PEER REVIEW TEAM REPORT

Carrington College
8909 Folsom Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95826

This report represents the findings of the peer review team that visited
Carrington College from Monday, October 14 – Thursday, October 17, 2019

Kevin Trutna, Ed.D.
Team Chair

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Carrington College
Comprehensive Evaluation Visit
Peer Review Team Roster

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Feather River College
Superintendent/President

Assistant

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Feather River College
Chief Student Services Officer

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Dr. Stephanie Droker
ACCJC
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Summary of Evaluation Report

INSTITUTION: Carrington College

DATES OF VISIT: Monday, October 14 – Thursday, October 17, 2019

TEAM CHAIR: Dr. Kevin Trutna

A ten member accreditation team visited Carrington College October 14 to October 17, 2019 for the purpose of determining whether the College meets Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) Standards, Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and USDE regulations. 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 on August 1, 2019 and conducted a pre-visit to the campus on August 29, 2019. During this visit, the chair met with campus leadership and key personnel involved in the self-evaluation preparation process. The team also attended a team training on September 5, 2019 in Los Angeles that was facilitated by senior leaders from the ACCJC.

The evaluation team received the College's self-evaluation document (ISER) and evidence several weeks prior to the site visit. The team members completed their team assignments individually which included acknowledging strengths and areas for further investigation and developed a list of additional evidence and interview requests and submitted their assignments to the team chair on October 1st. On October 8th, the team hosted a conference call with the team to discuss initial observations including their preliminary review of the written materials and evidence provided by the College. Overall, team members found the ISER to be fairly brief and lacking substantial evidence in a few areas in order to adequately address Eligibility Requirements, Commission Standards, and Commission Policies. Together, the team developed a list of additional evidence requests and common questions that would be best suited for a meeting with a Carrington staff member. Responses to requests were met with transparency and detailed information.

Prior to the visit and during the visit, the College provided additional evidence as requested by the team. The team felt that meetings with Carrington leadership, staff, students and board members helped provide clarification to the team's outstanding questions.

In the weeks leading up to the main campus visit in Sacramento, members of the team visited Carrington College campuses in Reno, Nevada, as well as Ontario, Pleasant Hill, and Stockton in California. During the visit to Sacramento, team members also visited the Citrus Heights campus. Each visiting team member reported that at all of the locations facilities were conducive to learning with appropriate oversight and comparable services at each campus.

The team confirmed that the ISER was developed through broad participation by the entire College community including faculty, staff, and administration. The team found that the College

provided an ISER containing self-identified action plans for institutional improvement. The College also prepared a Quality Focus Essay based upon self-identified improvement areas.

Upon arriving, the team members toured the campus and were welcomed by the President and several members of the Campus Leadership Team. Throughout the visit, the team met faculty from various programs, and had meetings with representatives from Accreditation and Professional Regulation, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Finance and Infrastructure, Human Resources, Institutional Research, as well as a forum with students and a meeting with five members of the Board of Governors.

The team found the College was prepared for the team visit and that all members of the Carrington community were very accommodating in meeting requests for additional evidence and follow-up interviews. The team felt welcomed by the entire campus community and was thoroughly supported in all facets of their work. The team also felt the responses were open, honest, and Carrington College was transparent in providing information. The evaluation team identified practices for which the College excels in meeting the Standards and some recommendations to improve quality which are documented in the following section.

Major Findings and Recommendations of the
Peer Review Team Report

Team Commendations

Commendation 1: The team commends the College for the strong alignment of the institution's programs and services with its mission by emphasizing professional standards required for successful careers. (I.A.3)

Commendation 2: The team commends the College for providing exemplary comprehensive academic advising programs to support success for at-risk students. The (Students on At-risk) SOAR advising program provides timely interventions to ensure that students understand the requirements for completion in their program of study. (II.C.5)

Team Recommendations

Recommendations to Meet Standards:

None

Recommendations to Improve Quality:

Recommendation 1: In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends that the College build upon its existing SLO processes to ensure a sustained, substantive, and collegial dialogue about student learning and achievement. (II.A.3)

Recommendation 2: In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends that the College continue to follow the Correction Action Plans (CAP) as identified in response to audit reports. (III.D.15)

Recommendation 3: In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends that the College further document their evaluation mechanisms of institutional decision-making policies, procedures and processes, including how the resultant improvements are communicated across the institution. (IV.A.7)

Introduction

Carrington College has a rich history spanning over 50 years or providing specific, career-related programs to different locations, including various consolidations with other private two-year certificate and associate degree program granting institutions. The institution can trace its roots to 1967 when Northwest College of Medical Assistants and Dental Assistants was founded. In 1983, a new ownership changed the name to Western Career College. Western Career College was granted initial ACCJC accreditation in 2001. Various programmatic, locations, and ownership changes have occurred between 1968 through the latest acquisition in 2018.

In 2018, Carrington College was sold to San Joaquin Valley College Incorporated, an existing fully accredited private, for-profit institution. Carrington College currently offers 20 degree/certificate programs in eighteen locations throughout eight states (Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas, and Washington). In addition to being accredited by the ACCJC, Carrington has an array of programmatic approval from program-specific accrediting bodies appropriate to the academic disciplines and states in which programs are offered. Over the last 5-7 years, twelve low-enrolled programs have been eliminated. In 2018 a Phlebotomy program was added.

The mission of Carrington College is to provide learning opportunities to individuals in the communities it serves through postsecondary programs of study, which include general students and professional preparation in career focused majors. The mission statement was adopted in 2010 and is still applicable today. Carrington offers certificate and associate degree programs that range in length from several weeks to approximately two years. A current snapshot of the student population shows 85% of the student body is female, reflecting the large percentage of healthcare programs which traditionally attract females. Additionally, 75% of students have children, 65% are unmarried, 55% of the students are 24 years old or under, and between 69-80% of students are eligible for Title IV Federal financial aid. Medical/Healthcare programs enroll the largest percentage of students (42%), followed by Nursing (22%), Dental (15%), and Veterinary (11%). California has 40% of enrolled students, followed by Arizona (23%), and Nevada (11%).

Carrington College has made significant organizational changes due to mergers and acquisitions, but also in relation to needs identified for oversight of individual campuses and programmatic accreditation. A new vice president position was added in part to the various state regulations and state accreditation requirements of healthcare programs in eight different states. Other recent improvements include a dedicated campus director for each site in addition to the consolidation of functional oversight for academic areas and support functions.

Through various meetings with faculty, staff, students, and administrators, it is clear that Carrington College strengths are in three areas (a) providing targeted and specific career programs, (b) excelling in high-touch student services and support both inside the classroom and outside of the classroom for necessary support, and (c) taking pride in career placement and student preparation for state and national board examinations. Carrington College serves a very diverse student population who come to the College for specific career aspirations. Carrington

College is actively engaged in their local community, providing services such as dental clinics to low-economic residents while also providing real clinical experiences for students.

Prior to the acquisition by SJVCI, the five-year strategic-plan called for 2018 and 2019 to be stabilization years with 2020 and 2021 targeted for expansion and growth of programs. Immediately prior to the team visit, the Criminal Justice Associate Degree program launched at the Sacramento and Citrus Heights sites. Also during the visit, leadership shared the transition of ownership to SJVCI has gone smoothly and leadership is committed to continue to focus on finalizing a successful transition while continuing to provide and improve upon the high level of service and quality learning for students.

Eligibility Requirements

1. Authority

The team confirmed that Carrington College is authorized to operate as a post-secondary degree-granting institution based on continuous accreditation by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior College (ACCJC) of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). The ACCJC is a regional accrediting body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and granted authority through the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008. They are authorized through the California Bureau of Private Postsecondary Education. The College also maintains multiple programmatic accreditations throughout the states in which the programs are offered.

Conclusion: The College meets Eligibility Requirement 1.

2. Operational Status

The team confirmed that the College is operational and provides educational services to approximately 5,800 students each year who are enrolled in degree or certificate applicable credit courses. Carrington College, which has eighteen campus locations located across eight Western states and offers programs within healthcare, veterinary care, and criminal justice.   They offer courses in a variety of modalities: traditional face-to-face, hybrid, and online instruction.

Conclusion: The College meets Eligibility Requirement 2.

3. Degrees

The team confirmed that the courses offered by Carrington College lead to a certificate, degree, and/or transfer.   The College's students are enrolled in one of 12 certificates of achievement or 18 associate degree programs.

Conclusion: The College meets Eligibility Requirement 3.

4. Chief Executive Officer

The College's chief executive officer is appointed by the governing board who has delegated the responsibility for administering the policies of the College to the CEO. The CEO is highly qualified for the position and has served as the lead administrator since May 2016. Her full-time responsibility is to the College, and she possesses the requisite skills and authority to provide leadership to the College, and does not serve as the chair of the governing board.

Conclusion: The College meets Eligibility Requirement 4.

5. Financial Accountability

The College's Finance and Infrastructure Department oversees the College's audits and is responsible for all site visits.   The College undergoes an external audit performed by a certified public accountant.   The College's audit is presented annually to the governing board of Carrington College and to San Joaquin Valley College, Inc.

Conclusion: The College meets Eligibility Requirement 5.

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 an Peer Review Team Visit and Third Party Comment

Evaluation Items:

☒	The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comment in advance of a comprehensive evaluation visit.
☒	The institution cooperates with the evaluation team in any necessary follow-up related to the third party comment.
☒	The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission *Policy on Rights and Responsibilities of the Commission and Member Institutions* as to third party comment.

[Regulation citation: 602.23(b).]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

☒	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
☐	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.
☐	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative
The College was cooperative, honest, and transparent during all interactions with the visiting team. The team found all elements of compliance in this area to be satisfactory.

Standards and Performance with Respect to Student Achievement

Evaluation Items:

⊠	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)
⊠	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)
⊠	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)
⊠	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):

⊠	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
☐	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.
☐	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative:
The College has established and assesses student achievement performances and institution-set standards across the College and for all programs. When there are performance gaps, the College creates action plans to address the deficiencies. Managers and program leaders work with College colleagues to create and implement the action plans.

