THREE RIVERS COLLEGE
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION REGULATION

Section: 1000 General Administration	
Sub Section: 1100 College Operations	
Title: GAR 1140 Institutional Effectiveness	Page 1 of 7
Primary Policy: GAP 1140 Institutional Effectiveness	
Associated Regulation: GAR 1110 Policy and Regulation Development	
References: The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Criterion Five: Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness; The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).	
Addendum: "Institutional Effectiveness Process Diagram"	
Supersedes: NA	
Responsible Administrator: Chief Institutional Effectiveness Officer; College President	
Initial Approval: 07-20-2016	Last Revision: 05-24-2017

Three Rivers College engages in institution-wide, systematic, and continuous improvement through the assessment of the effectiveness of the institution by all academic and administrative units, as guided by the strategic plan.

Requirements

Three Rivers College engages in Institutional Effectiveness processes that determine the extent to which the College is operating within its Mission and is meeting the goals and objectives set forth in its Strategic Plan. The process of assessment is defined in such a way to ensure the College's ability to meet the Institutional Effectiveness standards set forth by the regional accreditor the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), as well as other accreditors of college programs and to demonstrate best practices in higher education institutions.

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Criterion Five: Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness states "the institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future." To systematically facilitate this process and ensure alignment of the colleges annual planning priorities of the strategic plan and mission, an electronic planning and budget development software known as Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) has been adopted.

Planning and Assessment Process

Planning and assessment is conducted by each academic and administrative unit on an annual and ongoing basis. The college planning cycle precedes budget development and begins in January at the annual college planning retreat. The college planning year aligns with the annual fiscal calendar commencing on the first of July. Through use of Strategic Planning Online (SPOL), the culmination of the annual assessment process is the annual planning cycle, this time period is used to document progress made with goals, objectives or outcomes; analyze data; benchmarks; institutional targets; actual results; action plans for units, departments, and academic programs as appropriate; and planning unit progress reports that document the results of action plans. Please see, Addendum: Institutional Effectiveness Process Diagram.

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Assessment results from SPOL planning unit progress reports, surveys, focus group interviews, academic program reviews and the results from student learning outcomes assessment (SLOs) are used to inform programmatic and administrative decisions, strategic planning initiatives, budget requests, and resource allocations. Each department and planning unit shall reference and incorporate its assessment outcomes data for justification of financial requests during the annual planning and budgeting process.

Duties and Responsibilities

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness provides leadership in the design and implementation of processes outlined herein and provides training and support to unit managers in their continuous improvement efforts. The College Cabinet, the Student Learning Improvement Committee (SLIC), the Continuous Improvement Leadership Team (CILT) and the Board of Trustees are fully engaged and invested in the institutional effectiveness processes.

Each unit manager of academic and/or administrative units of the college are responsible for ensuring the ongoing, systematic continuous improvement process is properly aligned with the strategic plan, executed and documented within Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) during each cycle and that specific action is taken (Use of Results) based upon data regarding what is learned from the continuous improvement processes (Actual Results).

Definitions

Academic Program Review (APR): a process to examine the effectiveness of an academic program and inform the continuous improvement efforts of the college. The APR process is applied to degree programs, stand-alone minors, General Education, and academic initiatives. The process provides feedback (a) to the academic unit primarily responsible for the program, (b) to the appropriate academic administrators, (c) to external advisory boards, and to college planning units in the form of confirmation of the existence of the APR process and the sustainability of the program in the form(s) of an executive summary report(s) of outcomes.

Assessment: the process of determining whether the college is meeting its goals established in unit and department operational plans. Assessment is conducted by each academic and administrative unit on an annual basis, and follows the fiscal calendar. The continuous

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assessment of the quality of both instructional and service programs at Three River College is a necessary component of institutional effectiveness. The results of assessment are used to inform the planning and budget development process. The college planning cycle precedes the budget development period to allow time for analysis of data from the results of assessment to ensure the use of data informed decisions. The process of assessment is for the purpose of continuous improvement and sustainability.

Assessment Measures: the tools or strategies used to measure progress toward achieving an objective. A minimum of one assessment measure is necessary, however several may be used in support of a SPOL objective or goal. Assessment measures may apply to the overall objective.

Benchmarking: a process used to evaluate various aspects of the college processes in relation to best practices and may be compared to internal goals or the performance of peer institutions.

Co-curricular: refers to activities, programs, and learning experiences that complement, in some way, what students are learning —i.e., experiences that are connected to or mirror the academic curriculum.

Continuous Improvement Leadership Team (CILT): a representative body of faculty, staff, and administrators who consider challenges related to assessment of administrative and academic programs and activities, review objective reports to ensure consistency with data, institutional expectations for assessment, and to communicate appropriate actions and decisions. The purpose of the Continuous Improvement Leadership Team is to advocate for quality enhancement, be champions for the development of a culture of assessment and continuous improvement, and be current on all matters of accreditation compliance for the college. Objective reports are developed in Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) and the CILT review reports for alignment with the strategic plan, adequacy of supportive data, and consistency of process.

