

PEER REVIEW TEAM REPORT

Rio Hondo College
3600 Workman Mill Road
Whittier, CA 90601

This report represents the findings of the Peer Review Team that conducted a virtual visit to Rio Hondo College from March 14, 2022 to March 17, 2022. The Commission acted on the accredited status of the institution during its June 2022 meeting and this team report must be reviewed in conjunction with the Commission's Action letter.

Kevin G. Walthers, Ph.D.
Team Chair

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Rio Hondo College
Comprehensive Peer Review Visit
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Summary of Peer Review Process

INSTITUTION: Rio Hondo College

DATES OF VISIT: March 14, 2022 to March 17, 2022

TEAM CHAIR: Kevin G. Walthers, Ph.D.

An 11-member accreditation team conducted a virtual visit to Rio Hondo College from March 14, 2022 to March 17, 2022 for the purpose of determining whether the college continues to meet accreditation standards, eligibility requirements, commission policies, and U.S. Department of Education regulations.

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior College's (ACCJC) decision to conduct virtual visits for the spring 2021 comprehensive reviews was based upon state mandated health guidelines, and the commission's authority to implement flexibilities to accreditation processes and practices afforded by the federal government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, the U.S. Department of Education's March 17, 2020 guidance, as well as all updates, permitted accreditors to perform virtual site visits for institutions as long as the accreditor follows up with an onsite visit in a reasonable amount of time to meet the statutory and regulatory requirements (though not necessarily a full peer-review site visit).

Consistent with on-site visits, and in accordance with the *Guide for Conducting Virtual Visits: An Addendum for Peer Review Team Chairs, Team Members, and Colleges*, which ACCJC provided to team chairs, peer reviewers, and colleges being reviewed, the virtual peer review team visit to Rio Hondo College relied on an engaged and interactive format. The team conducted multiple interviews with college representatives, participated in team meetings to discuss findings, and conducted the required campus forums. The team evaluated how well the college is achieving its stated purposes, providing recommendations for quality assurance and institutional improvement.

In preparation for the visit, the team chair attended a team chair training workshop via Zoom on December 13, 2021 and held a pre-visit meeting with the college CEO on February 24, 2022. During this virtual pre-visit, the team chair met with campus leadership and key personnel involved in the self-evaluation preparation process. The entire peer review team received team training provided by staff from ACCJC via Zoom on February 1, 2022.

The peer review team received the college's Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) and related evidence several weeks prior to the team's virtual college visit. Team members found the

ISER to be a comprehensive, well-written document detailing the processes used by the college to address eligibility requirements, commission standards, and commission policies. The team confirmed that the ISER was developed through broad participation by the entire college community including faculty, staff, students, and administration. The team found that the college provided a thoughtful ISER containing several self-identified action plans for institutional improvement. The college also prepared a Quality Focus Essay.

Prior to the virtual visit, team members completed their team assignments, identified areas for further investigation, and provided a list of interview requests. Prior to the visit, on March 11, 2022 team members spent the afternoon discussing their initial observations and their preliminary review of the written materials and evidence provided by the college. The college kicked off the virtual visit with a well-produced video that outlines the college's successes since the prior accreditation cycle. During the visit, team members met with faculty, administrators, classified staff, and students in formal meetings, group interviews, and individual interviews. Team members met separately with each trustee from the college. The team held two open forums, which were well attended, and provided the college community and others an opportunity to share their thoughts with members of the evaluation team. The team thanks the college staff for coordinating and hosting the virtual visit meetings and interviews, and ensuring a smooth process, which held high standards for the integrity of the peer review process.

Major Findings and Recommendations of the Peer Review Team Report

Team Commendations

Commendation 1: The team commends the college for its model Bachelor of Science in automotive technology program that aligns with the college's mission and, in particular, the application and admission processes, articulation support, and clearly communicated course sequencing. (II.A.1, II.A.6, II.A.13, II.A.14, II.C.6)

Commendation 2: The team commends the college for its efforts in providing students with timely, useful, and accurate information about relevant academic requirements, and its commitment to ensuring all first-time students are provided with an educational plan, advising, and orientation resources that ensure their success. (II.C.5)

Team Recommendations

Recommendations to Meet Standards:

Recommendation 1: In order to meet the standard, the team recommends the college include student learning outcomes on their officially approved course outlines and ensure students receive, in every class, a syllabus that lists these outcomes. (II.A.3)

Recommendations to Improve Quality:

Recommendation 2: In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends the college enhance the tracking of faculty and administrator evaluations to ensure all personnel are evaluated systematically and at stated intervals. (III.A.5)

Introduction

The Rio Hondo Community College District was established by election in October 1960, but first classes were not held until 1963-1964. Initial district administration of the college was under the purview of Whittier Union High School District Board of Trustees. Creation of the El Rancho Unified School District in 1962 required that Rio Hondo College establish its own board of trustees, and an election for that purpose was held in April 1962.

The new board of trustees appointed Dr. Phil Putnam as the founding superintendent/president in February 1963. In May 1963, the board chose Rio Hondo as the name for the college. The name, long associated with the area surrounding the Rio Hondo River, means “deep river.”

The present campus opened in the fall of 1966 with an enrollment of 3,363 day and 2,682 evening students. Measure A, a \$245 million bond passed by voters in 2004, provided new buildings and facilities upgrades campus wide as well as new off-site educational centers in South Whittier, El Monte, and Pico Rivera. Today, Rio Hondo College enrolls approximately 20,000 students per semester.

Rio Hondo College is an open-access California Community College that serves nine cities, in whole or part, four distinct unincorporated communities, and a portion of one other unincorporated community of Los Angeles County within its district boundaries. The cities include El Monte, South El Monte, Pico Rivera, Santa Fe Springs, and Whittier. The college also serves portions of Norwalk, Downey, La Mirada, and the City of Industry; and the unincorporated communities within the district of Los Nietos, East Whittier, South Whittier, West Whittier, and a portion of Avocado Heights. School districts within the college boundaries are the Whittier Union High School District, El Rancho Unified School District, and the El Monte Union High School District.

Students come to Rio Hondo College seeking a variety of educational experiences. Rio Hondo College’s educational program includes courses for transfer to four-year colleges and universities, general education courses for greater understanding of individual and community life, career and workforce education, and courses for improving academic performance necessary for studying at a higher level.

For the past two years the college has operated remotely in accordance with guidelines established by Los Angeles County to curtail the spread of COVID-19. During this time the college completed its Institutional Self-Evaluation Report, a commendable undertaking given the nature and complexity of developing and publishing an ISER.

Eligibility Requirements

1. Authority

Rio Hondo College is part of the California Community College System and is authorized to provide educational programs through the state's education code. The college acts under the authority of the state of California, the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, and Board of Trustees of the Rio Hondo Community College District. Rio Hondo College is fully accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) and Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

2. Operational Status

Rio Hondo College is operational with students actively pursuing degrees and certificates through Rio Hondo College's ongoing course offerings during the fall, spring, winter intersession and summer sessions.

3. Degrees

The majority of Rio Hondo College's educational offerings, as listed in the college catalog, are within programs that lead to degrees for students. The college catalog lists the degrees the college offers and identifies the courses required for completion of degrees and certificates. In addition to associate degrees, Rio Hondo College offers a Bachelor of Science degree in automotive technology.

4. Chief Executive Officer

The superintendent/president of Rio Hondo College is the chief executive officer (CEO) hired by the board of trustees with the authority to administer board policies, as described in Board Policy 2430: Delegation of Authority. The superintendent/president may not serve as the chair of the board of trustees.

5. Financial Accountability

Rio Hondo College annually undergoes and makes available an external financial audit conducted by an independent certified public accounting firm. The firm provides a presentation to the board of trustees in public session and explains any findings or recommendations of the audit. The most recent three audited financial statements are available for review in the office of the vice president of finance and business. Additionally, the college adheres to board-approved

policies and administrative procedures governing allocation of funds to support educational programs and services and follows Title IV eligibility requirements.

Checklist for Evaluating Compliance with Federal Regulations and Related Commission Policies

The evaluation items detailed in this checklist are those which fall specifically under federal regulations and related commission policies, beyond what is articulated in the Accreditation Standards; other evaluation items under ACCJC standards may address the same or similar subject matter. The peer review team evaluated the institution’s compliance with standards as well as the specific checklist elements from federal regulations and related commission policies noted here.

Public Notification of a Peer Review Team Visit and Third Party Comment

Evaluation Items:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comment in advance of a comprehensive review visit.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution cooperates with the review team in any necessary follow-up related to the third-party comment.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the commission <i>Policy on Rights, Responsibilities, and Good Practice in Relations with Member Institutions</i> as to third party comment.

[Regulation citation: 602.23(b).]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the commission’s requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the commission’s requirements.

Narrative:

The Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) announced at the August 11, 2021 board of trustees meeting that the accreditation peer review team would be visiting the college during the week of March 14, 2022. The college also posted the date of the evaluation team visit on the college’s accreditation webpage in August of 2021. Finally, the college maintains an active link to the ACCJC Third Party Comment form on its accreditation webpage. The college has actively

engaged the board of trustees in open session with updates on the progress of the Institutional Self Evaluation Report, and the board of trustees approved the 2022 Rio Hondo College ISER on November 10, 2021.

Standards and Performance with Respect to Student Achievement

Evaluation Items:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has defined elements of student achievement performance across the institution and has identified the expected measure of performance within each defined element. Course completion is included as one of these elements of student achievement. Other elements of student achievement performance for measurement have been determined as appropriate to the institution’s mission. (Standard I.B.3 and Section B. Presentation of Student Achievement Data and Institution-set Standards)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has defined elements of student achievement performance within each instructional program and has identified the expected measure of performance within each defined element. The defined elements include, but are not limited to, job placement rates for program completers, and for programs in fields where licensure is required, the licensure examination passage rates for program completers. (Standard I.B.3 and Section B. Presentation of Student Achievement Data and Institution-set Standards)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution-set standards for programs and across the institution are relevant to guide self-evaluation and institutional improvement; the defined elements and expected performance levels are appropriate within higher education; the results are reported regularly across the campus; and the definition of elements and results are used in program-level and institution-wide planning to evaluate how well the institution fulfills its mission, to determine needed changes, to allocating resources, and to make improvements. (Standard I.B.3, Standard I.B.9)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution analyzes its performance as to the institution-set standards and as to student achievement and takes appropriate measures in areas where its performance is not at the expected level. (Standard I.B.4)

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(i); 602.17(f); 602.19 (a-e).]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the commission’s requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.

<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the commission's requirements.
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Narrative:

The college maintains defined elements of student achievement performance within each instructional program along with expected measures of performance. The college has an established, regular process to evaluate and assess performance. Results of these assessments are used to make improvements in areas that did not meet goals. The college has program planning and program review processes to support the evaluation cycle.