Credits, Program Length, and Tuition

Evaluation Items:

☒	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)
☒	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)
☒	Tuition is consistent across degree programs (or there is a rational basis for any program-specific tuition). (Standard I.C.2)
☒	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)
☒	The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission *Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits*.

[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):

☒	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
☐	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.
☐	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative:
Carrington College's credit hour assignments and program lengths are within the range of standard practice in higher education. These assignments have been verified internally by the College and externally by the visiting team, with evidence derived from College publications and interviews. The College complies with the Commission Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits, and tuition differences between programs are clearly justified.

Transfer Policies

Evaluation Items:

☒	Transfer policies are appropriately disclosed to students and to the public. (Standard II.A.10)
☒	Policies contain information about the criteria the institution uses to accept credits for transfer. (Standard II.A.10)
☒	The institution complies with the Commission *Policy on Transfer of Credit*.

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

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

☒	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
☐	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.
☐	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative:
Carrington College has a transfer of credit policy. The policy is stated in the Catalog and is shared with students during orientation and enrollment.

Distance Education and Correspondence Education

Evaluation Items:

For Distance Education:	
☒	The institution demonstrates regular and substantive interaction between students and the instructor.
☒	The institution demonstrates comparable learning support services and student support services for distance education students. (Standards II.B.1, II.C.1)
☒	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:	
☐	The institution demonstrates comparable learning support services and student support services for correspondence education students. (Standards II.B.1, II.C.1) Not applicable
☐	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. Not applicable
Overall:	
☒	The technology infrastructure is sufficient to maintain and sustain the distance education and correspondence education offerings. (Standard III.C.1)
☒	The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission *Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education*.

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

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

☒	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
☐	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.
☐	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the Institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.
☐	The College does not offer Distance Education or Correspondence Education.

Narrative:
The College has a policy outlining regular and effective student contact. Faculty are aware of their responsibilities and their contact is monitored on a regular basis by academic administrators. The College provides comparable student learning support services and student support services. The institution has a verification process for students in distance education courses. The College has sufficient technology infrastructure to support distance education students.

Student Complaints

Evaluation Items:

☒	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.
☒	The student complaint files for the previous seven years (since the last comprehensive evaluation) are available; the files demonstrate accurate implementation of the complaint policies and procedures.
☒	The team analysis of the student complaint files identifies any issues that may be indicative of the institution's noncompliance with any Accreditation Standards.
☒	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)
☒	The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission *Policy on Representation of Accredited Status* and the *Policy on Student and Public Complaints Against Institutions*.

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

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

☒	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
☐	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.
☐	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative:
The institution has clear procedures for student complaints and has a systematic process for using this feedback for continuous improvement. The procedures are outlined in the College catalog and Student Handbook. Complaints are logged (and maintained) with the Senior Director of Student Affairs/Ombudsman and shared appropriately with concerned parties.

Institutional Disclosure and Advertising and Recruitment Materials

Evaluation Items:

☒	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)
☒	The institution complies with the Commission *Policy on Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment*, and *Policy on Representation of Accredited Status*.
☒	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):

☒	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
☐	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.
☐	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative:
Carrington College provides accurate, timely, and appropriate detailed information through its website and its catalog regarding programs, locations, and policies. The website and catalog are easy to navigate and information to students and the public is readily available. College and program accreditation status is available on the College website, in the catalog, and displayed in the physical locations.

Title IV Compliance

Evaluation Items:

☒	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 USDE. (Standard III.D.15)
☒	If applicable, the institution has addressed any issues raised by the USDE 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)
☒	If applicable, the institution's student loan default rates are within the acceptable range defined by the USDE. Remedial efforts have been undertaken when default rates near or meet a level outside the acceptable range. (Standard III.D.15)
☐	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)
☒	The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission *Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations* and the *Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV*.

[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:

☐	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
☒	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.
☐	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative:
The audit reports for fiscal years ended June 30, 2018, 2017 and 2016 noted findings for different locations, some of which were repeat findings from the previous years which have not been addressed. The College has developed Correction Action Plans (CAP) to address these audit reports and the visiting team recommends that the College continue to follow these plans through the change in ownership.

Standard I

Mission, Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness

I.A. Mission

General Observations

Carrington College demonstrates its commitment to students through its mission. The Mission Statement, which was created in 2010, accurately describes its purpose, student population, types of degrees, and its commitment to student learning and achievement. Institutional set standards, course, program, and institutional student learning outcomes, third-party licensure exams, and student survey data are among the data used to assess how well the College is accomplishing its mission. The College's programs are aligned with its mission, and data from planning and assessment processes guide institutional decision making and resource allocation.

Findings and Evidence

The institution's mission statement describes the institution's broad educational purposes, which are to provide "postsecondary programs of study, which include general studies and professional preparation in career focused majors." The intended population is the "individuals in the communities it serves." The institution offers associate degree and certificate programs in healthcare, veterinary care, and criminal justice disciplines. The College achieves its mission through an "outcomes based approach," and per its Mission and related statements, "encourages students to work to achieve their highest potential while attaining their career goals." (I.A.1)

The College's Hedegrow Project completed in 2017 was used to help the institution determine the best programs and price structure to offer at each location and was fruitful enough that they intend to implement it every three years to continue their commitment to the students they serve and their educational achievement. (I.A.1)

The institution utilizes various types of data to determine how effectively it is accomplishing its mission. Students participate in a variety of student satisfaction surveys. The institution collects data from advisory boards, programmatic accreditors, and third-party licensure exams, and student learning outcomes' assessments, and uses this data within its program review process.   (1.A.2)

The institution also generates a weekly Academic Dashboard Report as well as a weekly and annual Academic Scorecard that are reviewed regularly and results in action plans when the data shows the same and/or decrease in results. (1.A.2)

The Strategic Plan, which is built on a five year cycle, informs the Academic Excellence, Facilities, and Information Technology Plans. (1.A.2)

Institutional Set Standards (ISSs) include retention rate, licensure pass rates, course completion, and job placement rates. ISSs are developed utilizing a combination of historical averages and "realistic projections." (1.A.2)

Educational programs that support the Mission are assessed and improved through program review and program advisory committees. An Institutional Effectiveness Plan highlights the data which different planning and assessment efforts use to ensure that they effectively aligned with and support the mission. (I.A.3)

The team observed a strong alignment of the institution's programs and services with its mission by emphasizing professional standards required for successful careers. One of the four Institutional Learning Outcomes is professionalism and this is prominently displayed around campuses. Student learning outcomes for programs and services support student learning of ILOs and are used to measure how well the College is teaching professionalism to the students. Students are exposed to professional standards through the student handbook, orientations, workshops, the Student Advisory Committee, and student peer mentors. Faculty have, as one component of the evaluation process, demonstrating and enabling students to practice aspects of professionalism. (I.A.3)

The College's Mission Statement is published in numerous documents and locations, including the website, catalog, Student Handbook, Faculty Handbook, on the walls at the College locations and others. (I.A.4)

Per the Board Operating Manual, the Board of Governors annually reviews the College's mission statement, and it ensures that the President initiates a college-wide review every three years. The Mission statement was reviewed college-wide in a 2019 survey, the results of which indicated that no changes needed to be made. (I.A.4)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standard.

Commendation:

The team commends the College for the strong alignment of the institution's programs and services with its mission by emphasizing professional standards required for successful careers. (I.A.3)

I.B. Assuring Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness

General Observations

Carrington College has an organizational structure and processes that provide opportunities for dialogue about student outcomes, student equity, academic quality, institutional effectiveness, and student learning and achievement. The College defines and assesses student learning outcomes for all instructional programs and student and learning support services. In addition, Carrington College has established institution-set standards that are aligned to its mission; assessment of the institution-set standards occur on a regular basis and are published. The College uses assessment data and institutional processes to support student learning and achievement. Program and Service Area Reviews are used to evaluate goals, student learning outcomes, and student achievement. Quantitative and qualitative data are disaggregated by program type and mode of delivery. In addition, the College evaluates its policies and practices across all areas of the institution and communicates the results of its assessment and evaluation activities. Moreover, the College is involved in continuous, broad-based, systemic evaluation and planning.

Findings and Evidence

The team found that Carrington College has a systematic integrated planning process that relies on the following five main committees to compile information that is forwarded to Carrington's Senior Leadership Team: Accreditation Excellence, Enrollment Excellence, Academic Excellence, Operations Excellence, and Student Excellence. Subcommittees provide information to each main committee. In addition, subcommittees can make recommendations directly to the Senior Leadership Team. The committee framework allows for both individuals within and outside of the College to contribute to a sustained, substantive, and collegial dialogue about student outcomes, student equity, academic quality, institutional effectiveness, and continuous improvement of student learning and achievement. Individuals from outside the College include members of program advisory committees. (I.B.1)

The College provides multiple opportunities to engage in dialogue about student learning, achievement, and equity. Program reviews and service area reviews are important vehicles

used to reflect on and document matters related academic quality and institutional effectiveness; these reviews are conducted every two years. In addition, the program and service area review process is evaluated regularly for effectiveness. As a result of the evaluation of the process, changes have been made at the College (e.g., new meeting times for certain committees and additional data in data packages). (I.B.1).

Carrington College also provides other opportunities to gather and share information. The College conducts engagement surveys twice per year across all locations. The results of the surveys are analyzed by the Senior Leadership Team and shared at local town halls and leadership meetings. Examples of information that was shared as a result of the surveys include encouraging more in-class discussions so that students could better engage with the subject matter and encouraging more one-on-one time with faculty and students in order to enhance learning. In addition, there are academic town hall-style calls that occur on a monthly basis. During these calls, academic leadership provides information on updates related to current policies, procedures, and services. (I.B.1)

Carrington College defines and assesses student learning outcomes for all instructional programs and student and learning support services. Through the program and services area reviews, the College has created and evaluated Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLOs), Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs) and course–level SLOs. All instructional student learning outcomes are captured using the learning management system called Canvas. (I.B.2)

The Academic Catalog states Carrington's ISLOs and PSLOs by program and they are evaluated in capstone and practicum/externships. For student support services, learning outcomes are assessed through a student satisfaction survey. The results of student learning outcomes are part of program review data packets. (I.B.2)

Carrington College had initially established institution-set standards for a wide number of metrics, including retention rates, successful course completion rates, job placement rates, third-party license exam pass rates, and results from the student satisfaction surveys. However, in July of 2019, the College reduced the number of institution-set standards to four metrics: successful course completion rates, graduation rates, job placement rates, and certification/licensure rates. The standard for successful course completion is set at 80%. Graduation rate is set at 50%. Job placement in the field of study is set at 50%. The standard for certification/licensure pass scores vary by program. The institution-set standards are stated in the Academic Catalog and performance can be found in data packages; the Integrated Planning Committee evaluates if standards have been met. If institution-set standards are not met, action plans are created and implemented to address the deficiencies. (I.B.3)

Carrington College uses assessment data and its institutional processes to support student learning and student achievement. The College has an ongoing and systematic program review process that utilizes a variety of data, including student learning outcomes, student satisfaction surveys, employer satisfaction surveys, placement rates, graduation rates, and licensure exam results. The outcomes of the program review, student learning outcomes assessment, and other processes feed into their participatory governance process for eventual consideration by the Carrington Senior Leadership Team. Senior Leadership Team can also consider information that has not originated from the College community. (I.B.4)

Carrington College uses program and service area reviews to assess the accomplishment of its mission and evaluate institutional effectiveness. Program and service area reviews are conducted in order for faculty and staff to assess program and service area goals and objectives, evaluate student achievement and learning outcomes, and plan for increasing student outcomes. As part of the program and service area review process, data packages are provided to the College community that include data on student achievement and student learning outcomes. Quantitative and qualitative data are disaggregated for analysis by program type and mode of delivery. (I.B.5)

Carrington College analyzes student achievement and learning outcomes data. The College disaggregates and analyzes achievement data by subpopulations of students; Carrington College defines subpopulations of students by how they receive instruction (i.e., the mode and location of delivery of the instruction). When there are gaps in performance, the College initiates action plans to address them. (I.B.6)

Carrington College regularly evaluates its policies and practices across all areas of the institution, including instructional programs, student support services, and learning support services. The primary methods through which the College evaluates its policies and practices are the program and service area reviews. Carrington College has published a program review schedule for up to 10 years with each program or service area being evaluated every two years. (I.B.7)

The personnel at the campuses review policies to ensure that they are current and relevant as well as to determine opportunities for improvement. An example of a recent initiative the College cited was an update to its grading policy in the Academic Catalog. The proposed change in grading policy was ultimately reviewed by several leaders at the College, including the Senior Leadership Team and the Accreditation Committee. (I.B.7).

Carrington College also conducts the confidential employee satisfaction survey using a third-party agency. The results of the survey are ultimately reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team and communicated to the College. (I.B.7)

Carrington College communicates its assessment and evaluation activities using a variety of sources. The College has provided a list of ten different avenues of communication; these include strategic plan reports, Senior Leadership Team reports, committee minutes, academic dashboards, and results of student satisfaction surveys and course evaluation surveys. Each aforementioned source has stakeholders who are engaged in the communication of the information, including the governing board, the president, directors, deans, and faculty. The communications occur on a weekly, monthly, quarterly, or biannual basis. (I.B.8)

The College has a documented year–round integrated planning cycle. The governing board approves an operating plan prior to the start of the fiscal year. This leads to a host of activities that occur at the College. During the first quarter of the fiscal year, academic excellence, facilities, and technology plans are updated. Furthermore, program and service reviews are initiated by the College. (I.B.9)

As part of the program review process, there are discussions of academic quality and assessment of human, physical, technological, and financial resources for each program. If there are recommendations to be made, they are forwarded through the committee structure and managers to the Senior Leadership Team for review and approval. A resource allocation rubric is used to evaluate recommendations. (I.B.9)

During the second quarter of the fiscal year, the Senior Leadership Team researches and analyzes information from the prior year; this information includes the annual operating plan, the five-year strategic plan, program and service reviews, and campus operating reviews; the results of this effort then moves toward developing the operating plan for the next fiscal year. These processes lead to annual and long-range goals of the strategic plan. (I.B.9)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standard.

I.C. Institutional Integrity

General Observations

The team finds Carrington College to be proactive and diligent in its pursuit and attainment of institutional integrity.   The College meets this standard and is particularly adept at making information about itself (policies, programs, costs) transparent and easily accessible to the public.   Particularly noteworthy is the College's focus on the continuous process of accreditation; a full-time vice president responsible for accreditation supported by two Deans and a staff member work year-round to ensure that Carrington College is in compliance with

accreditation standards, whether they be from the ACCJC or other professional or state accrediting agencies.   The College has developed and regularly revises student and employee handbooks promoting ethical behavior, and regularly evaluates faculty to ensure material is presented fairly and objectively.   Finally, the institution's commitment to students above all else is evident through continuous improvement processes tied to program review and assessment of student learning outcomes, as well as a variety of well-staffed and relevant student support services.

Findings and Evidence

Carrington College shares its mission statement, learning outcomes, educational programs, student support services and accreditation status through the College website, course catalog and a variety of publications.   This information is widely disseminated and readily available. Accuracy is ensured, as each publication is assigned to a vice president or director, and reviewed at regular intervals.   For example, the College Catalog is reviewed quarterly by the Vice President of Accreditation and Professional Regulation, who in conjunction with the accreditation team, holds catalog meetings involving departments such as Legal, Academics, Finance, Operations, Title IX, Regulatory, Compliance, and the Office of Disability Services. (I.C.1)

The College provides an online catalog, which is accessible to the public, and which students are introduced to during enrollment and new student orientation.   Information is accurate and updated on a regular basis by the Vice President of Accreditation and Professional Regulation. Catalog content is in compliance with the ACCJC "catalog requirements."   Communication between campus constituents is ensured during catalog meetings.   (1.C.2)

Individual student learning and achievement data is measured each semester by course.   This information is examined regularly through the program review process, and by deans of curriculum, accreditation, and program directors.   Licensure rates, program passage rates and employment rates are reviewed, and posted publicly on program websites.   (1.C.3)

The College provides in depth descriptions of its certificates and degrees.   The College Catalog and individual program websites describe each program's purpose, curriculum, credit hours, length, learning outcomes and career expectations.   (1.C.4)

Carrington College regularly reviews institutional policies, procedures, and publications to assure integrity in representations of its mission, programs, and services.   All publications are reviewed annually (or quarterly in the case of the College Catalog).   Two recent examples of updates to college publications are the recent inclusion of three-year pass rate data for first time test takers of the Veterinary Technician National Exam, and Medical Assisting five year weighted average placement rates (1.C.5)

The College accurately informs current and prospective students regarding the total cost of education.   The College Catalog contains a list of programs and an itemized breakdown of associated costs.   In addition, the College provides this information to students in individualized enrollment agreements, prior to beginning a course of study.   (I.C.6)

The College ensures institutional and academic integrity by publishing governing board policies on academic freedom and responsibility.   The policy on academic integrity and freedom is located in the "regulations" section of the College Catalog.   It articulates that instructors have an obligation to present material in an intellectually honest and fair manner, and to foster an atmosphere conducive to intellectual freedom.   (I.C.7)

Carrington College establishes and publishes clear policies and procedures that promote honesty, responsibility, and academic integrity.   Policies in each of the following areas are included in the College Catalog, Student Handbook or Faculty Handbook: Family Educational Rights, nondiscrimination, Title IX compliance, Drug Free Schools and Communities Act, Campus Crime and Security Act, media release rights, academic integrity and student code of conduct.   (I.C.8)

Carrington College takes measures to ensure faculty distinguish between personal conviction and professionally accepted views in a discipline.   Initially, faculty are informed of these conditions in the job listings on the College website.   Next, newly hired faculty are required to complete an online training course.   Instructors are evaluated annually through either a Virtual Course Observation (for online classes) or a Learning Evaluation Observation (for face-to-face classes).   Finally, students evaluate instructors in an end-of-course survey.   (I.C.9)

Carrington College has student, instructor and employee codes of conduct/ethics centered on academic honesty, and intellectual freedom.   These codes do not require adherence to partisan beliefs or worldviews, nor do they seek to instill such beliefs or worldviews.   (I.C.10)

Carrington College does not operate in foreign locations.   (I.C.11)

Carrington College is in compliance with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, Commission policies, guidelines and requirements for public disclosure, institutional reporting, team visits, and prior approval of substantive changes.   There is a dedicated Vice President of Accreditation and Professional Regulation, accompanied by two Deans who formulate a team to maintain programmatic and institutional accreditation.   Governing Board Policy #18 outlines the expectation that Carrington College comply with all applicable accrediting agencies. (1.C.12)

The College demonstrates honesty and integrity in its relationships with external agencies and works proactively to ensure compliance with regulations and statutes. Once approvals are attained, they are indicated in the Course Catalog and College website.   Proper disclosures and disclaimers are listed according to the requirements of institutional and programmatic accreditors.   When changes are needed to update policies or content in these areas, the Course Catalog change process is initiated.   (1.C.13)

Carrington College makes its commitments to student achievement and student learning paramount to other objectives.   This emphasis is evident throughout the Academic Excellence Master Plan, the vigilant monitoring of student progress, as well as the allocation of resources to Student Success Centers and Libraries on each campus.   (1.C.14)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standard.

