



Community College of Rhode Island

NECHE Self-study

Draft as of August 24, 2023

Table of Contents

STANDARD ONE: MISSION AND PURPOSE	2
STANDARD TWO: PLANNING AND EVALUATION	6
STANDARD THREE: ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE	12
STANDARD FOUR: THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM	20
STANDARD FIVE: STUDENTS	37
STANDARD SIX: TEACHING, LEARNING AND SCHOLARSHIP	49
STANDARD SEVEN: INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES	58
STANDARD EIGHT: EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS	75
STANDARD NINE: INTEGRITY, TRANSPARENCY, AND PUBLIC DISCLOSURE	90

STANDARD ONE: MISSION AND PURPOSE

Strengths	Opportunities
The mission statement is clear.	The mission statement needs to be modernized, including an emphasis on DEI work and workforce integration.
The mission, programs, and role in the state are in alignment.	
The development of the mission statement was an inclusive process.	

Description

The [mission](#) of the Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) accurately defines the distinctive character of the institution, identifies the students it serves, and its role in serving the region. The mission statement states:

The Community College of Rhode Island is the state’s only public comprehensive associate degree-granting institution. We provide affordable open access to higher education at locations throughout the state. Our primary mission is to offer recent high school graduates and returning adults the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for intellectual, professional and personal growth through an array of academic, career and lifelong learning programs. We meet the wide-ranging educational needs of our diverse student population, building on our rich tradition of excellence in teaching and our dedication to all students with the ability and motivation to succeed. We set high academic standards necessary for transfer and career success, champion diversity, respond to community needs, and contribute to our state’s economic development and the region’s workforce.

The college enacts its mission in numerous ways. Since CCRI opened its doors in 1964, it has been committed to open access and student success. The college grew from an inaugural class of 300 students to more than 14,000 students in 2018. The campus expanded from a single location inside a former manufacturing mill in 1964, to meeting students where they are by offering a full array of programs in several locations throughout the state. Campuses are in Providence, Lincoln, Warwick, and Newport.

The Community College of Rhode Island is recognized as an innovative education leader. In 2019, CCRI was recognized by Higher Ed Dive as [America’s Two-year College of the Year](#). Recipients of the Dive award are recognized as trailblazers and leaders for innovative strategies to support student success. CCRI is considered a national leader for its successful implementation of the Rhode Island Promise program in 2017, which provides free tuition to all recent Rhode Island high school graduates. CCRI, through high-impact practices, has seen the two-year graduation rate triple and the three-year graduation rate double in the past seven years.

The college offers multiple modalities of instruction, including face-to-face, online, and hybrid, to improve access for our diverse student population. Significant time and effort have been expended to ensure high quality instruction during the most challenging of times and to remain true to our commitment to high academic standards and excellence in teaching. Through the creation of a *Center for Teaching Excellence* (CTE), faculty are provided with ongoing, high quality professional development offered by faculty experts as well as national leaders in community college initiatives. Faculty are also actively engaged in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

The Community College of Rhode Island has been referred to as Rhode Island's economic workforce engine. Through collaboration with the state's Department of Labor & Training, along with other public and private agencies, CCRI has responded to workforce needs with rapid growth in new programming and by developing a strong pipeline to employment for unemployed and underemployed Rhode Islanders. CCRI's division of Workforce Partnerships collaborates closely with Academic Affairs to create high value stackable credentials directly tied to labor market needs. The state turned to CCRI during the COVID-19 pandemic to educate needed healthcare professionals, and CCRI trained more than any other higher education institution in Rhode Island. CCRI's nursing program responded by increasing its enrollment capacity and provided support to hospitals during the height of the pandemic. The Division of Workforce Partnerships hosts a variety of noncredit healthcare, finance, and manufacturing programs that lead to credit bearing academic pathways. In addition to workforce training, this division offers adult and community education programs.

In 2018, President Hughes oversaw the creation of a new Strategic Plan by engaging external facilitators who led faculty, staff, and students in an inclusive process. The resultant Strategic Plan encompassed three major goals: student success, partnerships, and institutional effectiveness. In 2021, the college conducted an inclusive process to evaluate the effectiveness of the Strategic Plan and confirm the three major goals remained pertinent. CCRI's updated 5-year Strategic Plan was approved by the Council on Postsecondary Education in 2022 and can be found on the [Strategic Plan webpage](#). The mission statement was discussed throughout the Strategic Planning process both in 2018 and 2021 and is published on the college's [website](#).

The mission statement serves as a guiding light for all college activities and program development. Academic departments reflect the college's mission statement through their own purpose and mission statements. This cascading of mission assists in program development and engagement of community partners in developing current and high-quality programming.