Credits, Program Length, and Tuition

Evaluation Items:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Credit hour assignments and degree program lengths are within the range of good practice in higher education (in policy and procedure). (Standard II.A.9)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The assignment of credit hours and degree program lengths is verified by the institution and is reliable and accurate across classroom-based courses, laboratory classes, distance education classes, and for courses that involve clinical practice (if applicable to the institution). (Standard II.A.9)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tuition is consistent across degree programs (or there is a rational basis for any program-specific tuition). (Standard I.C.2)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Any clock hour conversions to credit hours adhere to the Department of Education's conversion formula, both in policy and procedure, and in practice. (Standard II.A.9)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the commission <i>Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits</i> .

[Regulation citations: 600.2 (definition of credit hour); 602.16(a)(1)(viii); 602.24(e), (f); 668.2; 668.9.]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the commission's requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the commission's requirements.

Narrative:

The college has appropriate board policies and administrative procedures along with internal controls through the faculty driven and administratively supported Curriculum Committee to ensure compliance with credit hour and degree program lengths regardless of modality. Tuition across all degree programs is consistent and aligned with California community colleges. Of noted exception is the Bachelor of Science degree in automotive technology. Through its established processes and procedures, the college is in compliance with the commission *Policy on Credit Hour, Clock Hour, and Academic Year*.

Transfer Policies

Evaluation Items:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Transfer policies are appropriately disclosed to students and to the public. (Standard II.A.10)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Policies contain information about the criteria the institution uses to accept credits for transfer. (Standard II.A.10)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution complies with the commission <i>Policy on Transfer of Credit</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(viii); 602.17(a)(3); 602.24(e); 668.43(a)(ii).]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the commission’s requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the commission’s requirements.

Narrative:

The college has transfer policies, practices, and procedures that are appropriately disclosed to students and the public through the college catalog, the Transfer Center, the Office of Admissions and Records, and the college website. The college clearly articulated the criteria it uses to accept credit for transfer and complies with the commission *Policy on Transfer of Credit*.

Distance Education and Correspondence Education

Evaluation Items:

For Distance Education:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates regular and substantive interaction between students and the instructor.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates comparable learning support services and student support services for distance education students. (Standards II.B.1, II.C.1)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution verifies that the student who registers in a distance education program is the same person who participates every time and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit.
For Correspondence Education:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates comparable learning support services and student support services for correspondence education students. (Standards II.B.1, II.C.1)
<input type="checkbox"/>	The institution verifies that the student who registers in a correspondence education program is the same person who participates every time and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit.
Overall:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The technology infrastructure is sufficient to maintain and sustain the distance education and correspondence education offerings. (Standard III.C.1)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the commission <i>Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(iv), (vi); 602.17(g); 668.38.]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the commission's requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the Institution does not meet the commission's requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The college does not offer Distance Education or Correspondence Education.

Narrative:

Through a review of over 25 online courses, the college demonstrates regular and substantive interaction between students and instructors. Learning support services and student support services are comparable to in-person services. All online courses are in Canvas LMS, which allows the institution to verify the identity of students for registration and record of credit. The required technology for maintaining and sustaining distance education is sufficient. As a result, the college meets the commission’s requirements for distance education. The college does not offer Correspondence Education.

Student Complaints

Evaluation Items:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has clear policies and procedures for handling student complaints, and the current policies and procedures are accessible to students in the college catalog and online.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The student complaint files for the previous seven years (since the last comprehensive review) are available; the files demonstrate accurate implementation of the complaint policies and procedures.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team analysis of the student complaint files identifies any issues that may be indicative of the institution’s noncompliance with any accreditation standards.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution posts on its website the names of associations, agencies and governmental bodies that accredit, approve, or license the institution and any of its programs, and provides contact information for filing complaints with such entities. (Standard I.C.1)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the commission <i>Policy on Representation of Accredited Status</i> and the <i>Policy on Student and Public Complaints Against Institutions</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(ix); 668.43.]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the commission’s requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the commission’s requirements.

Narrative:

Rio Hondo College maintains current policies and procedures for addressing student complaints, including grievances and conduct covered under Title IX. The current policies can be accessed both on the [website](#), and in the [college's catalog](#). The college's website provides an overview of the process, and links to [AP 5530](#), the [student grievance form](#), and the Chancellor's Office complaint process. The student grievance form does not provide instructions on how to submit the form. The college may want to revise the form to include instructions on how to submit the form or a contact person. The administrative procedure for Student Rights and Grievances ([AP 5530](#)) was last updated on 10/8/2014, and the administrative procedure for Sexual and Other Assaults on Campus ([AP 3540](#)) was last updated on 6/13/2018. The college may want to consider reviewing and updating AP 5530 and ensuring that all APs and BPs are regularly reviewed and updated. Records of student complaints and conduct matters are kept in a secured locked location. The college is in the process of revamping the student complaint process whereby student conduct and grievance will be decoupled and has a plan to update the appropriate APs and BPs. Students are encouraged to first communicate with their faculty and/or instructional dean prior to moving into the formal grievance process. Once the formal process is initiated by the student, the complaint is directed to the Dean of Student Support Services, and the complaints are discussed, and a decision rendered through the committee hearing process.

Rio Hondo College's [accreditation website](#) includes information regarding its accredited status, previous and current reports, and how to file a complaint with ACCJC.

Institutional Disclosure and Advertising and Recruitment Materials

Evaluation Items:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution provides accurate, timely (current), and appropriately detailed information to students and the public about its programs, locations, and policies. (Standard I.C.2)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution complies with the commission <i>Policy on Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Policy on Representation of Accredited Status</i> .
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution provides required information concerning its accredited status. (Standard I.C.12)

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(vii); 668.6.]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the commission's requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the commission's requirements.

Narrative:

The college provides accurate, current, and appropriately detailed information to students and the public about its programs, locations, and policies. The college website contained all necessary information. The college provides required information on its accreditation status and complies with the commission policy on institutional advertising, student recruitment, and policy on representation of accredited status. The accreditation homepage also has a link to "How to File a Complaint with ACCJC" (<https://www.riohondo.edu/accreditation/>).

Title IV Compliance

Evaluation Items:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution has presented evidence on the required components of the Title IV Program, including findings from any audits and program or other review activities by the U.S. Department of Education (ED). (Standard III.D.15)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If applicable, the institution has addressed any issues raised by ED as to financial responsibility requirements, program record-keeping, etc. If issues were not timely addressed, the institution demonstrates it has the fiscal and administrative capacity to timely address issues in the future and to retain compliance with Title IV program requirements. (Standard III.D.15)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If applicable, the institution’s student loan default rates are within the acceptable range defined by ED. Remedial efforts have been undertaken when default rates near or meet a level outside the acceptable range. (Standard III.D.15)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If applicable, contractual relationships of the institution to offer or receive educational, library, and support services meet the Accreditation Standards and have been approved by the commission through substantive change if required. (Standard III.D.16)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The institution demonstrates compliance with the commission <i>Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Accredited Organizations</i> and the <i>Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(v); 602.16(a)(1)(x); 602.19(b); 668.5; 668.15; 668.16; 668.71 et seq.]

Conclusion Check-Off:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the commission’s requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the commission’s requirements.

Narrative:

The college demonstrates compliance with Federal Title IV regulations and Department of Education (DOE) requirements. The student loan default rate (8.6 percent) is well within the

acceptable range. The team examined the report of the independent auditor and confirmed that there are no have been no audit findings related to compliance with Title IV regulations over the past two audited years. A minor deficiency not considered to be a material weakness was identified in the audit year that ended on June 30, 2019, but a correction was quickly implemented and not repeated.

Standard I

Mission, Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness

I.A. Mission

General Observations:

Rio Hondo College demonstrates its commitment to its recently updated mission statement that includes a bold and laudable antiracism component. The college uses Tableau as a primary data dissemination tool while Taskstream is used for program planning. The ISER indicates a foundational reliance on the Mission and Education Master Plan (EMP) while integrating the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) initiatives through program planning. This includes alignment of goals and activities with the CCCCCO Vision for Success (VfS) and Student Equity and Achievement (SEA) goals and metrics. The mission is updated on a three-year cycle and is posted in all major documents and their website.

Findings and Evidence:

The recently updated mission statement communicates Rio Hondo College's educational services, credentialing, and student population. A key phrase in the mission statement of "advancing social justice and equity as an antiracist institution" for all students. This statement reflects a significant intent to refocus college operations in alignment with societal changes with respect to views on diversity, equity, and inclusion. It is a brave and impressive component to their mission statement. (I.A.1)

The college provides publicly available data via Tableau dashboards to support program and strategic planning. They also utilized their Institution Set standards and environmental scanning data in planning retreats and committee meetings to assess their goal progress and inform mission statements updates. The annual planning retreat is impressively inclusive with all employees being invited resulting in between 75 to over 100 participants especially by governance committee members. Minutes from key committees such as Planning and Fiscal Council include review of data and key performance indicators. (I.A.2)

College documents such as the Education Master Plan (EMP) and program planning cycle diagrams indicate the need to tie planning to the mission and core institutional metrics. The timelines of review and update processes are included in these planning documents. These expectations are evident in user directions for the college's Taskstream platform. Resultant program plans and reviews include references and relationships to the relatively new college mission. (I.A.3)

The mission is published in the catalog, on the college website, and in planning documents. The mission statement was updated in July 2020 and approved by the governing board as a result of regularly occurring planning retreats that included review of data via publicly accessible Tableau dashboards, and other reports. (I.A.4)

Bachelor's Degree

The college offers one Bachelor of Science degree in automotive technology. The team verified that the mission statement displayed on the college's website is inclusive of baccalaureate degrees. (I.A.1, I.A.2, I.A.3)

Conclusions:

The college meets the standard.

I.B. Assuring Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness

General Observations:

The college has a program review structure with a 6-year cycle along with an annual program plan managed via Taskstream. Their "Closing the Loop" student learning outcomes reflection serves as the starting place for instructional program plans. Data dashboards are a central element for ensuring data are accessible for decision making and resource allocation.

Additionally, there is a three-year governance review process. The college's AccessRio portal is an integral part of their internal communication and dissemination process. The college has policies in place related to planning and governance in addition to major institutional plans for infrastructure, programs, and services.

