

## Institution-Set Standards

The College began developing institution-set standards in response to an Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) directive in early 2013. The initial group of institution-set standards addressed course completion, student term-to-term persistence, degree and certificate numbers, and transfer numbers, as requested in the *2013 ACCJC Annual Report*. Developed by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) in conjunction with the Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC), this initial group of standards was presented to Rio Hondo's Board of Trustees in March 2013 and to the Institutional Planning Retreat participants in April 2013.

Between November 2013 and February 2014, the College advanced its institution-set standards initiative. During this period, IEC reviewed the current performance of the College, updated the ACCJC required institution-set standards, and developed additional standards in response to campus feedback. The feedback was related to two campus developments in late 2013: the College updated its Mission Statement and found more uses for the new Student Success Scorecard than for the previous *Accountability Reporting for California Community Colleges (ARCC) Report*. Most of the outcomes in the new Mission Statement ("associate degrees, certificates, transfer, career and technical pathways, basic skills proficiency, and lifelong learning") were aligned with Scorecard measures, and IEC saw the value of developing Scorecard-type measures for progress in fulfilling the mission. At the same time, faculty members questioned the usefulness of the Scorecard. They were seeking data on recent cohorts, rather than students who had begun their time at the College six or more years ago. IEC decided to apply a Scorecard-type metrics to each outcome in the Mission Statement and set standards for three-year cohorts, where appropriate.

With guidance from IEC, IRP staff members drafted two sub-sets of institutional standards: one for those required by ACCJC and one for those Mission and Scorecard outcomes not addressed by the ACCJC-required standards. In each case, the priority was to foster alignment between the Rio Hondo College standards and Scorecard metrics. For example, the College used fall-to-fall persistence for its *2013 ACCJC Annual Report*, but converted to three-semester persistence (as used in the Scorecard) for 2014 and the future. For the five standards then required by ACCJC (course completion, persistence, certificate completion, degree completion, and transfer), IEC reviewed results for the past five years and factors that could have affected results in particular years. IEC set the level for each standard at or near the five-year median. This sub-set of standards addresses three outcomes from the Mission Statement: degree completion, certificate completion, and transfers (Rio Hondo's standards are listed in Table I-16).

**Table I-16: 2014 RHC Institution-Set Standards**

Standard	Level	Source
Successful Course Completion	68%	ACCJC
Degree Completion	840	ACCJC
Transfer to CSU & UC	480	ACCJC
Certificate Completion	200	ACCJC
Completion Rate	15%	Scorecard
Persistence (3-Semester)	67%	ACCJC
30 Units	47%	Scorecard
Remedial (ENGL)	36%	Scorecard
Remedial (ENLA)	34%	Scorecard
Remedial (MATH)	25%	Scorecard
Remedial (READ)	42%	Scorecard
CTE (Completion)	34%	Scorecard

Sources: Various (see table)

Measures for the first sub-set of standards are yearly counts and rates. They allow for direct, year-to-year comparisons. The second set of standards has measures of cohorts' yearly progress, and newer cohorts tend to have lower rates than earlier cohorts. For example, on the Scorecard's Completion measure (formerly known as "SPAR"), the fall 2012 cohort had a 1.0% Completion rate, while the fall 2010 cohort had a 15.1% rate and the fall 2008 cohort had a 25.1% rate. (The longer the cohort has been in college, the more time the members have to achieve Completion.) This raised questions about setting appropriate levels for the standards and choosing the cohort to be compared to the standards. Following the procedures for the first sub-set, IEC placed the institution-set standards at or near the median. In response to faculty requests to use recent cohorts, the priority was to choose a cohort that had been at the College the least amount of time, but still enough time to provide for significant progress on the measures. IEC determined this was the cohort that had been at the College for three years (i.e., fall 2010 cohort for the 2013-2014 analysis). For the 2014-2015 analysis, the cohort for comparison will be the one that began at Rio Hondo College in fall 2011. These standards address the "career and technical pathways" and "basic skills proficiency" outcomes of the Mission Statement, as well two Scorecard-specific measures of progression.

Three institution-set standards are currently under development. One Mission Statement outcome, "lifelong learning," is not currently among the institution-set standards. The College is discussing appropriate ways of measuring lifelong learning as an outcome. For its *2014 Annual Report*, ACCJC added licensing examination pass rates and job placement rates to its list of required institution-set standards. The College reported pass rates for those licensing exams that are publicly reported and will develop procedures for collecting job placement data. The College intends to set standards for these three topics during the 2014-2015 academic year.

RHC's institution-set standards include two Scorecard progression measures that are not part of the Mission Statement: 30 Units and Completion. The 30 Units measure is a momentum point; students who achieve at least 30 units tend to progress and complete their community college education. The Chancellor's Office (CO) casts Completion (of a degree, certificate, or transfer-related outcome) as the ultimate measure of community college success.

Procedures for placing students into Scorecard-type cohorts generally followed Scorecard guidelines. Development of the basic skills and career and technical education cohorts followed Scorecard procedures exactly. Creating cohorts for three standards involved adapting the criteria. For the Persistence, Completion, and 30 Units measures, the Scorecard defined cohort members as first-time college students who earned at least six units and attempted a math or English course in their first three years in the California community college system. Because some the Rio Hondo cohorts consisted of students who had not yet been in college for three years, the College defined members of these cohorts as first-time college students who attempted at least nine units in their first semester.

These institution-set standards will be used and monitored in multiple ways. By the spring of each academic year, IRP will produce a report to the IEC on the College's progress on the standards during the previous year. (This timing will allow for the inclusion of persistence, certificate and degree completions, and transfer data, which become available during the fall semester.) The IEC will review the report, consider the appropriateness of current levels, and forward the report to the Planning and Fiscal Council (PFC). A cover memo from IEC will recommend adjustments to the standards' levels for the coming academic year. (Especially in the early years, the standards will be a "living document." As additional data become available, the College will make corrections to ensure that the standards are realistic and practical.) The annual report on institution-set standards will also be provided to the Board of Trustees. The spring-semester timing of the report will allow it to inform the activities at the annual Institutional Planning Retreat. It will provide retreat participants with the information needed to align institutional objectives with the institution-set standards.