Inputs: resources that the college allocates to a program of study such as faculty, technology, training, facilities, labs, students, curriculum, and support. Activities are learning processes that engage students such as classes, lectures, internships, labs, projects, etc.

Institutional Effectiveness: is a process that demonstrates achievement in the accomplishment of the institutional mission through review of the institution's strategic plan, related goals and

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outcomes; resulting in data-informed approaches leading to continuous improvement. Institutional Effectiveness is an acknowledged and accepted process commonly used in higher education thorough the established terminology for regional accreditation criteria.

Mission Statement: a written declaration of the core purpose and focus of the college.

Objective: a statement of what will be achieved and by when. Objectives in SPOL must be SMART: specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic and relevant, and time-limited. If an objective statement does not meet the SMART criteria, it may be a unit goal, which is broader in scope than an objective.

Outcomes: student learning outcomes measure change in learning (and/or the learner) and answer two questions. What do students (graduates) know that they did not know before? What can they do that they could not do before? **Outcomes** are specific measurable changes in learning, attitudes, behaviors, knowledge, skills, status, or level of functioning. "Student learning outcomes are properly defined in terms of the knowledge, skills, and abilities that a student has attained at the end (or as a result) of his or her engagement in a particular set of higher educational experiences." CHEA 2016

Outputs: most survey data, as well as graduation, retention, transfer, and employment rates, are outputs and not outcomes referred to as student, program and institutional outputs. Output data do not directly and specifically measure changes in student learning. **Outputs** are the indirect results of program activities such as enrollment, retention rate, graduation data, and external exam pass rates, etc.

Planning Priorities: established annually from the strategic plan by each member of the College Cabinet, they provide specific focus to the annual continuous improvement plan of the College.

Results: at the end of the planning period, planning unit managers in SPOL must detail the actual results achieved in working towards an objective. The unit manager enters narrative statements to answer such questions such as, was the objective met and to what degree. (Refers to the assessment measures) and what lessons were learned that can be applied to future efforts?

Standards: a set of criteria, guidelines, and best practices to which institutions and/or programs must adhere to receive accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission or another

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accrediting body. In SPOL, the term standard in the singular form is used generically to refer to any single statement within a set of standards, principles, criteria, etc., issued by any accrediting body, department, and program or quality initiative.

Student Learning Improvement Committee(SLIC): representative body of faculty and staff that facilitates the analysis related to assessment data of academic programs, reviews assessment reports, and program review summary data to ensure consistency with institutional expectations for academic assessment, considers relevant challenges and communicates results to those entities, their recommended actions and decisions for the purpose of planning for the improvement of student learning across the institution.

Student Learning Outcomes or Objectives: statements of what students should know and be able to do by the end of a learning experience (generally a course or degree program). It focuses on what the student will take away from this learning experience. These statements provide the basis for assessment of student learning in courses and programs.

Sustainable Institutional Effectiveness: ensured through college-wide, coordinated planning and assessment processes supporting a culture of decision making based on data and assessment activities associated with the strategic plan, vision, core values, mission, and goals of the college-wide community.

Use of Results: after analysis of results (what happened and what was learned?), a SPOL planning unit manager must document what is learned for continuous improvement of student learning, customer service, cost effectiveness, etc., within a planning unit, department, division, or the overall institution. Often the Use of Results in SPOL is the basis for the next semester or FY plan. Use of Results closes the planning loop and describes the next steps based on results.

Three Rivers College is committed to institutional effectiveness by developing and maintaining institutional planning and assessment processes that lead to improvement. Through a shared governance model, college planning and assessment includes representatives of the college community in establishing institutional priorities, guiding decision-making, and allocating resources to ensure that the College is meeting the needs of its stakeholders.

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DOCUMENT HISTORY:

07-20-2016:   Initial approval of regulation GAR 1140 Institutional Effectiveness.

09-21-2016:   The College Board of Trustees approved the name change of the college from Three Rivers Community College to Three Rivers College.

05-24-2017:   Minor revisions for clarification.

Addendum

Three Rivers College Mission

Strategic Plan

Annual Planning Priorities

Adjust and Align Modifications with College Priorities

Continuous Improvement
Institutional Effectiveness
Processes & Practices

Intended Outcomes & Objectives

- Develop Unit Plans in Strategic Planning Online (SPOL)
- Create Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) & Assessments
- Continuous Improvement Leadership Team (CILT) Review
- Revise based on CILT Review

Implementation of SPOL Unit Plans

Use of Results

- Implement Use of Results for Improvement
- Modifications to Desired Outcomes that lead to Continuous Quality Improvement in Programs and Services

Actual Results

- Feedback from Assessment
- Analysis of Assessment Findings
- Record Actual Results in SPOL
- Budget and Accountability Review

Assessment Activities

- Performance Benchmarks/ Targets
- Record Assessments in SPOL
- SLO Assessment Reports
- Record Assessment in SPOL