Findings and Evidence:

The college provides high level overview of key college indicators to the board of trustees for review and input. Program review activities include dialogue between departments and the Institutional Effectiveness Committee. The Office of Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) conducts ad hoc research to support inquiry. Non-instructional programs participate in program planning using goals and metrics appropriate to the office or service. (I.B.1)

Student learning outcomes mapped to ILO's are assessed by the college via program planning and within the Taskstream system. The Closing the Loop form documents reflective dialogue

among faculty about their student learning outcomes assessments. This form is then used to develop program plans and six-year program reviews. (I.B.2)

The college has established Institution Set Standards with benchmarks. The standards are reviewed on a regular basis by governance committees such as the Institutional Effective Committee and Planning and Fiscal Council, as well as individual programs to be included in program planning. (I.B.3)

Assessment data are included in the program planning process. Reflections on the data are included in reflective analysis documents called the Closing the Loop form. A recent example of this reflection and resulting action is from the English department where their Closing the Loop reflection from a common assessment suggested improvements were needed in the consistency of instructional implementation of core English courses including ENGL-101, College Composition and Research, and ENGL-201, Advanced Composition and Critical Thinking. They are currently engaged in norming sessions to ensure common understanding of definitions and expectations in course outlines of record. (I.B.4)

Data dashboards provide data disaggregation of achievement data that includes modality of instruction. Most courses are either in-person or online with some being asynchronous hybrid. An emerging modality is “hyflex” that would also synchronous in-person and online participation. Student learning outcomes are manually disaggregated by faculty as needed. (I.B.5)

These disaggregations of achievement data also include a variety of student demographics that are including in both annual program plans and six-year program reviews. The disaggregations are used not just by instruction but also by Student Services to assess how special population achievement in the context of support services (I.B.6)

A variety of policies related to standard I.B.7 are in place. For example, in 2019, the Planning and Fiscal Council reviewed governance evaluation surveys administered in 2018 and developed an improvement plan that will be evaluated this fall 2022. In addition, the college annually reviews program planning and resource allocation processes after each annual planning cycle that reflects on the delivery of instruction and services. (I.B.7)

Assessment and evaluation activities are shared with the Institutional Effectiveness committee, planning and fiscal council, and high-level outcomes with the governing board. In addition, there is an annual planning retreat attended by 75 to over 100 employees where outcomes and achievement data summaries are presented and discussed. Minutes from these meetings are posted on committee websites with more recent meetings also being posted in BoardDocs, which has been newly adopted. (I.B.8)

The college engages in program planning managed by Institutional Research and the Planning and Fiscal Council and has major institutional plans for infrastructure, instruction, and student services. Program planning and review ensures goals and resource requests are related to the college mission. The integrated resource allocation process manages general fund dollars allocated to program planning while categorical and grant funds are managed by budget officers over those areas according to the program regulations for those funding sources. (I.B.9)

Bachelor's Degree

The team acquired evidence that the college consistently monitors and evaluates the Bachelor of Science degree in automotive technology program's completion and job placement rates. Annual plans include achievement and outcomes data to help the program and college reach established goals. The college established institutional set standards for bachelor's degree completion and evaluates performance in relationship to the mission. Program and course level outcomes are reviewed and discussed in the "Closing the Loop" form incorporated into program plans. The automotive technology program anticipates increased material resource needs as the program grows in parallel with the two year and certificate programs. (I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.7)

Conclusions:

The college meets the standard.

I.C. Institutional Integrity

General Observations:

The college has all required documentation and policy elements. A rubric based resource request ranking system is in place to aid decision making. The policies and rubrics are reviewed on a regular basis by governance committees including the Institutional Effectiveness Committee and Planning and Fiscal Council.

Findings and Evidence:

The college provides information about its accreditation status, academic program, and student service information with a review and update cycle. This information is posted on their website with appropriate components published in the catalog and class schedule. (I.C.1)

The college publishes a catalog and class schedule that is publicly available on the web. These documents include key policies and learning outcomes that are reviewed and updated on a regular basis. (I.C.2)

The college engages in program review and has publicly available dashboards on course quality and student outcomes. Reflections on the outcomes are shared in various governance meetings and an annual planning retreat. However, individual program, unit, and area plans are not yet readily available on the college website, which would enhance access to the public. The team strongly suggests the college make their program plan and program review documents readily available to the public. (I.C.3)

The college shows course and program requirements in the catalog and has been responsive to the new Guided Pathways paradigm. This includes a web based guided map that helps students explore academic and career pathways with program requirements and labor market information. (I.C.4)

The college updates its policies on a regular cycle. The governance process has a new review cycle that began in 2018 and is set to complete its first full cycle this year. Program planning procedures are reviewed and updated after each annual cycle. (I.C.5)

The cost of attendance is included in the catalog and schedule, as well as on the website. The cost of attendance information is current. Materials costs are included in the web-based schedule where a student can readily view textbook prices. Instructional materials costs are included as a current initiative to address as noted in the Quality Focus Essay. (I.C.6)

The college maintains an academic freedom policy reinforced in the faculty manual. (I.C.7)

Policies on ethical behavior, nondiscrimination, and academic honesty are established and published. Employees must verify they have reviewed these policies. (I.C.8)

The academic freedom policy includes the imperative to present information fairly and that “controversial question[s] in a college should be free from assumption that there is one correct answer to be taught authoritatively to the student”. (I.C.9)

Codes of conduct for employees and students have been established and are included in documents such as policies and the catalog. (I.C.10)

The college does not operate in foreign locations and so this standard is not applicable. (I.C.11)

A policy indicating the college will comply with ACCJC standards has been established and is publicly available on the web. (I.C.12)

The college communicates with external agencies including ACCJC in a timely and consistent manner. For example, the annual report to ACCJC including set standards is reviewed by governance committees such as the Institutional Effectiveness Committee. (I.C.13)

The college engages in a public budgeting process including a rubric based ranked resource allocation list in alignment with planning and program review that focuses the college on academic outcomes and student services. The rubrics are reviewed annually by the Institutional Effectiveness Committee after each planning cycle. (I.C.14)

Bachelor's Degree

The college publishes information about the Bachelor of Science degree in automotive technology in the catalog and college website. The college catalog and the college website describe program curriculum, financial aid, and other support services such as tutoring in a clear and accurate manner. The bachelor's degree can be built upon an associate degree in various specialties including alternative fuels and electrical vehicles as described in the catalog and website and include program course maps. (I.C.1, I.C.3, I.C.4)

Conclusions:

The college meets the standard.

Standard II

Student Learning Programs and Support Services

II.A. Instructional Programs

General Observations:

The college offers instructional programs aligned with its mission. Instructional programs are conducted at levels of quality and rigor appropriate for higher education. The college assesses its educational quality through (direct assessment of learning at the course, program and institutional level; annual and sexennial program review; and a 5-year cycle of curriculum review. The college makes high level summary of the results of its assessments available to the public and uses the results to improve educational quality and institutional effectiveness. The college defines and incorporates into all of its degree programs a substantial component of general education designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and to promote intellectual inquiry.

Based on the expertise of discipline faculty, the college has sufficient policies and procedures to provide quality degree and certificate programs in transfer and career technical education in a variety of locations and instructional modalities. Courses and programs are regularly assessed and evaluated through clearly identified and communicated processes and procedures. By means of the Guided Pathways framework and through an equity lens, the college supports access to, support for, and completion of programs of study. While the college does engage in the regular assessment of student learning outcomes, the visiting team could not find evidence of student learning outcomes in course outlines of record, and course syllabi did not consistently include accurate outcomes.

Findings and Evidence:

Based on Administrative Procedure 4020, Administrative Procedure 4105 and through annual program plans, sexennial program reviews, and course-to-course articulation agreements instructional programs, regardless of location or means of delivery, including distance education, are reviewed to ensure that they are appropriate to higher education and align with the mission of the college. Guided Pathways Areas of Interest provide students with contextualized fields of study that culminate in the achievement of degrees, certificates, employment, or transfer. (II.A.1)

Full- and part-time faculty regularly engage in ensuring the content and methods of instruction meet generally accepted academic and professional standards through a cycle of curriculum review, annual and sexennial program review, and regular assessment of student learning outcomes at the course and program level. The visiting team spoke with representatives from

Research and Planning, Curriculum Committee, and Outcomes Assessment Coordinator to verify the overall planning processes at the college and related data dashboards. Assessment of student learning outcomes is identified in the college's collective bargaining agreement and is also part of the evaluation of full and part time faculty. (II.A.2)

The college identifies and regularly assesses learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees as shown in student learning outcome mapping and program reviews. The college has approved course outlines of record; however, these course outlines do not include student learning outcomes. Student learning outcomes (SLOs) are housed in Taskstream and not connected to the course outlines kept in CurrIQnet. The ISER, in addition to faculty and administrator interviews, described the SLOs in Taskstream as an addendum to the course outlines, but there was no clear attachment or connection, electronically or otherwise. It is clear that the Outcomes Assessment Committee has identified the need for Student Learning Outcomes to be included in the Course Outline of Record (COR). However, the college has not fully adopted this element of the standard. Additionally, a review of 66 syllabi provided in both Canvas and files showed that student learning outcomes are not consistently or accurately included in course syllabi for more than 40 percent of courses. These concerns are noted in the ISER and are the subject of an improvement plan, but the extent to which the college does not meet the standard is not fully recognized by the college. (II.A.3)

As evidenced by the college catalog, pre-collegiate courses are clearly distinguished from college-level curriculum. Credit courses numbered 0 through 039 are non-degree applicable. Courses numbered 040 through 099 are degree applicable, non-transferable courses. Pre-collegiate course descriptions could more clearly state the preparatory nature of the course. These courses do support students in the knowledge and skills necessary to advance to and succeed in college level curriculum. (II.A.4)

The college develops courses, degrees, and programs that conform to common standards in higher education. The faculty bears the primary responsibility for curriculum development, and the Curriculum Committee ensures courses meet requirements for length, breadth, depth, and rigor. A review of the catalog demonstrates that the college ensures that a minimum of 60 or 120 semester credits or equivalent are required for the associates and baccalaureate degrees, respectively. (II.A.5)

The college ensures programs can be completed within a timely manner. Faculty and administrators work together to develop data-driven course schedules supported by data visualization software. The Guided Pathways website provides students with sample educational plans for nearly all degrees and certificates. A Course Schedule Frequency list is available in the college catalog to aid students in schedule planning. (II.A.6)

The college offers courses and programs in a variety of formats, including face-to-face, online, and hybrid. Programming ranges from service to high school students in dual enrollment and career pathway courses, to vocational skills and training, to university transfer programs, and continuing lifelong learning. Through the program review process and via quantitative and qualitative assessments, the college regularly and systematically evaluates the effectiveness of its delivery modes, teaching methodologies and learning support services. The Rio Hondo Teaching for Learning Institute sponsored by the Equity Committee offers seminars that address pedagogical concerns from an equity lens. There was ample evidence to demonstrate that the college responded to COVID-19 and the transition to remote learning. The college is to be congratulated for the centralization of professional development and the increased opportunities for faculty and staff engagement and improvement. (II.A.7)

Not applicable. The college does not use any department-wide and/or program examinations. (II.A.8)

The college awards course credit, degrees, and certificates based on student attainment of learning outcomes. Board Policy 4025: Philosophy and Criteria for Associate Degree and General Education addresses the attainment of course credit, degrees, and certificates. The college offers courses based on clock hours and follows Federal standards for clock-to-credit-hour conversions that is explained in AP 4020. (II.A.9)

The college makes available to its students clearly stated transfer-of-credit policies. The visiting team found that the college provides sufficient evidence in the college catalog, website, and Board Policy 4050. Additionally, the college has processes and procedures to facilitate course substitution, articulation agreements, and the evaluation of transcripts. The college also offers a host of Associates Degrees for Transfer (ADTs). (II.A.10)

The college includes the following student learning outcomes in all programs: communication competency, information competency, quantitative competency, analytic inquiry skills, ethical reasoning, and the ability to engage diverse perspectives. Every course-level student learning outcome is mapped to a program-level outcome, which, in turn, is mapped to an institutional-level outcome in Taskstream. (II.A.11)

As evidenced by AP 4015 and the catalog, the college requires that all degree programs have a component of general education based on a carefully considered philosophy that is clearly stated in the college catalog. The college relies on faculty expertise and the Curriculum Committee for determining course consideration in the general education curriculum. (II.A.12)

The college offers degree programs that include focused study in at least one area of inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core. The Curriculum Committee adheres to the Title 5 definition

of an educational program when reviewing degree program proposals and revisions, and relies on discipline faculty expertise. Inter-segmentally developed Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC) defines majors or areas of emphasis. (II.A.13)

The college provides evidence that its graduates demonstrate technical and professional competencies that meet employment standards. Career-technical advisory committees work with the career-technical faculty and administration in efforts to ensure all outcomes reflect the most current professional and employment standards and competencies. The College Comprehensive Integrated Planning Model, along with the Curriculum Committee, ensures that courses, certificates, and degrees receive regular updates and peer reviews. The college works with outside vocational accreditation agencies to have curricula reviewed and accredited. (II.A.14)

When an academic program faces discontinuance, the college makes appropriate arrangements so that enrolled students may complete programs that are eliminated or significantly changed. Administrative Procedure 4021 specifies the necessary analysis and data needed to begin the discontinuance process, the makeup and role of the Program Discontinuance Task Force, the types of recommendations the task force can forward to the superintendent/president, and a detailed plan that ensures students can complete their plan of study. (II.A.15)

The college regularly evaluates and improves the quality and currency of all instructional programs offered. The college's comprehensive planning model outlines the processes whereby all instructional programs evaluate themselves and strive to improve in quality. This includes annual program plans, sexennial program reviews, and regular curricular revision and updates. It is clear that the college strives to improve programs and courses to enhance learning outcomes and achievement for students. (II.A.16)

Bachelor's Degree

Rio Hondo College is one of the fifteen pilot colleges in the California Community Colleges system to offer a bachelor degree program, in this case, a Bachelor of Science in automotive technology (BSAT). The visiting team found evidence that the BSAT is integrated into college practices and procedures related to instructional programs and services. BSAT faculty engage in the same practices and procedures related to the assessment of learning outcomes for courses, programs, and degrees.

The BSAT also follows the same curricular processes as the rest of the college as verified by interviews with administration as well as agendas/minutes of the Curriculum Committee. Through the college catalog and the BSAT website, the college communicates information on degree requirements that meet the minimum of 120 semester credits or equivalent are required for the BS degree. The visiting team verified that the college has developed program maps that allow for degree completion on two tracks, one for full and another for part-time students. At the

same time, articulation agreements for the Bachelor of Science in automotive technology are found on the program's website and are established in line with Board Policy 4050 and the college catalog. The visiting team verified that the bachelor degree courses include the course level mapping to institution level competencies in communication, technology, quantitative, analytic inquiry skills, ethical reasoning, and the ability to engage diverse perspectives. The Bachelor of Science in automotive technology relies on the General Education requirements of the college's Associate of Science degree offerings in addition to upper division coursework. For the BSAT as well as for associates degrees, the Curriculum Committee adheres to the Title 5 definition of an educational program as "an organized sequence of courses leading to a defined objective, a degree, a certificate, a diploma, a license, or transfer to another institution of higher education" (§ 55000(m)) (II.A.90). Discipline faculty who develop and revise degree programs rely upon their discipline area of expertise (and, in the cases of interdisciplinary cores, collegial consultation) to determine the appropriate area of inquiry as well as identify what courses, based upon student learning outcomes and competencies, are required to ensure that students master the key theories and practices within the field of study in which the degree program resides. Career Technical Education (CTE) certificates and degrees additionally involve the input of advisory groups and labor market information (LMI) provided through the Centers for Success. As a signature CTE program, the BSAT is NATEF/ASE certified. The course standards reflect the skills that students must master to be successful in the automotive industry. Discipline faculty and the administration regularly seek and receive feedback from industry partners to ensure that this program is current and relevant. (II.A.1, II.A.3, II.A.5, II.A.6, II.A.10, II.A.11, II.A.12, II.A.13, II.A.14, II.A.15)

Conclusions:

The college meets the standard, except II.A.3.

Commendation 1: The team commends the college for its model Bachelor of Science in automotive technology that aligns with the college's mission and, in particular, the application and admission processes, articulation support, and clearly communicated course sequencing. (II.A.1, II.A.6, II.A.13, II.A.14, II.C.6)

Recommendation 1 (compliance):

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends the college include student learning outcomes on their officially approved course outlines and ensure students receive, in every class, a syllabus that lists these outcomes. (II.A.3)

II.B. Library and Learning Support Services

General Observations:

Rio Hondo College provides library and learning support services of sufficient quantity, currency, depth, and variety to its students in-person and virtually. Collections, learning support materials, equipment, and technology are selected with input from experts across the college and the library's collections, specifically, are selected to reflect the college's mission of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Analysis and evaluation of library and learning support services occurs cyclically via program review and, more often, in regularly-scheduled meetings. This analysis includes dialogue about student and program learning outcomes as well as usage and satisfaction metrics. Decisions about entering into formal agreements for learning supports are made by library and learning support professionals and evaluations are built into such agreements.

Findings and Evidence:

Rio Hondo College's library offers collections and services sufficient in quantity, currency, depth, and variety, evidenced by various collection and usage reports analyzed in the Library Program Review. A variety of tutoring and subject-specific learning assistance programming is offered to students, including special populations, as evidenced in the Learning Assistance Center (LAC) and the Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS) Program Plans as well as Writing Resource Center (WRC) and Math Science Center (MSC) service fliers. Computer labs and alternative media are of sufficient variety as evidenced in usage reports. The team's review of the college website confirms that instruction for library and learning support services is robust and includes both in-person and virtual delivery of library reference, workshops and orientations, a credit-bearing library research course, tutoring, and writing and math tutorials. In-person delivery of library and learning services and instruction at the college's three centers is offered by request. The library relies on a large number of adjuncts to offer equitable library services, as evidenced by interviews and program planning documents. Budget constraints impede library collection development and lack of a centralized model for tutoring across college assistance centers constrains program alignment in the area of learning assistance. (II.B.1)

Librarians, LAC coordinators, DSPS staff, and IT staff are primarily responsible for ensuring the selection of educational equipment and materials to support student learning. The Library Program Review, Collection Development Guidelines, and Curriculum By-Laws provide ample evidence that librarians liaise with department faculty to develop quality collections and their collection development policy includes diversity, equity, and inclusion as criteria for selecting library materials, clearly aligning with the college's mission. In various interviews, the team verified that the college's DSPS staff, LAC coordinator, and MSC faculty and staff solicit faculty feedback in the area of equipment requests for the learning centers. The college's Technology

Plan and Educational Master Plan prioritize IT projects including selection and maintenance of classroom and computer lab technology and equipment. (II. B. 2)

The library and LAC analyze and publish their SLO and Program Learning Outcome (PLO) assessments in program review every sixth year as part of the cyclical review process, which comprises a methodical self-study and dialogue and includes plans for continuous improvement. Usage statistics on tutoring, WRC and MSC usage, reference transactions, library workshops, library collections, and computer lab attendance are examined, in addition to SLO and PLO assessments. The library and LAC also collect student surveys to collect qualitative data on student access and satisfaction, as evidenced in program reviews. (II.B.3)

The college relies on the expertise of library and learning support professionals to make decisions about entering into formal agreements for supports and evaluation of the supports and resources is built into the agreements. The team confirmed through interviews that formal agreements exist with vendors in the areas of collection licensing and security. (II.B.4)

Bachelor's Degree

The library and learning support services for the college's Bachelor of Science in automotive technology include specialized resources housed within the automotive technology department as well as a robust collection of print and eBooks purchased with \$10,000 of "Strong Workforce Development" funding allocated to the library at the program's inception. Print and electronic library materials for the bachelor's degree were added to the collection by librarians in consultation with program faculty in automotive technology and librarians play an active role in the college's Curriculum Committee to ensure the resources are of sufficient scope, variety, and depth. The team's review of the library's catalog searches and collection reports confirm that the collection is appropriate for the bachelor's degree students and, in interviews with the library department, learned that a subscription to Ebsco's *Auto Repair Source* may be forthcoming. In addition, the team verified that, along with tutoring available at the college's Learning Assistance Centers, students in the automotive technology program can benefit from extra support workshops offered by faculty in the program. (II.B.1)

Conclusions:

The college meets the standard.

II.C. Student Support Services

General Observations:

Rio Hondo College shows evidence of regularly evaluating student support services and Distance Education learning through the annual planning and six-year program review process (includes

SLOs and SAOs). There are various committees and stakeholder groups that provide opportunities to discuss the quality of student support services, and this feedback informs the annual planning process. Counseling and other student support services are available on campus, as published by the service areas' websites, and remotely via the Virtual Welcome Center. First-time students are required to complete orientation, placement questionnaire, and meet with a counselor to create their first semester educational plan prior to enrolling to ensure students are provided useful, accurate, and relevant advising information. The college is in compliance with AB 705 and relies on multiple measures for placing students into math and English courses. Admissions policies are published in the college catalog, which are available in print and online formats. The college securely maintains student records, and policies regarding the storage, access to, and destruction of said records are available in the catalog and on the Admissions and Records website..

Findings and Evidence:

The college has a mechanism for regularly evaluating the quality of student support services provided to students, including services provided in-person or via Distance Education. The primary means of assessing effectiveness is through the annual and 6-year program review process. A review of the Counseling 2021 annual program plan showed evidence of the use of disaggregated data to evaluate the quality of student support services, as evidenced by the thoughtful discussion regarding the proportion of drop-in and scheduled appointments, and the number of students with a comprehensive educational plan.

The Virtual Welcome Center and Distance Education program website shows evidence that the college is providing support services for students regardless of modality. Students have the option to access services like counseling, financial aid, admissions and records via online, phone, or in person at all locations. Services are available to students at all the campus locations, and counselor liaisons are assigned to each academic division.

In addition to using the program review, Rio Hondo College also utilizes the Student Services Program Leadership Council (SSPLC) and Student Services Deans and Directors (SSDD) meetings to identify and address issues. While students are not represented on the SSPLC, the college has other committees that include student representation as evidenced in the Rio Hondo College Governance Manual, and campus recommendations and issues are also shared with student government. Campus Climate and other external surveys regarding issues like housing and food insecurity were noted as well. (II.C.1).

Rio Hondo College relies on its annual and six-year planning process to regularly assess its learning support outcomes. Annually, programs submit resource requests for areas identified

through data, including learning outcomes data, institutional surveys, and reports. The college uses Taskstream for conducting and housing program reviews. Program Outcome statements and assessments were observed in most student services reviews, such as in the Counseling, EOPS/CARE, and Outreach reviews. The outcome statements were mapped to other college goals and plans. There were differences in some of the reviews – for example, the Financial Aid review for Fall 2021 did not include any mapping to the college goals and plans. In addition to collecting and utilizing program outcomes within the auspices of the program review, the college also uses other forms of data (i.e., student satisfaction surveys) to collect feedback for programmatic improvement purposes. (II.C.2)

The college provides opportunities for students to access its services regardless of location. Students who are taking courses on campus are able to access services face-to-face at both the main campus and the centers. Online services are provided through the Virtual Welcome Center, and this is a resource that is available to all students regardless of their location. To increase accessibility of online services, the college provides a limited number of hotspots and Chromebooks for students. The availability of both on-ground and online services are shared through campus emails, website notices, and print materials. The college noted during the visit that there is an opportunity to clarify the website so it is easier for students to identify how to make an online appointment for counseling. (II.C.3)

The college provides students with the opportunity to engage in co-curricular and athletic programs that complement and enhance student learning opportunities. Rio Hondo College's athletic programs comply with the rules and regulations of the California Community Colleges Athletic Association (CCCAA). Athletic staff participate in annual training provided by the CCCAA to ensure that programs are conducted with sound educational policies and standards of integrity. Student athletes are supported through their athletics counselor to assist with ensuring satisfactory academic progress. Student clubs, student-led organizations and the performing arts programming are co-curricular opportunities that are available for students. All students who participate in athletics, clubs or other programming are required to complete a mandatory orientation that includes Title IX, code of conduct, and other critical topics related to standards of integrity. Rio Hondo College's athletics and co-curricular programs appear to offer students opportunities to develop community and enhance the student experience. The college has a mechanism for funding athletics and other clubs/programming, in addition to providing opportunities to request additional funding as needed. (II.C.4)

Rio Hondo College provides online and in-person counseling and advising services for students to provide orientation, academic planning, and other support services. The availability of counseling and advising services is marketed on the college's Virtual Welcome Center website, emails sent to students, phone calls, social media posts, and print media. These services are available in-person at the main campus, and at the college's off-site locations. First-time students

are required to attend orientation, complete a placement questionnaire, and meet with a counselor to create their first semester educational plan before enrolling. Data shared during the visit showed that during 2019-2020, 92.93 percent of new students met with a counselor and received an educational plan, up from 89.46 percent in 2018-2019. Additionally, the college described an intrusive and comprehensive onboarding program utilizing success coaches and other team members to help students, apply, enroll, and access support services. One example given during the visit was the increase in the number of students who have submitted a FAFSA (1,481 in fall 2020, and increased to 2,824 in fall 2021 despite an enrollment drop.)

The college has developed a tool, the Student Success Dashboard, to assist counselors in identifying which students have not met certain milestones and need intervention(s). The Counseling Department, Career Center, Transfer Center, and Admissions and Records Office provide students with information about academic procedures and deadlines. The college is committed to ensuring that first-time students meet with a counselor and complete an educational plan during their first semester at college, and it was noted that the percentage of first-time students who have met with a counselor and completed an educational plan increased from 86.46 percent to 92.93 percent between 2018-19 and 2019-20. The college is commended for their work in ensuring that almost all new students are connected with a counselor and provided with their course plan. Student Educational Plans are critical to ensure that students receive timely, useful, and accurate information about relevant academic requirements. Counselor competencies have been developed, and training is provided for new and adjunct counselors. Ongoing training opportunities are provided to the counselors through regional meetings and other CCCCO sponsored events related to counseling and advising. (II.C.5)

Rio Hondo College publishes and makes available its policies regarding admissions and qualifications of its programs – including its Bachelor of Science in automotive technology program - via admission policies, board policies, and the college catalog. (II.C.6)

The college shows evidence of regularly evaluating admissions and its placement methodology. Rio Hondo College is complying with the state AB 705 mandate and is relying on Multiple Measures Assessment to guide students into transfer-level course for math and English. (II.C.7)

The college demonstrates that they securely maintain student records in a confidential manner that is in compliance with the college's board policies, administrative procedures, FERPA, Title 5 and HIPPA. The college publishes information regarding student records in the course catalog and on the Admissions and Records website. Student academic and financial records are stored electronically in the college's student information system, and hard copy documents are stored in two vaults on campus. Shredding is completed by an external vendor on the college's premises. (II.C.8)

Bachelor's Degree

The college provides information on Bachelor of Science in automotive technology program on its website. Information is provided on the application process, admission requirements, and course sequencing through the program website. Course sequencing is displayed for both full-time and part-time students, and the program can be completed in three semesters (i.e. fall-spring-summer.) Once admitted to the program, students receive a detailed welcome email that provides guidance for next steps and resources that are available to students in the program. Students are encouraged to meet with a program counselor; however, they are not required to do so since courses are already mapped out as noted in the upper division course work sequence. The program is offered 100 percent online to accommodate the students who tend to work full time. Onboarding and counseling provide intrusive support behind the scenes by processing transcripts and proactively clearing pre-requisite challenges, processing GE pass throughs, and major course substitutions. The Articulation Officer and the CTE department worked collaboratively to ensure that a student could start at any California community college with a degree in automotive technology, and transfer to Rio Hondo College to complete the Bachelor of Science in automotive technology program. Dedicated counseling is provided from a full-time CTE counseling and adjunct CTE counselor, in addition to a designated financial aid upper division advisor that works closely with the CTE counselors. Students in the Bachelor of Science in automotive technology program have access to the Virtual Welcome Center, Learning Resource Center, and other services like Veteran's Resources and DSP&S. The program shows evidence of regular evaluation through the program reviews. These practices and policies are consistent with the college mission and institutional practices. (II.C.6)

Conclusions:

The college meets the standard.

Commendation 1:

The team commends the college for its model Bachelor of Science in automotive technology program that aligns with the college's mission and, in particular, the application and admission processes, articulation support, and clearly communicated course sequencing. (II.A.1, II.A.6, II.A.13, II.A.14, II.C.6)

Commendation 2:

The team commends the college for its efforts in providing students with timely, useful, and accurate information about relevant academic requirements, and its commitment to ensuring all first-time students are provided with an educational plan, advising, and orientation resources that ensure their success. (II.C.5)

Standard III

Resources

III.A. Human Resources

General Observations:

Rio Hondo College effectively uses its Office of Human Resources to achieve its mission and to improve academic quality and institutional effectiveness. The team finds that the college guarantees the integrity and quality of its programs and services by employing administrators, faculty, and staff who are qualified with the proper education, training, and experience. Policies, processes, procedures, criteria, and qualifications for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated and in alignment with the mission and goals of the college. The college plans for and provides all personnel with a wide array of opportunities for professional development consistent with the college's mission.

Findings and Evidence:

Rio Hondo College has board policies and administrative procedures in place to ensure that administrators, faculty, and staff meet qualifications in terms of appropriate education, training, and experience. Each opening is processed, monitored, and coordinated by the Office of Human Resources which has clearly outline the procedures for position analysis, job announcement, recruitment, and application process. Job descriptions were publicly available, in line with the institutional mission and goals, and accurately reflected the position duties, responsibilities, and authority. Job announcements possessed all the required information including title, basic function, distinguishing characteristics, knowledge, ability, and education and experience. (III.A.1)

Rio Hondo College has board policies and administrative procedures in place to ensure that faculty meet the minimum qualifications established by the Board of Governors or the equivalent.. The 2019 Handbook for Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges from the CCCCO and a Master List of MQs and Equivalencies are available on their website. The college ensures that faculty qualifications include knowledge of the subject matter and requisite skills for the service to be performed by defining these requirements within job announcements and screening for applications for these requirements. Approved equivalencies are published in job announcements. Job announcements include appropriate degrees, professional experience, discipline expertise, level of assignment, teaching skills, scholarly activities, and potential to contribute to the mission of the institution as factors for qualification. The collective bargaining agreement (CBA) includes course and curriculum

revisions and responsibility for student learning outcomes assessment within the faculty workload and evaluates faculty participation through the performance evaluation process. (III.A.2)

The team found that there are policies and procedure in place to ensure that administrators and other employees responsible for educational programs and other services possess the qualifications necessary to perform the duties required to support the mission and values of the college and to sustain institutional effectiveness and academic quality. Job announcements emphasized the diverse population that the college serves and possessed all the required information including title, basic function, distinguishing characteristics, knowledge, ability, and education and experience. (III.A.3)

Rio Hondo College has processes in place to ensure that required degrees held by faculty, administrators, and other employees are from institutions accredited by recognized U.S. accrediting agencies, as well as processes for recognizing equivalent degrees from non-U.S. institutions. Information regarding these requirements and processes are available in job announcements and through the Human Resources website. Human Resources includes the screening and verification process of candidate qualifications as a component of the job description for the Human Resources Coordinator. (III.A.4)

The College has established written criteria for evaluating employees through collective bargaining agreements, board policies, and administrative procedures. The performance evaluations aim to assess employee effectiveness and identify areas of improvement. Processes are in place to ensure that employees that receive a “Needs Improvement” in their evaluation receive a performance improvement plan with goals and resources. All evaluations are documented and placed in the employee’s personnel folder. The team found evidence that the Office of Human Resources tracks the completion of evaluations for all employee groups. The performance evaluations for staff are conducted on a regular basis as required. However, based upon the evidence provided, the college is not keeping pace for faculty and administrative evaluations. The team found that the college had completed 68 percent of the full-time faculty, 82 percent of the part-time faculty, and 33 percent of the administrator performance evaluations on schedule. The team verified that the college is committed to addressing the backlog in these areas. (III.A.5)

Standard III A.6. – No longer applicable deleted by the commission.

The team found evidence that Rio Hondo College ensures that it maintains a sufficient number of full-time faculty by meeting or exceeding the Faculty Obligation Number (FON) set by the CCCCCO. The college analyzes faculty staffing numbers and plans for staffing for the upcoming year based upon the FON and institutional planning process. Through the institutional planning

process, program faculty may request faculty positions based on student performance data and learning needs. Requests include the reason for the request, data to support the request, history of the request, and the option to set the priority for the request. The faculty requests go through the annual planning process and a ranking process for the Resource Allocation Prioritization. Process begins with program review and works its way up. The college has demonstrated the development of new faculty positions based on these processes. (III.A.7)

The team found evidence that the college includes part-time faculty members in various campus events, college functions, and professional development activities. The college has established Board Policy 7160 to address the desire to provide professional development consistent with the institutional mission and based on evolving pedagogy, technology, and learning needs. The board policy also states that the institution should be systematically evaluating professional development programs and using the results as the basis for improvement and funding. The college has a Faculty Orientation – Quick Start Guide that provides new adjunct and part-time faculty with information regarding numerous campus processes, policies, and important contact information. Part-time faculty are also provided a class syllabus template and a guide on Teaching Tips for Student Centered Learning. The guide for student centered learning includes a section on using diverse teaching techniques which once again aligns with the mission of the college. Part-time faculty are invited to serve as representatives on Academic Senate, at the bargaining table between the college and faculty association, at division meetings, and as advisors for student clubs. Part-time faculty evaluation processes are laid out in the Collective Bargaining Agreement. (III.A.8)

Rio Hondo College ensures that it maintains a sufficient number of staff with appropriate qualifications to support the effective educational, technological, physical, and administrative operations of the college through its planning and resource allocation processes. The Office of Institutional Research and Planning Guide, Objectives and Resource Requests describes the process for submitting a full-time classified request. The request assesses the reason for the request, the data to support the request, the history of the request, and the option to set the priority for the request. The rubric used for Classified Resource Allocation Requests are linked to student success. The college has demonstrated the development of new staff positions based on these processes. (III.A.9)

The college utilizes an extensive annual program planning and resource allocation processes that utilize data analysis to assess the institutional effectiveness of all programs/areas/units and allows for informed, strategic decision making with respect to the number of administrators. Administrative procedures provide guidelines for opening an administrative position, the composition of the selection committee, and steps in the recruitment process. Job descriptions and announcements for administrative positions include information to ensure that administrators

have appropriate preparation, expertise, and experience to provide continuity and effective administrative leadership and services that support the institution's mission and goals. (III.A.10)

Rio Hondo College has established processes for creating, reviewing, and revising board policies and administrative procedures on a six-year review cycle. To ensure that the policies and procedures are fair, equitable, and non-discriminatory, the college utilizes templates from the Community College League of California and then puts them through a review, development, and vetting process with the Policies and Procedures Council, Planning and Fiscal Council, and then to the superintendent/president as part of the participatory/share governance process. Board policies and administrative procedures are readily available on the college website. (III.A.11)

The team found evidence that policies and practices at Rio Hondo College are consistent with the hiring and support of diverse personnel. The college has an Equal Employment Opportunity Plan that includes collecting employee demographic data, monitoring applicants for employment, and providing data for analyses to determine whether any monitored group is underrepresented. The information is reported to the board of trustees on an annual basis. The college creates and maintains appropriate programs, practices, and services that support its diverse personnel and are in alignment with Rio Hondo College's mission and values, including cultural events, workshops, trainings, and open dialogue spaces that promote awareness and appreciation of diversity, equity, and inclusion. (III.A.12)

The team found evidence that the college has an established code of ethics for academic employees, classified unit members, and the board of trustees. The college also has board policies and administrative procedures which detail the expectations, define unacceptable conduct, reporting requirements, and consequences for violating district policies. (III.A.13)

The team found evidence that the college plans for and provides all personnel with a wide array of opportunities for continued professional development consistent with the college's mission. The college has a cross representational Staff Development/FLEX Committee that plans, organizes, and evaluates professional development activities to meet the current and emerging professional learning and growth needs of all employees. The Staff Development Committee reviews the results of workshop and Flex evaluations to determine future professional development opportunities and submits its own program review which includes data analysis, strengths, weaknesses, and plans annually. (III.A.14)

Security and confidentiality of personnel records is outlined in the Rio Hondo College Faculty Association CBA and CA School Employees Association CBA. Each employee has access to personnel files in accordance with the law as outlined in BP 7145. (III.A.15)

Bachelor's Degree

The team verified that the faculty teaching within the Bachelor of Science in automotive technology program meet the minimum qualifications in education, professional experience, discipline expertise, and industry certifications to teach within the program. Job responsibilities within position announcements include instructing students in the discipline, instructional methodology and strategies, developing curriculum, and advising students. The number of faculty teaching within the program are sufficient to assure the quality of the program and achieve the institutional mission. The Bachelor of Science in automotive technology program may request additional full-time faculty through their annual program review in line with the college's annual planning process. (III.A.1, III.A.2, III.A.7)

Conclusions:

The college meets the standard.

Recommendation 2(improvement):

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends the college enhance the tracking of faculty and administrator evaluations to ensure all personnel are evaluated systematically and at stated intervals. (III.A.5)

III.B. Physical Resources

General Observations:

Rio Hondo College assures that it has safe and sufficient physical resources at all of its locations through sound planning and investment. The buildings are constructed and maintained through processes that ensure access to a safe, secure, and healthy learning environment. The college acquires, builds, and replaces their facilities, equipment, land and other assets in accordance with both long-term and short-term institutional goals and planning. Successful implementation of a general obligation bond (Measure A, 2004) has increased the safety, security, and effectiveness of the college's infrastructure. The annual program review process identifies ways in which physical resources can support institutional goals. These issues are addressed along with other requests for funding in the resource allocation process.

The college inspects and maintains facilities on a regular schedule and has a process to report and address issues as they arise. The college considers the total cost of ownership in its facilities planning processes. Campus safety is provided through contracted services and appropriate policies.

Findings and Evidence:

Rio Hondo College's physical resources are guided by institutional planning, including the Educational Master Plan, Facilities Master Plan, and the Five-Year Capital Outlay Plan, and other planning documents. Facilities are designed and constructed to meet the requirements of the Division of the State Architect and the American Disabilities Act. This ensures campus buildings are structurally safe for students and staff. The continued safety of facilities is achieved through regular inspections, a work order system (School Dude) for employee and student reports, and input from committees dedicated to facilities and campus safety. Many long-term capital outlay and infrastructure needs have been addressed through a voter-approved general obligation bond.

The college's annual program review process includes physical resources, providing regular input into campus facilities issues and programmatic needs. This process incorporates the college's baccalaureate program as well as its 2-year offerings, ensuring adequate support for all learning programs. Evidence of the college's responsiveness to safety concerns was funding improvement to the air filtration system during the COVID pandemic. Campus safety is provided through a contract with a private security firm, with regular patrols provided at all sites. Additionally, the college has agreements with local law enforcement agencies to address any emergencies. (III.B.1)

The college ensures adequate scope and utilization of its facilities through the annual program review process which identifies facilities needs as they relate to programmatic objectives. The Team reviewed evidence showing the college's responsiveness to the annual program planning process, including the funding of enhanced lighting in the library, the addition of electrical outlets in study areas, and the installation of light dimmers in several classrooms. Physical resource planning is integrated within the college's long-term (e.g., Facilities Master Plan) and short-term planning, which helps link physical resources to institutional goals.

The college's annual planning processes, including a Facilities Committee, ensure effective utilization of its physical assets. The college's physical resources are managed by qualified professionals with responsibility to inspect, clean, and maintain facilities and equipment in on a regular schedule. Space utilization and scheduling requests are managed through the 25Live system, providing real-time data to users. The college also has a general obligation bond (Measure A), which has helped to construct and modernize facilities pursuant to long-term college plans and capital outlay needs. Implementation of the bond is reviewed by a Citizens' Oversight Committee, as required by Proposition 39 (2000). This helps assure that the bond proceeds are managed with integrity and expended for the purposes intended by the voters. The annual financial and performance audits of Measure A reviewed by the team show no concerns. (III.B.2)

The college uses a variety of long- and short-term plans to assess the feasibility and effectiveness of its physical resources, including the Facilities Master Plan, the Five-Year Capital Outlay Plan (COP), and the Five-Year Scheduled Maintenance Plan (SMP). Further, the Educational Master Plan guides physical resource planning related to program development and enrollment growth. The college uses the COP, SMP and information from the annual program review process to review and adjust classrooms, labs, and other spaces to meet program needs.

The college utilizes several programs to help with the management of physical resources. Space utilization information is managed through 25Live, the web-based facilities scheduling program. The college utilizes the ESCAPE system to house information regarding equipment and fixed assets. New items are added to ESCAPE and provide the college with an inventory of assets, which facilitates tracking of necessary equipment replacement and repair. As mentioned earlier, the college utilizes School Dude for notification of issues that require attention. The college also engages third party vendors to assist with maintenance, particularly complex processes such as high-voltage electrical work. The college's baccalaureate program is included in these efforts. (III.B.3)

The college's management of physical resources is driven by long-term planning processes including the Facilities Master Plan, the Five-Year Capital Outlay Plan (COP), and the Five-Years Scheduled Maintenance Plan (SMP). The implementation of Measure A has allowed the college to address key goals documented in the Facilities Master Plan. Physical resources are regularly assessed and updated through annual revisions to the COP and SMP. Also, the college's annual program review process informs needed alterations to these plans.

Total cost of ownership is addressed in multiple ways. The college uses the ESCAPE program to track equipment and other physical assets. This guides staff to repair and replace assets on a regular schedule. During construction and design of capital projects, the college's construction management company works with the finance team to assess ongoing maintenance and operations costs of the new facility, including consideration of custodial services, waste management, and other obligations required by the facility. (III.B.4)

Bachelor's Degree

The Team's review found that the college's planning processes and funding resources are sufficient to support the Bachelor of Science in automotive technology program. The program's needs are incorporated into the annual planning and resources allocation processes, so the program's needs are appropriately identified. Additionally, the college has utilized grant funds where appropriate to support successful implementation of the program. (III.B.3)

Conclusions:

The college meets the standard.

III.C. Technology Resources

General Observations:

Rio Hondo College's technology services, professional support, facilities, hardware, and software are appropriate and adequate to support the college's management and operational functions, academic programs, teaching and learning, and support services. The college has a comprehensive technology plan with themes around infrastructure, systems integration, efficiency improvements, and business process review that guide the work of the Information Technology Services Department and are linked to the technology resource allocations through the college's annual planning process. The college plans for technology updates and replacements to ensure its technological infrastructure, quality, and capacity support its mission, operations, programs, and services.

Rio Hondo College effectively manages its technology resources to ensure reliability, safety, and security in its managed locations. In addition to Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 3720 which apply to the appropriate use of the college's computer systems, the college has an Information Technology Security Standards and Protocols document which applies to all computer and network systems, software, and paper files owned by and/or administered by Rio Hondo College.

The college has policies and procedures in place that guide the appropriate use of technology in the teaching and learning processes, and provide appropriate instruction and support for faculty, staff, students, and administrators in the effective use of technology related to its programs, services, and institutional operations. Training is designed to meet the needs of the campus as determined by a bi-annual needs assessment.

