B: Identify the Sample Courses and Programs Reviewed by the Team. For the programs the team sampled, the team should review syllabi and intended learning outcomes for several of the courses in the program, identify the contact hours for each course, and expectations for homework or work outside of instructional time.**

COURSES

AGR111	Pork Production
ARCTK 116	History of Architecture and Construction
BIOL 150	Genetics
CATTK 110	Caterpillar Engine Fundamentals
COMM 212	Public Speaking
ENGL 110	Composition I
GENTK 010	Private Pilot – Ground School
HIST 203	Illinois History
LIT 214	Shakespeare
MATH 115	College Algebra
WLDTR 121	Stick Welding I

PROGRAMS

AGRIO 0004	Agricultural Business Management
FCS 0202	Culinary Arts Management
BUSOC 0115	Office Professional
HCVS 0019	Registered Nurse
HCSV 0020	Surgical Technologist Certificate

**C: Recommend Commission Follow-up, If Appropriate**

Is any Commission follow-up required related to the institution's credit hour policies and practices?

Yes                       No

Rationale:

Identify the type of Commission monitoring required and the due date:

**D: Identify and Explain Any Findings of Systematic Non-Compliance in One or More Educational Programs with Commission Policies Regarding the Credit Hour**

## Appendix C Clock Hour Worksheet

*Instructions: Teams complete the following worksheet only if the institution offers any programs in clock hours OR that must be reported to the U.S. Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes even though students may earn credit hours for graduation from these programs. Such programs typically include those that must be identified in clock hours for state licensure of the program or where completing clock hours is a requirement for graduates to apply for licensure or authorization to practice the occupation. Such programs might include teacher education, nursing, or other programs in licensed fields.*

Federal Formula for Minimum Number of Clock Hours of Instruction (34 CFR §668.8)

- 1 semester or trimester hour must include at least 37.5 clock hours of instruction
- 1 quarter hour must include at least 25 clock hours of instruction

Note that the institution may have a lower rate if the institution's requirement for student work outside of class combined with the actual clock hours of instruction equals the above formula provided that a semester/trimester hour includes at least 30 clock hours of actual instruction and a quarter hour include at least 20 semester hours.

### A: Answer the Following Questions

- Does the institution's credit to clock hour formula match the federal formula?

Yes                       No

Comments:

- If the credit to clock hour conversion numbers are less than the federal formula, indicate what specific requirements there are, if any, for student work outside of class?

- Did the team determine in reviewing the institution's credit hour policies that they reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education?

Yes                       No

Comments:

- Did the team determine in reviewing the assignment of credit to courses and programs across the institution that it was reflective of the institution's policy on the award of credit and reasonable and appropriate within commonly accepted practice in higher education?

Yes

No

Comments:

**B: Does the team approve variations, if any, from the federal formula in the institution's credit to clock hour conversion?**

Yes

No

(Note that the team may approve a lower conversion rate than the federal rate as noted above provided the team found no issues with the institution's policies or practices related to the credit hour and there is sufficient student work outside of class as noted in the instructions.)

**C: Recommend Commission Follow-up, If Appropriate**

Is any Commission follow-up required related to the institution's clock hour policies and practices?

Yes

No

Rationale:

Identify the type of Commission monitoring required and the due date: