

7. The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in the following area: 3.3.1.1 educational programs, to include student learning outcomes. (Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1) Please also include information specific to the institution's new off-campus sites.

Compliance Non-Compliance

Narrative:

Austin Community College identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which these outcomes are achieved, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in the area of educational programs, including student learning outcomes.

As a one college multi-campus institution, the Round Rock Higher Education Center is included in any evaluation process related to student achievement.

Austin Community College requires that all courses have a ["Master Syllabus"\[1\]](#) posted online that includes the [common objectives or learning outcomes\[2\]](#) that students are expected to demonstrate. These form the basis for the assessment of learning outcomes for all educational programs college-wide, regardless of teaching location.

Faculty teaching educational programs document their assessment and improvement activities related to learning outcomes using the unit-level effectiveness assessment process as stated in the [Assessment Manual for Instructional Units\[3\]](#). Faculty enter their documentation into a database. In each educational program, faculty: (a) review or define the program's purpose, (b) state intended educational results (learning outcomes) and the criteria used to determine whether those outcomes have been achieved, (c) define and implement assessment methods, (d) analyze and report results, and (e) develop plans for improvement. At the end of the academic year, program faculty complete an Annual Assessment Summary in which they examine their findings from all learning outcomes assessments. Through this examination,

faculty identify the program's strengths and weaknesses, improvements that were made and their impact on the quality of the program, and challenges that the program must still address.

Examples:

[Chemistry Assessment Plan\[4\]](#)

[Chemistry Annual Summary\[5\]](#)

[Philosophy Assessment Plan\[6\]](#)

[Philosophy Annual Summary\[7\]](#)

[Medical Coding Assessment Plan\[8\]](#)

[Medical Coding Annual Summary\[9\]](#)

[Occupational Therapy Assistant Assessment Plan\[10\]](#)

[Occupational Therapy Assistant Annual Summary\[11\]](#)

In addition to assessment of learning outcomes, as part of academic stewardship, faculty members conduct an intensive review of their program's performance. Each program's faculty members use the [Instructional Program Review\[12\]](#) (IPR) framework to conduct a reflective evaluation of the content, quality, effectiveness and efficiency of the program.

Each program is [scheduled\[13\]](#) to be reviewed every five years. [Board policy E-5 Review of Instructional Programs\[14\]](#) requires faculty to “systematically and regularly gather and analyze both qualitative and quantitative data in order to facilitate the continuous improvement of each program, to guide resource allocation, and to assist the administration and Board in making decisions about programs.”

The [purpose\[15\]](#) of the intensive review is to provide an opportunity for faculty to critically reflect on their program's effectiveness and create an improvement plan to enhance the program's quality. The [outcomes\[16\]](#) of the Instructional Program Review process ensure every educational program is engaged in continuous, authentic evaluation that is integrated into the planning and budgeting processes of the College.

The [structure\[17\]](#) of the review process requires a self-study team composed of program faculty and faculty from other programs, as well as students and advisory committee members, to examine standard information about the program's students, enrollments, completions, faculty, budgets, etc., and then to conduct a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis, summarize their findings, and propose recommendations for program improvement.

The self-study team completes the Instructional Program Review Summary (IPRS), reporting their program's performance relative to eight criteria defined in [Board Policy E-5\[18\]](#), and proposes a plan for improvement, the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The QIP is used to guide improvements for the next four years, including such things as proposals to update curriculum, equipment, space, increase faculty, faculty development, etc. The QIP also forms the basis for the program's initiative that may be submitted into the college-wide Master Plan and budget development processes.

The Instructional Program Review Committee, composed of faculty from each of the dean areas, reviews the IPRS and QIP and completes a [Program Status form\[19\]](#) for each program. Based on this review, IPR Committee members provide an evaluation of each program's strength and continued viability.

In the final step of the intensive review process, the self-study team chair presents the findings of the team, including planned improvements, to the Executive Vice President/Provost

and the Vice President for Workforce Education. The Executive Vice President/Provost and the Vice President for Workforce Education consider the information from the presentations in their preparation for Master Planning. In addition, upon approval from the Executive Vice President/Provost and the Vice President for Workforce Education, each program completing an intensive program review has the opportunity to submit one initiative from their QIP for inclusion in the Master Planning process through the IPR Cluster Group.

In years 2-5 of the program review cycle, the department chair of the program reports the status of implementation of the QIP. Examples: [Government\[20\]](#), [Philosophy\[21\]](#), [Interpreter Preparation\[22\]](#), [Environmental Studies\[23\]](#).

In addition to ACC's IPR process, some specialized programs, such as the nursing and other health sciences programs, the child development program, and others are accredited by [national organizations\[24\]](#) and are required to meet the accreditation requirements of their discipline or profession.

As stated previously, Austin Community College is a one college multi-campus institution, and the processes for program effectiveness, as described above, apply at all teaching locations, including the Round Rock Higher Education Center.