CCRI's faculty and staff created [Guiding Principles](#) that address organizational culture. The Guiding Principles are an outcome of the CCRI Culture Initiative. The first phase of this initiative was to bring employees together to surface challenges and strengths related to organizational culture and then define what a positive and productive work environment looks like. To do this, the Office of Institutional Equity staff held workshops in February, March, and April 2018, to hear from employees and begin to develop a set of cultural operating principles, which are statements that describe an effective culture at CCRI. Concurrent with the workshops, an employee task force formed, which gathered feedback from the workshops, to elucidate the themes from these discussions. In May 2018, the task force published a set of draft operating principles. The task force gathered feedback on the draft operating principles by administering a survey and holding a series of focus groups. In reviewing the feedback from the focus groups and the survey, the task force developed the CCRI Culture [Guiding Principles: Going the Distance for Our Students](#), also known as our Culture Code.

The guiding principles include:

- We believe in our students
- We champion equity
- We strive for excellence and results
- We communicate and collaborate
- We pursue creative solutions
- We follow through

Appraisal

The mission statement was discussed throughout the strategic planning process both in 2018 and 2021. In periodic surveys of faculty, staff, students, alumni, and other stakeholders, responses to questions about the mission statement show that our mission statement appropriately reflects their vision for the college and the needs of Rhode Islanders. For instance, in spring 2022, students (n=196), faculty (n=93), staff (n=103), and alumni (n=54) were surveyed about key elements of CCRI's mission. The survey respondents include the following breakdown of roles:

Table I.1 Percentage of Respondents to Spring 2022 Mission Statement Survey

Role	Percentage of respondents
Student	43.9%
Full-time Faculty	15.3%
Part-time/Adjunct Faculty	5.6%
Full-time Staff	17.3%
Part-time Staff	3.4%
Administration	2.5%
Alumni	12.1%

Survey evidence supports that the current mission statement is strong and reflective of our practices and focus. On average, 89.9% of all respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the current mission statement is clear, concise, defines who we are, describes what we do and identifies who we serve. The majority agreed or strongly agreed that each sentence in the mission statement describes an essential part of CCRI's role in Rhode Island. One-fifth of respondents (20.4%) felt the mission statement placed too little emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

While respondents to our recent survey affirmed the mission statement's strength, it has been more than ten years since the mission statement was updated and formally adopted by CCRI's governing board. According to the survey results, areas requiring more emphasis includes commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as the need to incorporate new student success initiatives such as guided pathways, Rhode Island Promise, co-requisite curricula, and multiple measures placement. In addition, the mission statement needs to reflect the needs of students in a holistic manner beyond graduation and retention rates.

An intentional rollout of the Culture Guiding Principles has been slow. While an inclusive process was undertaken to create the principles, a reorganization of the Office of Institutional Equity and staff turnover has slowed the rollout and incorporation into the college's day-to-day activities. The addition of new staff in the Office of Organizational Development and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion will allow for

examination of progress and recommendations to senior leadership on steps to reintroduce the Guiding Principles collegewide.

Projection

- A schedule for evaluating the mission statement that aligns with our established strategic planning timeline has been established. In fall 2024, a comprehensive and inclusive process will be launched to update the current mission statement. The process will include a collegewide ad hoc committee charged with organizing the work and engagement of the college community. It is expected that this work will entail a year of engagement and vetting of a proposed new mission statement with eventual approval by the college's governing board, the Council on Postsecondary Education, by early 2026.
- As part of the above process, the Office of Organizational Development and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion will collaborate with college departments to obtain additional community feedback regarding updated language around diversity, equity, and inclusion in the mission statement.
- The Culture Guiding Principles will be reintroduced to the college community and validated in spring 2024 by the Office of Organizational Development and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion.

DRAFT

STANDARD TWO: PLANNING AND EVALUATION

Strengths	Opportunities
The college engaged in an effective and collaborative strategic planning process.	There is a need for additional division-level strategic plans, such as a Technology Strategic Plan.
The expansion of institutional research capacity has allowed the college to use data to support planning and institutional effectiveness.	More “closing the loop” sessions with faculty and staff to share assessment and survey results are needed.
There is demonstrated success in meeting strategic priorities.	With a new Vice President for Administration and Finance, there is a greater alignment between the strategic plan and resource allocation.

Over the past six years, the development and implementation of the college’s strategic plans and the expansion of the Office of Institutional Research into the Office of Institutional Effectiveness have galvanized energy and resources around a culture of collaborative planning and data-informed evaluation. All major planning efforts, including the [Strategic Plan 2022-27](#), the [Facilities Master Plan](#), and the [Academic Master Plan 2022-2027](#) have involved the participation of a broad cross-section of stakeholders. The CCRI community is regularly updated on goal progress and planning adaptations through the President’s Council Reports, semester opening and town hall meetings; and discussions with the Council on Postsecondary Education, CCRI Foundation, and Alumni Association.

PLANNING

Description

While the COVID-19 pandemic was an interruption to the execution of many aspects of the college’s planning, the foundation we laid in the 2018-2021 strategic plan allowed us to respond to the crisis with care for students while also making progress towards short- and long-term strategic priorities. The 2018-2021 plan provided the flexibility to adapt to new technologies because the goals had been identified over a yearlong inclusive planning process. The process included Paulien & Associates, a higher education planning firm, a 30+ member Strategic Planning Committee, a 20+ member Faculty Advisory Committee, and active participation from students, faculty, staff, the Foundation Board, alumni, and business representatives. The President’s Council, a body representing all professional employees, and the Council on Postsecondary Education, Rhode Island’s legal entity for public higher education and the college’s governing board, unanimously endorsed the 2018-2021 strategic plan in January 2018. We successfully implemented several of the plan’s strategies, meeting our key performance indicators of 1) an increase in the two-year graduation rate of first-time, full-time students (6% in 17-18 to 17% in 2020-2021), 2) an increase in the percent of transfer-out students earning a credential before transfer (27% in 2017-2018 to 32% in 2020-2021), and an increase in the percent of certificates awarded in high-demand, high wage fields (96% in 2017-2018 to 99% in 2020-2021).

The [Strategic Plan 2022-27](#) was developed to build on the previous plan’s flexibility and strengths. It aims to continue to actualize the college’s mission and vision and inform staffing, budget, technology, and enrollment goals. An effort was made to intentionally seek out diversity of thoughts and experiences so that the college could reach a common vision where everyone could see their work

reflected in the goals and strategies. Another goal for the planning process was to set more measurable key performance indicators. In spring 2021, community feedback was sought about the 2018-2021 plan's strengths and areas for improvement. Overall, 518 CCRI community members participated in the development of the current plan. There were more than 800 touchpoints, fully representing all college divisions. The plan was endorsed by the Council on Postsecondary Education in November 2022. During the budget-planning process, all resource requests are aligned with the strategic goals.

A [Facilities Master Plan](#) was developed through a two-year inclusive process that involved stakeholders from all campuses. The goal was to develop a capital planning policy aligned with the college's strategic plan. To facilitate collegewide discussions, CCRI hired the nationally regarded architecture and planning firm Goody Clancy. Throughout 2018, the Goody Clancy team engaged in conversations with more than 300 students, faculty, and staff at each campus and hosted monthly meetings with a newly created Facilities Master Planning Task Force. Working collaboratively, the physical changes required on each campus were prioritized. This prioritization allows us to achieve our strategic goals, address our most urgent facility needs, and improve our ability to serve students. For example, the plan advanced a renovation to our student services offices spread across the Knight Campus building into a one-stop student services hub, improving navigation among admissions, financial aid, advising, and other student services into one contiguous and modern space. Also prioritized were improvements to classroom and study spaces, making them appropriate for active learning and the need for enhanced technology.

The need for an academic master plan was highlighted in NECHE's response to our NECHE 2019 Interim Fifth-Year Report. Following the launch of CCRI's new strategic plan in 2022, the Academic Master Plan Committee was assembled in April 2022. With a goal of an inclusive and data-informed process, the 29-person cross-divisional committee had nine faculty representatives and met several times over the summer. The committee's charge was to reach a common vision of academic strategies and success measures and develop a guiding document for Academic Affairs. The committee met to identify key priorities, review what the data were revealing about the student experience and identify key success measures for implementation. A draft plan was shared with the Senior Leadership Team for review and feedback in late summer 2022. In fall 2022, the plan was shared with the full faculty for feedback, endorsed by the Faculty Senate, and launched. The [Academic Master Plan 2022-2027](#) reflects our institutional strategic plan by mirroring the three major goals: student success; expanding partnerships; and institutional effectiveness. The strategies reflect academic initiatives and evidence-based practices to support student success, such as improving developmental English and math, strengthening transfer pathways, and expanding faculty development opportunities that emphasize data-informed practice and equitable student outcomes.

Additionally, an Academic Master Plan Advisory Board was formed and meets quarterly. Each person responsible for the activities listed in the plan presents their progress towards the goals. Workgroups have been created to focus on specific strategies, such as compressed-terms, English Language Learning, and Starfish, an early alert software that enhances the student feedback cycle. Success measures will be monitored each year and the plan will have a dynamic element that will grow and adapt to the ever-changing environment, but not lose sight of the overarching goal of supporting our students and faculty.

The college has established a [regular calendar](#) for measuring and reporting out on its indicators of student success. This calendar is hosted on the Institutional Effectiveness (IE) [website](#) and an internal SharePoint site where it enables stakeholders from across CCRI to know both 1) when processes to evaluate its performance occur (e.g., term census) and 2) when updated key performance indicator (KPI) data become available (e.g., updated graduation rates are available in late September).