Findings and Evidence:

Rio Hondo College provides and maintains effective technology in support of its classroom, support services, and operational management. Technology resources are managed through the Information Technology Services Department (ITS) which provides support and direction to all segments of the college for administrative, instructional, and student support services areas. The college has a Technology Master Plan with themes around infrastructure, systems integration, efficiency improvements, and business process review that guide the work of the ITS. Resources for technology are allocated through the college's annual planning process. The 2016 Climate Survey Report demonstrates student and employee satisfaction with technology. The college

also has an Enterprise Systems Advisory Committee that meets monthly during the academic year to discuss technology related topics and the status of various technology projects and initiatives. ITS offers help desk support to faculty, staff and students via telephone and the internet. They also provide technology training to staff and faculty both in-person and online. (III.C.1)

Rio Hondo College plans for technology updates and replacements to ensure its technological infrastructure, quality, and capacity support its mission, operations, programs, and services. The Enterprise Systems Advisory Committee (ESAC), a shared governance committee, has established classroom and operational technology replacement cycles. A list of equipment proposed for replacement is provided to the committee annually. The committee reviews the reports, makes modifications as necessary, and provides support in obtaining funding necessary to implement the replacements. Information Technology Services (ITS) has an established instructional equipment replacement budget of \$250,000. Rio Hondo College received \$15 million for technology improvements in bond Measure A. Since 2018, the college has invested money into upgrading the college's network switches and wireless network to improve speed and service to the campus, server and storage upgrades, firewall and security system enhancements, upgraded the main campus internet circuit, and installed four remote locations with gigabit internet circuits and connecting the locations to the main Rio Hondo College campus. In 2020-2021, the college made server and storage upgrades along with a third-party vendor contract to provide 24/7 securing monitoring services to protect the college's digital assets from ransomware and other forms of cyberattack. During the pandemic, Rio Hondo College upgraded its technology loaner program to make over 1,000 Chromebooks and 800 hotspots available to students to support online learning. (III.C.2)

Rio Hondo College effectively manages its technology resources to ensure reliability, safety, and security in its managed locations. In addition to Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 3720 which apply to the appropriate use of the college's computer systems, they have an Information Technology Security Standards and Protocols document which applies to all computer and network systems, software, and paper files owned by and/or administered by Rio Hondo College. The college has a main campus and four education centers that are interconnected with redundant fiber connections and multiple switch paths. The college utilizes its storage infrastructure to take multiple snapshots of critical servers throughout the day and full backups of the information each night. Backups are performed on a schedule and stored offsite to Wasabi Cloud Storage to prevent data loss from a catastrophic disaster. The college also uses a security protection firm to monitor its servers and its internal and external networks for possible intrusions. (III.C.3)

Rio Hondo College provides appropriate instruction and support for faculty, staff, students, and administrators in the effective use of technology related to its programs, services, and institutional operations. The college has an Information Technology Services department that

provides support for IT services such as e-mail, telephone, internet access, Wi-Fi, website maintenance, Banner, Access Rio, SARS-Anywhere, Blackboard Connect, Office 365, Microsoft Windows, technical training, etc. On their website, they have a link for a help desk that provides immediate support and a training link that leads to training for individuals and groups by appointment. Training is designed to meet the needs of the campus which are determined through the college's Professional Development Department's bi-annual needs assessment. The college also provides instructional videos for students using college email, registering for classes, applying for financial aid, etc., as well as personalized instructional support in on-campus computer labs. (III.C.4)

Rio Hondo College has policies and procedures in place that guide the appropriate use of technology in the teaching and learning processes. Board policies and administrative procedures are established for Computer and Network Use, Student Records and Directory Information and Privacy, Accessibility of Information Technology, and Distance Education. The faculty at Rio Hondo College have created a Guide for Faculty Peer Review of Online Classes which reviews regular and effective contact, instructor communication with and between students, timely feedback on student work, and best practices to ensure compliance with regular and effective contact requirements. (III.C.5)

Bachelor's Degree

The team found that the Bachelor of Science in automotive technology program submits an annual program review in line with the college's annual planning process. As the majority of technology used within the program applies to the first two years of curriculum, there have not been additional technology needs within the bachelor's program. (III.C.1)

Conclusions:

The college meets the standard.

III.D. Financial Resources

General Observations:

Management of the college's financial resources is guided by its mission and goals. The college's budget planning and development process is outlined through detailed policies and procedures. The planning process provides transparency and allows for adequate input from college stakeholders. Appropriate policies, procedures and internal controls are in place to ensure that financial resources are managed with integrity and comply with relevant regulations and generally accepted accounting principles.

The college provides detailed budget reports to the board of trustees, cabinet, and to the Planning and Fiscal Council for input, and review. An annual budget town hall held for the community's benefit provides further transparency. The college assesses long-term financial obligations and enacts plans to address them. The college has adequate financial resources to support student learning and to ensure financial stability for its programs, including the Bachelor of Science in automotive technology program. Annual independent audits reviewed by the team confirm that the college's finances are managed with integrity.

Findings and Evidence:

Rio Hondo College's finances are effectively managed to support and sustain learning programs and services while maintaining financial stability. Evidence that the college's budget supports learning is that 56 percent of unrestricted general fund expenditures go toward direct instruction, exceeding legal requirements. The college's financial decisions and resource allocations are fully integrated within its planning processes. The college's integrated planning process include participation from all constituent groups. The college has sufficient financial resources required to sustain its objectives, as evidenced by a net ending balance of over 26 percent. Additionally, the college pursues external grants to enhance financial support for programs. The college has sufficient resources and planning to support learning objectives, sustain institutional effectiveness, and maintain financial stability for its programs, including the baccalaureate program in automotive technology. (III.D.1)

Fiscal planning is guided by the college's long-term and near-term goals. Resource allocations support the college's strategic goals through a prioritization process that is managed through the Planning and Fiscal Council in a manner outlined in the Comprehensive and Integrated Planning Process. This ensures that resources are aligned with the college's priorities.

Appropriate board policies are in place (BP 6200, BP 6300, BP 6320, BP 6400) to ensure that finances are managed with integrity and in a transparent manner. A review of recent audit reports demonstrate that published fiscal information accurately reflects the college's financial position and long-term obligations.

The college's institutional planning process centers around the annual Comprehensive Program Review process, which is guided by the college's Education Master Plan and its strategic goals. The process provides for input from stakeholders from all areas of the college. Fiscal transparency is achieved through committee review, regular reports to the Trustees, an annual town hall, and by making important fiscal information and reports available on the website. (III.D.2, III.D.3)

The college has appropriate policies regarding development of the annual budget. The Office of Finance and Business develops revenue estimates based on the January release of the Governor's

Budget. Estimated revenues are shared with college leadership, committees, and the board of trustees. The team reviewed agendas and minutes of board of trustees and committee meetings confirming that the college follows its documented procedures. The college uses reasonable assumptions to project revenues and expenditures over a multiyear period, which aids long-term fiscal planning. The annual independent audits provide evidence that college expenditures are fairly stated. (III.D.4)

The college has adequate internal control processes, policies, and procedures to ensure the responsible use of resources. The college utilizes the PeopleSoft enterprise resource program to implement budget control and approval processes while providing real-time information to all budget managers. The college makes available a detailed chart of accounts and an accounting manual, and it employs qualified accounting staff that monitors all transactions. Adequate purchasing requirements and checks are in place. Annual audits are conducted by an external independent auditor, as specified in the California Community Colleges Contracted District Audit Manual. Financial information, including the budget and quarterly financial statements, is routinely disseminated to the college community and presented to the board of trustees. (III.D.5)

The college's budget, audit reports, quarterly financial reports, and other information are broadly disseminated and are available on the Finance and Budget Division's webpage. The team reviewed audit reports and verified that the college has not received any modified opinions on its financial statements over the past several years. This reflects a high degree of credibility and reliability of the college's accounting practices. Where a few nonfinancial findings were identified in previous years, they were corrected in a timely manner. Audit results and financial information presented to the board of trustees are also communicated to other constituent groups. The annual audits are inclusive of the college's baccalaureate program, and there were no findings related to that program in the team's review. (III.D.6, III.D.7)

The annual audits reviewed by the team have not identified any issues with the college's internal controls. Additionally, the college's financial transactions are approved by the Los Angeles County Office of Education through the PeopleSoft system. The college's general obligation bond (Measure A) is also subject to annual independent audits, which have not identified any concerns. The college's Foundation is reviewed in conjunction with the college's annual audit. (III.D.8)

The college has sufficient cash flow and completes regular analyses to monitor fiscal stability. BP 6250 (Budget Management) requires the college to maintain reserves of at least five percent of unrestricted general fund expenditures, consistent with the minimum reserve required by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. The team confirmed that the college has maintained unrestricted general fund balances of approximately 26 percent over recent years, well above the required level. The college has sufficient cash reserves to address unforeseen

financial emergencies and avoid borrowing. The college has also taken a proactive approach toward addressing long-term liabilities through investments in a pension rate stabilization program (balance of \$7.3 million). Further, the college mitigates potential risk through comprehensive property, liability, and workers compensation insurance. (III.D.9)

The college practices oversight of all funds inclusive of financial aid, grants, externally funded programs, and contractual relationship through board policies (e.g., BP 6200, BP 6250) that, among other things, provide for responsible stewardship over resources in accordance with the Budget and Accounting Manual. Additionally, the college employs grant accountants to ensure compliance with all pertinent regulatory requirements. Auxiliaries, the Financial Aid Department, the Foundation, and grants undergo external audits and are compliant with Title IV rules and regulations. (III.D.10)

As demonstrated through its budget and financial documents, the college has adequate resources necessary to meet both short-term and long-term financial obligations. The college's reserves have consistently been over 26 percent in recent years, which provides protection from unforeseen emergencies and economic downturns. The college's planning and resource allocation processes consider both current and future liabilities. Aiding this effort are the college's multi-year revenue and expenditure projections, in which reasonable assumptions are employed to assess the college's ability to meet long-term obligations.