Standard II

Student Learning Programs and Support Services

II.A. Instructional Programs

General Observations

Carrington College is a two year college offering a variety of associate and degree programs within the healthcare, veterinary care, and criminal justice disciplines. The institution has 5,813 enrolled students at 18 campuses located across 8 Western states. Courses for the College's 12 Certificates of Achievement and 18 Associate Degrees have identified student learning outcomes at the course, program, and institutional levels, and course SLOs are regularly assessed to improve teaching and learning strategies. Scheduling practices are appropriate for higher education, and courses are offered in a variety of formats: on-campus, hybrid, or online. Through the biannual program review process, program directors (faculty) analyze program data, make recommendations for improvement, and request resources if needed.

Findings and Evidence

The College's programs are consistent with the College's mission and are appropriate to higher education. The College's associate degree and certificate programs are driven by student learning outcomes and lead to students attaining degrees, certificates, employment or transfer to other higher education programs.   The College Catalog identifies program learning outcomes, and course learning outcomes are provided on Canvas shells and syllabi. Data was provided in support of the College's annual retention rate, completion rate, employment rate, and graduation rate. (II.A.1).

Faculty create and review curriculum, and faculty and program directors develop student learning outcomes at the course and program levels. For each course, a Production Master is created, and it includes the syllabus, curriculum, student learning outcomes, content topics, discussion topics, and week-by-week plans. Through the program review process, these Production Masters are reviewed and revised as needed. The content contained in the Production Master is provided to individual faculty through a Canvas shell where they can subsequently embed additional resources if they choose for individual classes. (II.A.2)

Faculty evaluation serves as another method to improve instructional practices. The Learning Environment Observation is utilized in face-to-face classes, and the Virtual Course Observation form is used for online classes. (II.A.2)

The College provides professional development training opportunities to all faculty in instructional methodologies and modalities through the Faculty Training Courses (FAC 99, FAC101, and 102) as well as in faculty meetings. (II.A.2)

Outcomes are assessed each term and are reported through the Canvas gradebook (transitioned from eLumen in 2017). Reports can be produced at any point and results are analyzed to identify gaps in student performance during the biannual program review process or, if necessary, annually through the program review short form. The institution's course outlines exist in the Production Masters, which are then downloaded into individual Canvas shells. (II.A.3)

The College utilizes course maps as their course outlines of records, and they provide faculty with information pertinent to courses such as textbooks, software, content, lesson topics per week, outcomes with associated assessment mechanisms (e.g. quizzes), and accreditation competencies. (II.A.3)

The team verified and agreed with the College's Improvement Plan and Quality Focus Essay that the institution would benefit from improvement of its student learning outcomes processes. As stated in the College's ISER, this would include "improving the accessibility and delivery of SLO results and the review of topics relating to the assessment of student learning outcomes." In its QFE, the College proposes the implementation of an Assessment Committee to "increase communication, responsibility, and accountability across the College to improve programmatic and faculty performance, which in turn, will improve student achievement." The team supports the College's recognition and efforts to improve in these areas. In its Recommendation for Improvement for this area, the visiting team states that the College would "benefit from building upon its existing SLO processes to ensure a sustained, substantive, and collegial dialogue about student learning and achievement." (II.A.3)

The institution does not offer pre-collegiate level curriculum; however, the College offers services through its Success Centers, Tutoring, Academic Coaches, and Library Services to help students when they are experiencing academic challenges. When needed, faculty are brought in to assist the student with content-related information. (II.A.4)

The College utilizes recognized national practices in establishing its programs and degrees. It employs the Standard Occupational Classification System to assess the content, breadth, and rigor of its certificate programs. In addition, many of its programs receive accreditation from third party or state agencies. (II.A.5)

Students are placed into courses by the Registrar in a manner that allows them to complete their respective program within a period of time consistent with higher education standards. This service also ensures that students can complete their program without scheduling barriers and know when they are expected to graduate. Terms are typically six weeks in length and may include an externship as the capstone course. (II.A.6)

The College offers programs in several different formats: campus based (face-to-face), hybrid, and online. Retention and success rates of DE courses are compared to corresponding rates for face to face courses to determine the effectiveness of the delivery system/mode of instruction for facilitating student learning. The College utilizes uniform exams regardless of delivery mode. (II.A.7)

Support for student learning includes library resources, Student Success Centers, and Student Support Managers. Student Support Centers provide access to library materials, databases, and tutorial help. The Student Support Managers act as local librarians and tutors for the programs offered by a particular campus. Online students can go to the Student Support Centers and are provided online tutoring through Tutor.com. When student assistance is discipline-specific and cannot be answered by student support staff, the faculty member is contacted to provide that assistance. The College utilizes Knewton, an online math program, for its math courses. This program supplies analytics on areas of strength and weakness to students and faculty. (II.A.7)

The College utilizes program-wide course examinations for all degree programs. Exam content is directly related to learning outcomes and to topics associated with licensure exams. Results from these program-wide exams inform faculty on remediation needs and additional areas of instruction relative to third party licensure exams. (II.A.8)

The College awards course credit, degrees, and certificates based on generally accepted norms in higher education. Awarding of credit, degrees, and certificates based on attainment of learning outcomes is accomplished through the course mapping process, which ensures that content and skills are met by students and is correlated to the course, program, and institutional SLOs. (II.A.9)

The College has a Transfer of Credit Policy, which it provides to students upon enrollment and is available in the catalog. Technical courses must have been completed within three years from enrollment at Carrington College, but if coursework is over six months old, the student may be required to meet with the Program Director and/or be required to audit the class if it is determined that the student needs additional instruction. The College does not accept credit for some science based general education courses, and these courses are identified in the catalog.

The College maintains a record of all transfer credit evaluations. Credit for military training coursework is granted with a transcript documenting the completion of military training.

Recommendation of equivalency is based on the ACE recommendation. No more than 50% of a program's total credits can be earned through CLEP, DANTES or AP. The institution does not grant credit for challenge exams, achievement tests, or experiential learning unless that experiential learning results in a licensure or certification. (II.A.10)

An articulation agreement exists with Chamberlain College of Nursing for RN students to transfer for the purposes of achieving a Bachelor's Degree. (II.A.10)

The College has course, program, institutional, and GE outcomes. Program learning outcomes include requirements for communication competency, information competency, quantitative competency, analytic inquiry skills, critical reasoning, and the ability to engage in diverse perspectives within one or more of the various types of outcomes. Institutional learning outcomes include critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and professionalism. These four institutional learning outcomes are listed in all programs as a single program outcome and are assessed at the course level. (II.A.11)

The College developed an improvement plan indicating that the College plans to re-examine its institutional learning outcomes for possible revision, including how they are measured and to compare how ILOs and SLOs align. The visiting team agrees with this assessment and recommends that the College build upon its existing SLO processes to ensure a sustained, substantive, and collegial dialogue about student learning and achievement in order to improve institutional effectiveness. (II.A.12)

The Academic Catalog explains the institution's General Education philosophy and provides the GE outcomes in support of this standard. General Education courses are identified in the catalog. The College's General Education Curriculum Committee reviews GE courses including course outcomes and content, to ensure consistency with the GE philosophy. (II.A.13)

The College's degree programs each include a focused area of study, and programs have student learning outcomes at the program and course levels to include mastery, at the appropriate level, of key theories and practices. (II.A.13)

The institution offers numerous career-technical certificates and degrees, many of them requiring technical and professional competencies as well as preparation for external licensure and certification. Learning outcomes are reflective of technical and professional competencies, and along with assessing student learning outcomes, faculty assess students in regards to meeting programmatic accreditation standards. When programs fail to meet the institution set standards, they must create an action plan to address identified gaps (II.A.14)

The College has a process for addressing significant changes in programs or the elimination of programs. The College provides transition time and offers students the opportunity to complete a program at another campus (if available). They also provide a teach-out process. (II.A.15)

The College utilizes program review as its process to regularly evaluate and improve instructional programs. Program review occurs first at the campus level, with program faculty reviewing their program data and making recommendations for improvement and requests for resources. Program reviews for programs that are offered at multiple campuses are then summarized into a single document with recommendations and resource requests for the program as a whole. Program review is a two year process and, if needed, a short form process is used between the biannual timeframe. During program review, program personnel evaluate programs' major areas, including program resources, curriculum review, student achievement and learning outcomes, program fair practices, program accreditation, and feedback. The summarized documents are reviewed by appropriate committees and then by the senior leadership team. (II.A.16)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standard.

Recommendations for Improvement

In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends that the College build upon its existing SLO processes to ensure a sustained, substantive, and collegial dialogue about student learning and achievement. (II.A.3)

II.B. Library and Learning Support Services

General Observations

Carrington College offers library and learning support services that support in-person and online students through their Student Success Centers, labs, and online resources. Carrington College provides for adequate and appropriate staffing of these areas including a trained librarian to support each campus and the virtual library. Additional staff support includes Student Success Managers and Academic Coaches, who have been trained to assist students. The Library and Student Success Centers, as well as their collections/resources, are evaluated and improved through the program review process.

Findings and Evidence

Carrington College provides learning support through the Library, tutoring, Student Success Center, Learning Labs (computer labs) and access to faculty & staff office hours. Students and faculty can access or find information on these services in the catalog, handbook, website, and learning management system. Services and the associated staff members are introduced several times to students throughout their time at Carrington in orientations, special events, and collaboration with faculty. Online students who are not near a facility can access online resources which includes both library information and tutoring resources in addition to receiving help from local staff by phone, email, synchronous conferences, and asynchronous workshop recordings. In person, students can go to workshops or obtain one-on-one help from Carrington College. Students can request materials from other Carrington locations. (II.B.1)

Carrington College provides for adequate and appropriate staffing of these areas including a trained Librarian to support all campuses and the virtual library. Additional staff support includes Student Success Managers and Academic Coaches, who have been trained by the Librarian to assist students with information needs. Faculty are available to work with students, as needed, for content specific support. (II.B.1)

The Librarian and Student Success Managers, with suggestions from faculty and staff, are responsible for evaluating the library collection and standardized book and periodical lists every year as evidenced in the formal library collection development and maintenance policy. (II.B.2, II.B.3)

The Library and Student Success Centers complete biannual program reviews and there is an established process for reviewing the Standardized Equipment List yearly, which includes faculty and academic leadership. Through interviews, the team found that the Librarian, Student Success Managers, and Academic Coaches work with the other locations and include both local and global (or system-wide) recommendations in the program reviews for each campus. Faculty can also assess Library and Student Success Center needs for their specific programs as evidenced by the program review matrix. These efforts allow the College to maintain currency (e.g. library collection) and responsiveness to student needs. Additionally, a Library Committee is another venue where input on the Library and Student Success Center collections, services, and input on program reviews is obtained to improve service to students in support of student learning. (II.B.2, II.B.3)

The Library and Student Success Centers assess their contribution to student learning, as evidenced by their ILOs and Student Learning in Service Areas and program review documents, through indirect assessment of evaluating services that are mapped to Institutional Learning Outcomes. (III.B.3)

The College does not collaborate with other institutions for Library resources as they provide them on campuses with Carrington employees, but they do evaluate contracts for services, such as databases, during the program review process as evidenced by usage reports. According to an interview, some locations may have agreements with local college libraries to expand access to resources for Carrington students. (II.B.4)

Conclusions

The College meets the standard.

II.C. Student Support Services

General Observations

The College takes pride in providing necessary support for each student and making services available all through the educational process, including after graduation. Whether online or on the ground, students have equitable access to the student support services.

The College provides a dedicated team of individuals that have a student-centered focus. While the College does not offer co-curricular programs, there is activity at the College to engage with students and celebrate their successes such as the Student Spotlight and Ring the Bell (recognition of students who have received job offers).

The College has a strong advising process that follows students through their time at the institution. The College has dedicated staff and processes to ensure the retention and success of its students. The weekly SOAR (Students on At-risk) meetings involve collaboration with administration, faculty and staff to discuss the personal, professional, and learning issues of individual students.

Findings and Evidence

The College offers appropriate, comprehensive, and reliable services to students regardless of service location or delivery method. All services are available to on-campus or online students. College locations with smaller academic offerings utilize existing staff to fulfill student services. Online access to some services complements what is available in person. Students have the ability to complete the Student Satisfaction Survey which addresses enrollment services, financial services, career services and student records. (IIC.1, IIC.3)

The College undertakes evaluation of student services and has demonstrated this through the program review process. Student services utilizes Student Satisfaction Surveys administered twice per year as the primary means to determine changes or improvements to existing services. These indirect assessments are mapped to Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs).

Examples include the introduction of Career Services during the first term of the student's experience in response to what students have identified through surveys. In this way, the College provides appropriate student support services and programs and uses assessment data for continuous improvement. (IIC.2)

The College engages students in Federal work study opportunities such as peer tutoring and community service projects including free services to low-income pet owners, free blood pressure screenings, student mentor program and free dental clinic as seen at the Sacramento campus. (IIC.4)

The College has a robust advising structure that begins with the admissions process. Enrollment Advisors help prospective students explore career goals including utilizing the Profile of Interest and Evaluation Questionnaire and discussing options and guidance towards the best program of study. In conversations with staff and students, the team found examples of successful techniques such as the New Student Orientation, New Student Review meeting, Tuition Planning Overview and the weekly Student On At-Risk (SOAR) meeting. The team heard examples of how these techniques had significant, concrete impact on student retention and success. Student services administrators and staff described their approach as high touch and student-centered, a perspective that was affirmed through conversations with administrators, faculty, staff and students.

The weekly Student on At-Risk (SOAR) meetings are an exemplary practice. By including a cross-functional team of faculty, staff and administrators who meet and discuss at-risk students on a weekly basis, the College has made a demonstrable commitment to student success and retention. As a result of these meetings, a faculty member or the Student Success Manager will meet with a student and create a Student Success Plan. This plan outlines recommendations for tutoring assistance, attendance expectations, or other related matters. This document is accessible through the CampusNexus system and serves as a road map for the student towards meeting their educational goal. (II.C.5)

The College has adopted and adheres to admission policies consistent with its mission. The institution defines and advises students on clear pathways to complete degrees, certificates and transfer goals. Feedback gathered from students by the team indicates that the onboarding process for students is smooth and efficient and a deciding factor for students to enroll at the College. The physical configuration of student services has been arranged so as to provide convenient access to multiple student services. (IIC.6)

The College relies on the Entrance Standards Committee to regularly evaluate entrance policies, procedures and practices. The College utilizes the Wonderlic entrance examination to ensure students score high enough for their program of interest. Wonderlic evaluates the placement instrument for effectiveness. (IIC.7)

Based on observation and documentation provided, the College has established that it maintains student records permanently, securely, and confidentially; that there is provision for secure backup of all files, and that the College publishes and follows established policies for release of student records. (IIC.8)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standard.

Standard III

Resources

III.A. Human Resources

General Observations

Carrington College has been in existence for over 50 years. In December 2018, change in ownership from Adtalem Global Education to San Joaquin Valley College, Inc., led to organizational changes for the College. The Human Resources department in partnership with a third-party vendor is efficient in the assessing, hiring, on-boarding and evaluating of prospective applicants and employees. Policies related to the hiring and evaluating of faculty, staff and administrators are published and are readily available from the College. Positions are defined, job descriptions created and advertised on the College website and external websites. The College has provisions for professional development and the safe-guarding of confidential personnel information is with third-party entity with access only by the Human Resource Director. Due to the change in ownership, the timeline for staff evaluation has been extended as the College implements a new personnel tool. The College also identified the need to broaden access to all staff for professional development.

Findings and Evidence

Administrators, faculty, and staff are qualified for positions through their education, training and experience. The College assures the integrity and quality of its programs and services by employing qualified administrators, faculty and staff that meet or exceed minimum qualification as outlined in the Faculty Minimum Requirements or job posting. The College has clear job descriptions and advertises positions on its own webpage and external websites. (III.A.1, III.A.3)

A review of several faculty job descriptions indicates the College has strong criteria for identifying and hiring staff. Faculty qualifications are outlined in the Faculty Minimum Qualifications document which includes all academic, programmatic and state criteria. The College includes learning assessment in faculty job descriptions. (III.A.2)

All degrees held by faculty and administrators are from accredited institutions. A third-party vendor conducts all background checks to verify that applicant degrees are from accredited institutions. For employees with credentials earned outside of the United States, an accredited third-party vendor is used to ensure equivalencies. (III.A.4)

Carrington College evaluates administration and staff on an annual basis, through established policies and procedures. A planned gap in full and part-time employee evaluations occurred in 2018 due to the change in ownership. (III.A.5)

Standard III.A.6 is no longer applicable.

Carrington College employs full time, part-time and adjunct faculty for the various disciplines taught at the institution. The College maintains a sufficient number of qualified faculty based on the student to staff ratios, regulations and the biannual program review. The institution regularly assesses these numbers in order to ensure achievement of the institutional mission and purposes. The College's written employment policies and procedures are communicated through both the Employee Handbook and Faculty Handbook. (III.A.7)

The College provides for the orientation, oversight, evaluation and professional development of part time and adjunct faculty. New hires complete a comprehensive onboarding process including receipt of the Employee Handbook and Faculty Handbook. Faculty report to a Program Director or Campus director based on the College organization chart. Evaluation processes involve formal and informal methods to ensure continuous improvement. (III.A.8)

Carrington College has appropriate staffing levels to support the technical, physical and administrative functions of the College. Academic staffing levels are determined by student to faculty ratios. From Fall 2017 to June 2019 administrative staffing changed to a regional leadership model to better support academic programs at the campuses the College realigned its regional management team. (III.A.9, III.A.10)

The College has written policies and procedures that are readily accessible to all faculty and staff. Carrington College successfully navigated the change in ownership and moved to a new Colleague Handbook. All employees, upon hire, are given copies of the policies and procedures as part of the onboarding process. The Employee Handbook is posted on the website for easy reference by employees. (III.A.11)

The College supports a diverse workforce. (III.A.12)

The College has a written code of conduct that all employees must complete within 30 days of being hired. The code of conduct is located in the Employee Handbook. (III.A.13)

Carrington College provides in-services and professional development opportunities for faculty and staff in both the campus and online modalities. The College identified the need to broaden the types of professional development opportunities available and create a repository for materials collected to provide greater access for staff. (III.A.14)

The College maintains employee records in a secure and confidential manner and has a process to allow employees access to their files. The files are maintained in in a password protected database. (III.A.15)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standard.

III.B. Physical Resources

General Observations

The College has people and processes involved with physical resources to ensure sufficiency, safety, feasibility, and support of programs and services which supports the College's mission. Specific job titles include duties related to safety and security. Planning processes include components that provide an opportunity for the College to assess facility and equipment needs. The College plans for budgets to cover both planned and unplanned contingency expenses.

Findings and Evidence

Carrington College ensures safe and sufficient physical resources through a team of individuals who are responsible collectively for safety and security. The team reviewed job descriptions for the Campus Director and Student Success Manager and found these positions support safe and sufficient physical resources for student learning. Security Assessment reports are conducted at each campus, to review facilities and procedures related to visitor procedures, communication technologies, safety awareness, internal and external door locks, exterior lighting, parking lot security, security guard use, and surveillance systems. (III.B.1)

The College also has a number of reports that address safety issues. For example, the College has implemented Maxient; a tool used to ensure that there are follow-up processes for any safety incidents that happen at the campuses. To ensure transparency with regard to safety matters, each campus submits an annual safety report known as Annual Disclosures. In order to maximize safety, most locations have a single point of access and the College maintains a stringent security badge protocol for all students, guests, vendors, faculty, and staff. Students, faculty, and staff are notified of any location closures due to incidents or emergencies. (III.B.1)

The Facilities Plan, Standardized Equipment List (SEL), and program reviews show the College plans for, and maintains, physical resources which ensure feasibility, effective utilization, and quality in support of programs, services, and the College's mission. The Facilities Plan describes the characteristics of all college campuses, the various programs offered at the sites, student learning and support services, and square footage. In addition, classroom standards for various programs are included in detail describing the layout, square footage, furniture, and capacity for each type of lab. (III.B.2, III.B.3)

The program review process includes recommendations for facilities, equipment, and supplies. The program review process can lead to updates of the Standardized Equipment List and other planning documents, such as the Facilities Plan. The SEL details the type of equipment, manufacturer name, model number, and information regarding the need for periodic maintenance and calibration if required. In addition, costs and quantity are also listed. The annual budget process includes planning for repair and replacements of planned and unforeseen expenses related to furniture, fixtures, and equipment by department. (III.B.2, III.B.3)

The Hedgerow Project helped Carrington determine the best programs to offer by location and supports effective utilization of facilities. They plan to continue this process every three years. Professional Advisory Committees (PAC) contribute to the process for supporting facilities and equipment. For example, Medical Radiography moved from computed radiography to digital radiography and upgraded equipment. (III.B.3)

Carrington College's long-range capital plans are determined through a five-year strategic planning process, but they are currently doing an interim strategic planning process during the ownership transition. The strategic planning process identifies potential new locations. The Senior Leadership Team and select members of the academic leadership team evaluate facility needs for growth or new programs. The College uses a number of metrics to determine the need for expansion or discontinuation of facilities, including financial performance, enrollment trends, market research, and student satisfaction, much of this can be seen in Hedgerow Project documents. (III.B.4)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standard.

III.C. Technology Resources

General Observations

Carrington College provides appropriate and adequate technology resources to support the institution's management and operational functions, academic programs, teaching, learning, and support services. The institution has implemented new technologies to streamline operational processes, deliver instructional content efficiently, and provide support to student services effectively.

The College has multiple locations and has leveraged technology resources to effectively meet the needs of its students, faculty and staff. These needs are connected to the planning process. The College has developed systems and processes that ensure a level of responsiveness that

serves its mission. Technology resources include the Learning Management System (Canvas) and student management system (Campus Nexus) which both support student learning programs and services to improve institutional effectiveness.

The College evaluates the effectiveness of technology using various methods, such as survey results from students, staff, faculty and input to the College technology committee. The institution continuously plans for, updates and replaces technology to ensure its technological infrastructure, quality and capacity are adequate to support its mission, operations, programs, and services.

Findings and Evidence

Technology at Carrington College is centrally organized for students and staff. The Information Technology (IT) department is responsible for providing the operational systems of the College with a reliable, secure, and functional infrastructure. The College offers appropriate learning resources to complement both onsite and online courses. There is an IT committee led by the Senior Director of Finance and Infrastructure, and its members include a cross-functional team representing the various arteries of the College.

The need for new technological equipment and resources are assessed through the program review to ensure that each program has the necessary infrastructure to support new advances in teaching and learning. Each program location is equipped with classrooms and program-specific simulation labs that contain leading technology as well as a full multimedia library that provides a wealth of up-to-date resources for research and study such as EbscoHost and CINMed.

Online courses are structured using a linear, integrated approach and are delivered through Canvas. To ensure effective delivery of course materials and to facilitate participation from all students in a class, new faculty teaching online complete specialized instruction to prepare them to teach through this medium.

There are provisions for reliability, disaster recovery, privacy, and security for the technological items at Carrington College. (III.C.1)

The College continuously plans for, updates, and replaces technology to ensure its technological infrastructure has the quality and capacity to adequately support its mission.

There is a technology plan that provides an opportunity to assess technology-related tools at the College and identify areas of improvement. The Information Technology Committee, which consists of members from different constituent groups across the institution, reviews the technology plan each year. Meetings are held in an effort to identify global technology needs such as new computer servers, location wireless services, plans to upgrade equipment, new contracts, and license agreements.

The committee also receives feedback on technology and equipment during scheduled program reviews. The program review process includes the identification, planning, and implementation

of technology as the program director and faculty evaluate, in concert with industry standards, the needs within their respective programs. These program reviews help ensure that the standardized equipment and software lists used in the classrooms are up to date. A student survey provides a user view of the technology and equipment offered. The results of these surveys are reported to the project lead who then presented the findings to IT and Carrington's leadership team. (III.C.2)

The College's technology plan articulates the vision which provides the direction necessary to ensure that adequate technology resources are available at all locations and in all teaching modalities. Due to the diverse nature of career-focused programs offered by the College, these programs are delivered through various locations and in various formats (onsite and online). Both Adtalem and SJVCI provided the technology infrastructure which supported all campuses and technology resources.

The institution provides consistent technology resources through centralized services that support all locations and teaching modalities. The technology plan outlines the technology infrastructure which provides the foundation for the technology utilized by students and staff. Through institutional planning, financial resources have been allocated to implement and maintain the technology resources necessary for its courses, programs and services. The College offers the same level of access, safety, and security across all sites through seamless network integration. All critical applications are centralized and distributed. (III.C.3)

The College continues to offer quality training for faculty, staff and students in the use of technology. Technology training and support is provided for instructional programs, student services, and operations. Technology and training enable students the ability to access a wide variety of resources for learning, as well as to interact with faculty and other students. Instructors are able to communicate in a timely manner with students and staff in face-to-face situations as well as remotely. Administration and staff are able to provide a wide access to information and resources that are required to make productive, timely, and informed decisions concerning the College's assets and funds in order to provide a strong learning environment. College training needs are assessed by surveys. In addition, support needs are determined by the types of email requests sent to the tech help. (III.C.4)

Carrington College has policies in place that guide the appropriate use of technology in the teaching and learning process. Policies provide the parameters for the appropriate use of technology in the educational process. All new faculty that teach in the online format participate in mandatory training to prepare them to each effectively. Decision-making policies for technology resources are detailed in technology plan and are integrated into the College planning processes. Electronic media policies are published in major publications such as the College catalog and student and employee handbooks. Policies describe acceptable and prohibited forms and terms of use. (III.C.5)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standard.

III.D. Financial Resources

General Observations

Carrington College plans and manages its fiscal affairs with integrity and in a manner that ensures fiscal stability. The College has an annual budget planning process which is driven by mission statement and operational objectives. The evaluation team confirmed that Carrington College conducts audits for all financial records. The audits are conducted by an independent accounting firm, their reports are certified and findings and responses appropriately documented. Audits of Federal financial aid noted a few findings, some of which were repeated over the past two years, and the College has developed Corrective Action Plans (CAP) to address these issues.

Findings and Evidence

The College's financial resources are sufficient to support and sustain student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness. During budget development process, financial resources are planned for each location, academic programs, and operations. The College employs human resources to support and sustain the institution's budget which manages its financial affairs with integrity and in a manner that ensures financial stability. The College's budget is developed with the strategic plan as the basis for growth, physical or programmatic expansion and capital outlay. (III.D.1)

The College has policies and procedures setting the framework for sound financial practices and financial stability. College mission and operational goals form the basis for financial planning, and that financial planning is interwoven through its institutional plans. The College uses its strategic planning process, monthly finance/operation reviews and programmatic review to make resource decisions that guide the budgeting process. To ensure successful financial practices and dissemination of financial information, the College presents the information to the institutional planning process that arise from program reviews and monthly financial information to support an informed decision-making and planning process to lenders. (III.D.2)

The College mission statement and goals are the guiding principles of the budget development, ensuring academic programs and services are appropriately supported. Financial planning begins with the annual update and completion of the five-year strategic plan. The strategic plan outcomes align with the mission of the College and future growth opportunities are identified during this process. Recommendations for growth and development are done with college and operations leaders and are analyzed by location, program, and competition. The five-year strategic plan is reviewed and approved by the Board of Governors of Carrington College and the SJVCI Board of Directors.

The annual budget is guided by the five-year strategic plan and the completion of the budget allows multiple inputs from the College's constituencies. All constituencies have appropriate opportunities to participate in the development of institutional plans and budgets. (III.D.3)

The College's tuition and fees are predominantly driven by overall institution student population to generate operating revenues. The College's planning incorporates all available resources to meet expenditure requirements. The student population which is the primary driver of the College's financial budget is reviewed monthly by the senior administrators to monitor the actual revenues and variances from expected. This practice allows for adjustments to planning and scheduling of planned resource allocations.

There is a business committee which meets regularly to review the budget, discuss, and agree upon any adjustments needed and to make plans to execute on those adjustments. The leaders review planned capital expenditures against the College's fiscal condition to ensure appropriate use of college resources. (III.D.4)

The Governing Board of the SJVCI and the Board of Directors of Carrington set the framework for financial integrity by reviewing the strategic and operations plan of the College. Within the College's financial management system, internal controls separate responsibilities and duties to provide dependable information for financial decision-making. The senior management monitor financial indicators on an ongoing basis. The College's financial projections and reporting system provide senior management with a dependable mechanism in making financial decisions. The progress toward achieving enrollment projections is monitored daily and reported on a weekly basis through location and head office created reports via Campus Nexus (student management system). (III.D.5)

Financial and business processes are governed by institutional policies and procedures that are approved by the Board of Governors of Carrington and by the Board of Directors of SJVCI. The College's financial transactions are audited by a third-party accounting firm. Resolution of audit findings is assigned to the respective college location, where audit findings are resolved. The final audit report, which includes the College responses to audit findings are presented to the Governing Board of Carrington and to the Board of Directors of SJVCI for review and acceptance. The implementation of audit findings/recommendations is documented as part of the next year's audit and accompanying report.

The credibility and accuracy of the budget and strategic plan is validated, tied to actual student enrollment and execution of operational initiatives. The results of the annual accounting audits also attest to the credibility and accuracy of financial systems. A review of the fiscal reports for 2019 shows revenues and expenditures in line with the budget year-to-date, indicating a high degree of credibility and accuracy. (III.D.6, III.D.7)

The College as part of the SJVCI, and previously under Adtalem Group, is audited annually, which includes assessment of internal controls for validity and effectiveness. Internal controls are also reviewed and assessed and strengthened by the CFO of the Ember Group, which acts like the overall management oversight of both Carrington College and SJVCI. Results of assessments are used for improvements. (III.D.8)

The College is part of the SJVCI ownership and previously with Adtalem Group. A review of the group's primary reserve ratios as specified by the US Department of Education for the last three years, shows reserve ratios greater than 1.0 which per the Department of Education are above the minimum requirement to maintain sufficient to address cash flow needs. The College has additional line of credit of $10 million with Comerica Bank as a contingency in case of cash flow problem during the year. The College also received $9.5 million from Adtalem sale of Carrington to ensure ongoing stability and ability to address unforeseen circumstances. These funds have not been expended. (III.D.9)

While the College maintains its own financial control structure, as administered by the Senior Director of Finance & Infrastructure, the Ember Group CFO provides additional support and financial oversight as needed. These designated responsibilities coupled with external audits ensure effective oversight of finances. (III.D.10)

The College closely monitors financial results and makes adjustments to optimize financial resources needed to execute on the mission and goals of the institution. SJVCI has the financial resources to support the short and long-term goals of the College and remains in good standing with Comerica Bank. SJVCI has a $10 million operating line of credit available for use in a case of unforeseen circumstance, emergencies, and capital expenditures. The level of financial resources provides a reasonable expectation of both short- term and long-term financial solvency. When making short-range financial plans, the institution considers its long-range financial priorities to assure financial stability. (III.D.11)

The College plans and allocates appropriate resources for the payment of liabilities and future obligations. Reserves are maintained for accrued vacation and other expense such as sick leave. Accrued vacations are reviewed and updated monthly. Accrued vacation is paid when taken or paid out upon termination of employment. SJVCI has a qualified 401(k)/profit sharing plan, which is funded and expensed in the year incurred. Funds for this benefit are held by a third-party administrator. The College has an effective system in place for the allocation of financial resources to pay financial obligations. (III.D.12)

On an annual basis, the institution assesses and allocates resources for the repayment of any locally incurred debt instruments that can affect the financial condition of the institution. The parent company, SJVCI and Comerica Bank review the institutional line of credit. The estimated repayment rate, credit line amount, and future needs are reviewed and approved. The CFO of the Ember Group completes an annual assessment of debt repayment for both Carrington and SJVC and appropriate plans are made to address repayment. The CFO also ensures that agreements will not adversely impact the College's ability to meet current and future financial obligations. (III.D.13)

The College does not engage in auxiliary activities and fund-raising efforts to support its programs and services. The College did receive grant money from Nevada OSIT for the Nursing program, which also included a match in kind from the College. The funds matched each quarter were reported to the state until the completion of the program. (III.D.14)

The College monitors the cohort default rates through the strategic process and are reported to senior leadership. The College's most recent three- year cohort default rate (2016) is within an acceptable level and complies with the U.S. Department of Education's guidelines. The campus student finance procedures and processes are monitored through weekly team and site reports. The student finance office is subject to program compliance reviews by the US Department of Education and is subject to an annual independent audit by a certified public accountant. Annual audits evaluate the College's Title IV management and compliance for the award years. The audit reports for fiscal years ended June 30, 2018, 2017 and 2016 noted findings for different locations, some of which were repeat findings from previous years. The College has developed Correction Action Plans (CAP) to address these audit reports and the visiting team recommends that the College continue to follow these plans during the ownership change. (III.D.15)

The SJVCI and Adtalem Global Services have supported the institution by providing negotiating contracts for services, legal review, and real estate. Both parent groups of Carrington have purchasing departments which oversees contract services for areas such as classroom supplies, office supplies, student uniforms, textbooks, employee health plans, travel arrangements, student counseling services.

The College manages the contracting process more directly in cases of local contracts. Using the Legal departments of Adtalem and SJVCI to provide legal advice, the College directly contracted with clinical and externship sites, and with providers of local services. Contractual agreements with external entities are consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, governed by institutional policies, and contain appropriate provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution and the quality of its programs, services, and operations. (III.D.16)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standard.

Recommendations for Improvement

In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends that the College continue to follow the Correction Action Plans (CAP) as identified in response to audit reports. (III.D.15)

Standard IV

Leadership and Governance

IV.A. Decision-Making Roles & Processes

General Observations

Carrington College has a governance structure consisting of the Carrington Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and sixteen standing committees. An additional committee was developed for the ACCJC reaffirmation of accreditation. The committees report to one member of the SLT and, in some cases, the SLT member is also a member of that committee. Administrators have a substantive role and constitute the vast majority of members of these committees. Faculty representatives are on two committees, Accreditation Excellence and Faculty Excellence. Student representatives are members of one committee, Student Advisory Committee. In addition, Carrington College conducts virtual Town Hall Meetings which are open to participation of all employees.

Carrington College equates governance structures and processes to planning structures and processes. Planning processes include: Strategic Plan and Institutional Goals; Operating Plan; Annual Plan; Academic Excellence Plan; Technology Plan; Facilities Plan; and Program Reviews.

Findings and Evidence

Carrington College has a developed committee structure that reports to the Carrington Senior Leadership Team (SLT), which in turn makes recommendations to the Governing Board. There are sixteen committees with defined memberships. Two of these committees have faculty members (Accreditation Excellence and Faculty Excellence) and one has student members (Student Advisory Committee). Descriptions of constituent involvement for all planning and review processes stated "Colleagues can contribute to …. individually or through committee participation." Through interviews with faculty, program directors and administrators, the team verified that ideas and suggestions can and do arise from individual input and through both formal and informal processes. Formal processes include Program Reviews and Town Hall Meetings. Informal processes include biweekly conference calls with Program Directors (who are faculty) and Deans of Curriculum, biweekly conference calls of Operational Deans and Campus Directors, as well as Calls for Input from the President. (IV.A.1)

Carrington College has established policies and procedures that authorize administrator, faculty and staff participation. The Carrington College Policy on Constituency Group Participation in Governance describes the roles of students, faculty, and non-instructional personnel. This

policy does not include the roles of administrators. The policy is in the Employee Handbook, is referenced in the Faculty Handbook and is available on the College website. (IV.A.2)

Carrington College Administrators have a substantive role in institutional governance and exercise a substantial role in institutional policies, planning and budget. The Carrington College Policy on Constituent Group Participation states "Authority: Senior Management Committee, Executive Council, Campus Administration". The administrative designations in the policy do not align with the currently stated administrative or committee names. While some changes resulted from the sale of Carrington College last year, many of the changes in the committee structures, charges and membership were instituted as a result of a change in the President of the College, which occurred three years ago. Faculty roles in governance, planning and budget are defined and the primary avenue for faculty input is through the Program Review process. During Program Review, faculty evaluate their individual programs, learning outcomes, curriculum, and resources. The Program Review process does not provide a mechanism for input into planning and governance procedures. While the College meets this Standard, the lack of currency in the policy should be updated. (IV.A.3)

Carrington College has a Governing Board adopted "Statement of Faculty Responsibilities" which includes curriculum and student learning outcomes, among others. The Provost is delegated the administrative responsibility in these areas by the Governing Board. The Provost, in turn, is assisted in this area by three Deans of Curriculum and the Deans of Nursing. The College identifies Program Review as the procedure by which faculty and academic administrators make recommendations about curriculum and student learning programs and services. The Program Review matrix has seven areas including Curriculum and Student Learning Outcome Statements (Area 1) and Student Learning Outcomes (Area 6). Program Review matrices are completed by Program Directors, who are faculty, in consultation with their program faculty. The Program Directors from like programs on different campuses submit their Program Previews to specific Deans of Curriculum. The Deans of Curriculum compile the individual Program Reviews and create an Executive Summary of Program Reviews for each particular program. The Team interviewed Program Directors and Deans of Curriculum and found that all parties felt the process was collaborative and worked well. (IV.A.4)

Carrington College identifies institutional planning processes as governance processes. The institutional planning processes are defined, have stated timelines and are widely communicated. The regular implementation of the planning processes provides for timely action on plans, curriculum and resource allocations. The standing committees make recommendations to the SLT. The SLT has specific sub-committees which are responsible for different functional areas. The SLT sub-committees meet quarterly, review recommendations from the standing committees and make recommendations on these to the whole SLT. As noted above, both formal and informal processes exist that allow input from relevant perspectives to work their way through the committee structures and ultimately to SLT for consideration. The Team reviewed committee minutes and verified discussions of recommendations and subsequent action on those recommendations is occurring. (IV.A.5)

Carrington College has documented decision-making/integrated planning processes that are widely communicated across the institution. These processes are identified in and referenced by Integrated Planning Manual, the Program Review Manual, the Employee Handbook and the Faculty Handbook. These processes are also identified during new employee orientations and on-boarding. The identified mechanism of informing the institution on resulting decisions is "campus-wide communications". The Team interviewed Program Directors some of whom expressed dissatisfaction with the effectiveness of the College in communicating decisions to the institution. It was felt that when this concern was relayed to senior management, communication was improved for a time. However, since the procedures for dissemination of decisions is not as well codified as the processes for input, any improved communication waned over time. While the College meets the Standard, it might want to consider including the process of dissemination of decisions as a part of its planning processes and timelines. (IV.A.6)

Carrington College has no codified process to evaluate the leadership roles and the institution's governance and decision-making policies, procedures and processes. The College implements surveys for the evaluation of Program Review processes (completed by Program Directors) and an annual employee survey administered by an outside group. The most recent survey of Program Directors regarding Program Review identified areas of concern (35% were dissatisfied with the process). The College only addressed the low participation of Program Directors in the survey as an action plan for improvement going forward. The employee survey identified 44% unfavorable responses to "My organization is effectively organized and structured." and a 41% unfavorable responses to "My organization does a good job of listening to the concerns of colleagues." No evidence was presented in the ISER that the College uses the employee surveys as a basis for improvement. The Team interviewed several administrators and was able to determine that improvements were made based on these surveys and that the results of the surveys were disseminated across the institution. These findings led to the development of a new position of Campus Director along with duties and responsibilities. (IV.A.7)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standard.

Recommendations for Improvement

In order to improve effectiveness, the team recommends the College further document their evaluation mechanisms of institutional decision-making policies, procedures and processes, including how the resultant improvements are communicated across the institution. (IV.A.7)

IV.B. Chief Executive Officer

General Observations

The team found that the Carrington College President has primary responsibility for the quality of the institution. Governing Board policy delegates authority for the day-to-day operation of the College to the President as evidenced in the job description, policies and interviews with the Board of Governors.

The CEO, in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team and college committees, develops annual goals, strategic plans, priorities, and budgets for presentation to the Governing Board for approval.

The CEO has been instrumental in the selection of key leadership positions and delegates the administrative and decision-making needs of the College to these individuals. Recent decisions include the creation of a new position, the Vice President of Accreditation and Professional Regulation, to oversee the various reports and regulations for the eight states that cover the Carrington College footprint, and the corresponding state regulatory agencies and separate accreditors for healthcare programs.

The CEO guides institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment and, along with the Senior Leadership Team, directs all college operations. Specifically, the CEO, Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President of Accreditation and Professional Regulation and Governance Committees are responsible for the integration of academic and resource planning in the academic environment.

The College president utilizes the governing board policies, the strategic plan and integrating planning manual to set goals, benchmarks, and achievement targets. The CEO takes a primary role in Accreditation.

Findings and Evidence

The Board of Governors Operating Manual Bylaws, in Board Policy #1, delineates the authority of the president as responsible for day-to-day operations of the College. The president develops annual goals and plans and annual updates the Strategic plan and budget. (IV.B.1)

The president develops job descriptions and the organizational structure of the College. Changes are made as necessary as identified in the creation of the new Vice President of Accreditation and Professional Regulation position in relation to a need for oversight throughout the various state agencies and locations. The addition of a Campus Director for each location is another example of a change needed to improve oversight and communications throughout the organization. The Senior Leadership Team provides leadership in structural and organizational matters, while the deans of instruction provide oversight for curricular matters and consistency across campuses. Regular meetings enhance communication across campus within each discipline. (IV.B.2)

Working with the Senior Leadership Team as the main conduit for information and decisions that impact the College, the president develops policies and procedures that guide the institution. The team found evidence that Program Review processes and Institutional Set Standards are widely discussed across different sites within each academic program. Detailed data is shared and analyzed with each program director, who in turn represents and communicates with individual faculty members. The Board Operating Manual Bylaws and an interview with the Board confirmed that these decisions and discussions occur at the campus level and are based upon policy direction set by the Board. A component of faculty job descriptions lists expected participation in governance and administration of the College. The team confirmed that the president holds the authority and directs college operations in areas such as processes, evaluations, planning and budgeting. (IV.B.3)

The president has the primary leadership role in accreditation and demonstrates this commitment throughout the institution. In 2017, a new position was created, Vice President of Accreditation and Professional Regulation, whose primary responsibility includes all aspects of accreditation, including the various individual state regulations and accrediting bodies for Carrington College programs in each of the eight states where the College offers programs. Carrington College demonstrates a culture dedicated to compliance with accreditation standards. (IV.B.4)

Board Policy #1 states that "the President shall ensure that all relevant laws and regulations are complied with, and that required reports are submitted in a timely fashion." The President is responsible for the implementation of policies and operations. The Senior Leadership Team is the main conduit for implementation on a daily basis and improvements have been made in the operations of each campus with the addition of separate Campus Director positions. (IV.B.5)

The president works effectively with the communities served. Recent improvements include moving Board of Governor meetings to different campus locations. The President is actively involved with various civic and service organizations, and promotes the College with different communities served by the College, including different states. (IV.B.6)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standard.

IV.C. Governing Board

General Observations

Carrington College is led at the policy level by a nine-member Board of Governors consisting of five Independent Members having no employment, family or personal financial interest in the College in addition to four Affiliate Members consisting of two members of the Board of Directors from the parent organization San Joaquin Valley College and two appointed members

who are either members of the Carrington College Senior Management or employed by San Joaquin Valley College. The Board has adopted a Board Operating Manual that delineates responsibilities and policies. Two board standing committees are established: Academic Oversight Committee and the Finance Committee.

Findings and Evidence

The Board's Operating Manual makes clear that the Board has authority over, and responsibility for, policies that assure the effectiveness of the institution in regards to academic quality, integrity, and effectiveness as well as for financial stability.

The institution provided as evidence a chart showing which Board Bylaws are associated with each area of responsibility within this standard. The areas include Educational Quality and Student Success, Financial Integrity and Sustainability, Ethical Integrity, and Fulfillment of the Mission. The Board Operating Manual makes clear that the Board has authority over and responsibility for these bylaws. (IV.C.1)

The Board's Operating Manual was cited as evidence for this standard, including a statement about the board governing as a unit and acting as a whole. Discussion with the Board revealed that the Board acts as a collective entity and governs Carrington College at the policy level. (IV.C.2)

Policies and processes exist for the hiring and evaluation of the CEO. In regards to hiring, the process includes the creation of a search committee, collaboration with Human Resources, advancement of candidates, the approval of 2/3 of the full Board, and an internal and external communication plan. The Board is active in evaluating the CEO as evidenced by a collaborative revision to a more useful tool for Board/CEO relationships. (IV.C.3)

Per the Board Operating Manual, the Board contains both Independent and Affiliate members. Affiliate members are not employed by the College nor are their family members. They have no financial interests in the institution or parent organization. Another bylaw provides protection against undue influence or political pressure. Another bylaw states that members must abstain from voting if they have a conflict of interest. Biographical statements for each member were provided by the institution, and it was apparent that the Board is an independent, policy-making body representing public interest. (IV.C.4)

The Board Operating Manual indicates that the Board has ten areas of responsibility. They include Mission; Educational Quality and Student Success; Managerial Oversight; Institutional Goals, Initiatives, and Policies; Budget; Financial integrity and Sustainability; Legal Matters; Accreditation; Self Governance; and Ethical Integrity. The two Board subcommittees – Academic Oversight Committee and Finance Subcommittee – were designed to ensure that the Board has the appropriate policies in support of its academic programs and services, including the necessary resources to support them. (IV.C.5)

The institution provided evidence of its bylaws that specify the board's size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures. (IV.C.6)

After the transition of ownership of the institution in December 2018, the bylaws were redesigned and improved for readability. The board reviews bylaws as necessary. (IV.C.7)

The Board reviews Institutional Set Standards and the institution's performance, in addition to reviewing the Academic Scorecard. Through its Academic Oversight Committee, it reviews Program Review Reports although this is a new Board subcommittee and lacks historical evidence. The Board was involved in the review and approval of the Strategic Plan. (IV.C.8)

Board members have staggered terms per the Bylaws. Affiliate members are not subject to term limits. Non-affiliate members are appointed for up to a three-year term of service. These independent members may be reappointed for up to two additional consecutive terms, for a maximum of nine years.   (IV.C.9)

The annual Board of Governors evaluation is scheduled for the third quarter of each year. The College provides training for members of the Board through a New Member Orientation Program that was described by board members. Board members have been encouraged to attend external professional development and the Board Chair is heavily involved in leading inclusive board development activities. (IV.C.10)

Within its Operating Manual is the Board Code of Ethical Conduct. The Board also has a policy for addressing violations in this regard. Board members are required to conduct business with a high level of ethics and integrity, and their current self-evaluation addresses this issue. Board members also sign a certification form each year indicating that neither they, nor their family members, are employed by the institution and that they have no financial interest in the institution. They also sign a conflict of interest policy each year and provide a listing of all organizations with which they are associated and the roles they play in those organizations. (IV.C.11)

In Board Policy 1, "The Board delegates the executive responsibility for administering the policies adopted by the Board and executing all decisions of the Board to the President." The President is responsible to the Board for the execution of these decisions, is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the College, and is given power for reasonably interpreting policy. Through the evaluation process, the Board holds the CEO accountable for the operation of the College. (IV.C.12)

The Board has involvement in the accreditation process through Board Policy #17, and minutes and a presentation were provided as evidence of involvement. During interviews, the Board was knowledgeable and engaged in the accreditation process. (IV.C.13)

Conclusions

The College meets the Standard.

Quality Focus Essay

Carrington College identified two focus areas for improvement plans.

Quality Focus Essay #1 - Student Satisfaction Survey

Carrington College had been using a survey twice a year to determine student satisfaction using a Net Promoter Score (NPS). The results did not allow for variances in responses nor did the analysis provide robust information in order to make improvements. The College did a review of pertinent systems and student satisfaction surveys and revamped the survey instrument. The results are expected to allow the analysis to improve decision-making and have positive impacts on four areas: college-specific focus, focus on culture, focus on summative feedback derived from the pre-graduate survey, and focus on outcomes.

The team found this project will complement the existing data analysis from program specific outcomes and allow Carrington College to make better data-informed decisions. The team encourages the College to fully implement this project. Further, the team suggests that additional planning include a review of this new process once it is fully implemented to ensure a continuous quality improvement cycle.

Quality Focus Essay #2 - Development of Assessment Committee

Carrington College offers degrees and certificates that in many cases require a licensure exam before students can be employed. The College has an on-going student learning assessment process that is uniformly applied across their programs and campuses. The Quality Focus Essay identifies a concern that programs that are underperforming in student licensure pass rates are not able to identify difficulties or deficiencies prior to these tests. Carrington has decided that they will develop an Assessment Committee that will examine underperforming programs and develop assessment practices that will include psychomotor skills as well as cognitive skills. The plan includes clear responsibilities and timelines. Carrington College will, through this process, identify curricular changes, learning outcome changes and assessment changes to better prepare students for future success. These practices will allow the College to systematically respond to any identified issues going forward.