While the college has made significant commitments regarding long-term retiree health benefits, it has also made prudent investments into an Other Post Employee Benefits (OPEB) fund. As of June 30, 2019, the college has an estimated liability of \$57.9 million and a net position of \$52.5 million in the OPEB trust, for a net liability of \$5.4 million. While the college will need to continually assess the net liability and prepare to manage these costs, the team commends the college for the proactive steps taken to minimize the OPEB net liability while also maintaining adequate financial resources for its academic and student support programs. The college has adequate policies (BP 7340) and agreements in place to account for leave balances and cap them, as specified. (III.D.11, III.D.12)

The college has long-term debt related to Measure A, a general obligation bond measure approved by local voters in 2004 for capital improvement projects. Funds to repay the debt are collected by the county through ad valorem taxes and placed in a Debt Service Fund. The activities and internal control over Measure A funds are also audited by an independent auditor. The college has consistently received unmodified opinions in its audits. Active and planned projects are also reviewed by the Citizens' Oversight Committee, as required under Proposition 39 (2000). The college has appropriate policies in place for proper management of debt, specifically BP 6323. Grants and auxiliary funds are subject to appropriate expenditure policies

and procedures. Compliance is monitored through the college's annual audits, which show no concerns identified in recent years. (III.D.13, III.D.14)

The annual independent audits confirm that the college complies with all federal requirements related to the management and disbursement of federal financial aid. The college's student loan default rates have declined from 18.4 percent in 2015 to 8.6 percent in 2017, which are well below federal regulations that require a rate of less than 30 percent default over three years. (III.D.15)

The college's contractual agreements follow established policies and procedures (e.g., BP 6100, BP 6150) that require ratification of contracts by the board of trustees and establish appropriate signature authority for contract execution. The college also has appropriate policies in place regarding the bidding of contracts (BP 6340) to ensure the transparency of contracting efforts. Contracts are monitored by the vice president of finance and business and/or the director of contracts management and vendor services to ensure compliance with agreements. The team has reviewed contract agreements entered into by the college and can confirm that those agreements include appropriate provisions necessary to protect the college. Annual audits reviewed by the team have not identified any findings related to contract management. (III.D.16)

Bachelor's Degree

During its review, the team found that the college has adequate financial resources and planning processes to support the Bachelor of Science in automotive technology program. The automotive technology program is incorporated into the college's processes, including the annual integrated planning program and the resource allocation process. The college has provided the team with information showing that initial costs of implementation were funded with the help of a state grant intended to support community college baccalaureate programs, and that existing college resources and grants were sufficient to support the ongoing program. (III.D.1)

Conclusions:

The college meets the standard.

Standard IV

Leadership and Governance

IV.A. Decision-Making Roles & Processes

General Observations:

Rio Hondo College has a comprehensive leadership structure that includes the president, an administrative team, the Academic Senate, the Associated Student Body (ASB), and various focused committees that contribute to the college's collegial decision-making process. Constituent groups recognize that collaboration is a central component to participatory decision-making and integral to student learning, programs, and services at the college. Interviews with various key committee leaders, staff, and students validated the assertions that these processes and procedures are operationalized college-wide.

Findings and Evidence:

The college maintains appropriate policies and administrative procedures to support effective planning and implementation. The college's Organizational Structures and Governance Manual outlines the roles and responsibilities of constituent groups, allowing for input from faculty, staff, students, and administrators (IV.A.1).

The board of trustees is responsible for setting board policies that frame district governance. board policies and administrative procedures describe faculty, classified staff, administrator, and student roles in college governance. The college's Organizational Structures and Governance Manual and corresponding shared governance structures specify the manner through which decisions are made. (IV.A.2)

Administrators and faculty, through policy and procedures, have a substantive and clearly defined role in institutional governance and exercise a substantial voice in institutional policies, planning, and budget that relate to their areas of responsibility and expertise. The college's Organizational Structure and Governance Manual defines all roles in the participatory governance process. (IV.A.3)

The college board policies, administrative procedures, and established processes assure that both faculty and administrators have responsibility for recommendations regarding curriculum and student learning programs and services. The college primarily relies on faculty in development and update of curricular matters. (IV.A.4)

The college ensures consideration of relevant perspectives and decision making aligned with expertise through its board policies, administrative procedures, and governance structure. Timely action is achieved through annually published calendars for key processes such as curriculum, annual planning, resource allocation, and program review processes. The college's Organizational Structure and Governance Manual ensures the participatory/shared governance decision-making structure is an apparatus of committees that utilizes a representative approach. (IV.A.5)

Processes for decision making are documented and communicated widely across the institution through governance handbooks and models of decision making. Decisions are communicated through the representative decision-making model, committee minutes, board of trustees meeting minutes, reports made at the Institutional Planning Retreat, web-based platforms, and the college website. (IV.A.6)

The college regularly evaluates its governance and decision-making processes, revises its governance manual, and updates its board policies and administrative procedures with support of the Community College League of California's policy update services. The Organizational Structure and Governance Manual is reviewed every two years and was last reviewed in 2020. (IV.A.7)

Bachelor Degree

In the development of the Bachelor of Science degree in automotive technology, the college relied on AP 4050 and existing processes and procedures to ensure that both faculty and administration had joint responsibility regarding curriculum and student learning programs and services in support of the degree program. The faculty had primary responsibility for the development of curriculum. (IV.A.4)

Conclusions:

The college meets the standard.

IV.B. Chief Executive Officer

General Observations:

During the period observed, the college went through three transitions in the CEO role. Throughout this time, the college continued to follow established organizational structures,

policies, and procedures. The CEO is the board's only employee and is responsible for the quality of instruction, management, and accreditation.

Findings and Evidence:

The superintendent/president of Rio Hondo College has primary responsibility for the quality of the institution. These responsibilities are evidenced through the job description for the CEO, board policies, and administrative procedures, reporting relationships, and communication with respect to the college's key institutional effectiveness processes. (IV.B.1)

The board of trustees delegates appropriate authority to the superintendent/president. The superintendent/president ensures that administrators and others meet goals and objectives consistent with their roles and responsibilities. The institutional planning processes and governance structures also provide the superintendent/president with the information needed to ensure the administrative structure reflects the purposes, size, and complexity of the college. (IV.B.2)

The superintendent/president guides institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment by overseeing the institutional effectiveness function of the college, which includes all institutional planning activities and the setting of institutional performance targets. Key personnel, including the vice president of academic affairs, the vice president for student services, the chief financial officer, and the dean of institutional research and planning report directly to the superintendent/president. The superintendent/president maintains responsibility for all college planning and resource allocation processes and ensures these processes and assessments are aligned with the mission, vision, and values of the college. (IV.B.3)

The superintendent/president assumes the leading role in accreditation processes and demonstrates commitment to ongoing compliance and issues of academic quality through participation in institutional processes. Faculty, staff, and administrative leaders ensure academic quality and compliance with accreditation standards through participatory/shared governance structures associated with the standards and through collaboration and consultation with the accreditation liaison officer. (IV.B.4)

The college maintains several board policies, administrative procedures, and institutional governance structures that delegate authority to the superintendent/president. The superintendent/president ensures that administrative procedures and other institutional practices are in accord with the college's mission statement and board policies. (IV.B.5)

The superintendent/president regularly engages with the community, including businesses, nonprofits, service and school entities. Regular, formal updates are provided to each of the five

city councils within the service area along with presentations to various service clubs throughout the region. (IV.B.6)

Conclusions:

The college meets the standard.

IV.C. Governing Board

General Observations:

The governing board is the legal entity and ultimate authority over the college. Over the past four years, the board of trustees has seen significant turnover with four of the five trustees now serving their first term as trustees. The board of trustees is active in professional development through the Community College League of California and demonstrated practical understanding of the appropriate roles for board members.

Findings and Evidence:

The board of trustees exercises ultimate authority over and responsibility for college policies that assure the academic quality, integrity, and effectiveness of student learning services. The board is actively involved in oversight of the financial stability of the college supports activities that further the college's Mission. (IV.C.1)

The board of trustees makes decisions by majority at their meetings conducted in public according to California open meetings law. The board acts as a single body with a single voice. Rio Hondo College trustees have authority only when meeting as a board and not as individual trustees. (IV.C.2)

The college is currently in the process of a third presidential hire during the accreditation cycle. Upon the retirement of the president in 2019, the board conducted a search in accordance with board policy. The new president resigned at the end of 2020 and the board hired an interim president who has been in place throughout the pandemic. The team found evidence of evaluation of the CEO and concluded that the processes used for hiring met the standard. (IV.C.3)

Board members are elected by a public vote from one of five districts encompassing the college service area. Board members demonstrated an understanding that their role is to serve the college in their official capacity without undue political influence. (IV.C.4)

The board of trustees are ultimately responsible for the educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity of the college. The board members approve degrees, curriculum, and articulation agreements. The board oversees the legal position and fiscal health of the college in accordance with the California Education Code, the Rio Hondo college mission, and board policies. (IV.C.5)

The policies specifying the size of the governing board, its duties, responsibilities, structures, and operating procedures are published on the district's website in the board policies and administrative procedures section. All actions of the board of trustees are properly noticed and posted in a prominent location on the college's website. (IV.C.6)

The board of trustees acts in accordance with its policies, which they review, evaluate, and revise as necessary. The board adopts policies of intent authorized by law or deemed necessary for the operations of the college. (IV.C.7)

The board of trustees monitors institutional performance and educational quality. The board, regularly reviews key indicators of student learning and achievement as well as institutional plans for improving academic quality. (IV.C.8)

The college provides training for new members of the board of trustees through orientations. As well, trustees participate in ongoing professional development opportunities through national organizations and the Community College League of California. Existing board policies provide mechanisms for continuity of board membership and staggered terms of office. (IV.C.9)

The board of trustees assesses its performance through annual self-evaluations. Results of the self-evaluations highlight accomplishment and note areas for improvement. Goals and objectives are discussed in open session and within the context of college institutional effectiveness measures. (IV.C.10)

The board of trustees has established policies concerning its Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest. In addition, each board member is required to file appropriate documentation with the State of California to disclose economic interests that may appear to impact impartiality in contracts that are approved by the college (IV.C.11)

The board of trustees delegates responsibility and authority to the superintendent/president to implement board policies and holds the CEO accountable for the operation of the college through board policy and regular evaluation. (IV.C.12)

The superintendent /president is responsible for keeping the board of trustees regularly informed and updated about the eligibility requirements, accreditation standards, commission policies, accreditation processes, and the college's accredited status. A review of meeting agenda confirms that the college administration regularly updates the Board on matters relating to accreditation. (IV.C.13)

Conclusions:

The college meets the standard.

IV.D. Multi-College Districts or Systems

Rio Hondo Community College District is a single college district.

Quality Focus Essay

Rio Hondo College identified two separate projects in their Quality Focus Essay. Project One seeks “capacity building” by providing a commitment to developing and strengthening college resources toward the continuing goal of student success through excellence in teaching. Project Two seeks to develop, expand, and implement the use of open educational resources (OER) across campus.

Project One

This project seeks to build on the existing complement of faculty professional development offerings by establishing a fully integrated and systematic institutional infrastructure that supports organizational growth and individual capability on these topics. Several tiers of participation will be offered, with some culminating in certificates of achievement or other incentives as may be devised. In order to accommodate all faculty, professional development opportunities should be available through a variety of modes: face-to-face, online, via Zoom, and through individualized study.

Project Two

This project is designed to increase the number of course sections and programs that utilize OER—and increasing potential and current student awareness about OER — will increase enrollment, retention, and completion of those low-income students for whom instructional materials are cost prohibitive. The college anticipates that term-to-term persistence will increase as more OER materials are adopted. Increased implementation is also expected to translate to increases in the overall successful course completion rates and ultimately will lead to increases in achievement outcomes such as transfer and transfer degree completion.