Appraisal

One area where the college is behind schedule is in the development of an Information Technology (IT) Strategic Plan. The COVID-19 pandemic and turnover in IT leadership and staff has led to a period of rebuilding. The current CIO is reviewing the organizational structure, staff training and development needs, updates to college networks and enterprise software, and the cybersecurity framework so that policies and procedures protecting technology systems and service are appropriate and robust. CCRI's CIO left the college in June 2023. Upon his departure, IT began reporting to the VP of Administration and Finance who joined CCRI in February 2023. In his immediately prior role for seven years as Chief Financial Officer of a \$250 million health and human services organization, he was responsible for IT. Prior to the departure of CCRI's CIO, the college hired, as employees, a full-time Director of Information Security and a part-time Interim CIO and Director of Enterprise Applications. The interim CIO/Director of Enterprise Applications has extensive experience as a CIO in an Ellucian Banner environment (CCRI's ERP system) and extensive experience in application development including Customer Relationship Management systems.

CCRI has made great strides in advancing the facilities master plan. Significant renovations have taken place, including renovations of the Great Hall on the Knight Campus, renovations of science labs on the Knight and Flanagan campuses, and the covering of the entrance ramp on the Knight Campus for safety and accessibility. The college was able to implement the facilities master plan for two reasons: in March 2021, Rhode Island voters approved \$12 million for facility and program enhancements at three of CCRI's four campuses and, in the same year, the General Assembly appropriated \$102,011,431 in capital funds for the FY23-FY28 Capital Improvement Program, a much greater investment than ever before. The combination of these funds is supporting one-stop student services hubs on the Knight and Flanagan campuses; enhanced accessibility at the Knight Campus with the construction of an additional elevator and improved pedestrian flow on the ground and first levels; and renovated classrooms on the Flanagan, Knight, and Liston campuses. The comprehensive and innovative facilities master plan was critical in positioning the college to advocate for these funds.

EVALUATION

Description

In the [2018-2021 Strategic Plan](#), CCRI established key performance indicators (KPIs) under the three goals of 1) enhance student success and completion; 2) expand partnerships and programs; and 3) strengthen institutional effectiveness. These KPIs have been used to evaluate the college's performance against its goals internally and externally to the Rhode Island Council on Postsecondary Education through its performance-funding initiative (see Tables 2.1 below). Structures are in place to make achieving our 2022-2027 key performance indicators more likely. In spring 2023, phase two of the strategic planning process focused on efforts to operationalize the strategic goals and setting SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) goals by department. These SMART goals

demonstrate how day-to-day operations across divisions and departments support the key priorities of the college and provide measurable actions to show impact. The goal is for every CCRI employee to see how their work contributes to the college's improvement efforts. Importantly, the college has determined which Senior Leadership Team (SLT) members are responsible for the success of each goal and will be using [Cascade software](#) to enable measurement of its progress.

CCRI uses these KPIs to measure its performance while building upon the foundation of regular evaluation that it established under the previous strategic plan. The Academic Program Review (APR) of degree programs is a systematic process to understand how programs help CCRI meet its mission and plan for the future. To illustrate how the APR has been used to inform planning, one recommendation resulting from our computer programming APR was to improve collaboration with our transfer partners. Following this recommendation, and with greater partnership with Rhode Island College and URI, the degree requirements were updated to be more transferrable and aligned with current employer needs. Programs like fire science and engineering systems technology received the recommendation from their APRs to rebuild their external advisory boards and are now supported by a college-wide effort to support departments through the hiring of a liaison position in the Division of Workforce Partnerships. For more details on CCRI's evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of its academic programs, please see Standard Eight with a description and appraisal of our Academic Program Review and course assessment processes.

CCRI recognizes the importance of the student perspective in its efforts to measure progress. In Student Affairs, 2,900 student responses to a customer satisfaction survey were received. The survey asked students to share their experience with Advising & Counseling (A&C). Ninety-one percent of student respondents indicated they had an excellent (74%) or good (17%) experience with A&C from February 2019 through September 2021. We also administer a survey of continuing students and a survey of expected graduates each spring. While these surveys were pre-empted during COVID-19, we restarted them in spring 2023.

CCRI piloted a student Basic Needs Assessment (BNA) in summer 2022. Based on work from Amarillo College in Texas, student respondents who indicated they were struggling with food, housing, and other basic needs receive personalized outreach from the Community and Social Resource Center, now rebranded as the [Benefits Hub](#), to help address their needs in the near- and longer-terms. Starting in fall 2022 after the successful pilot, CCRI made the BNA available to all students each semester using its Starfish platform. Recognizing that a systems-based approach is needed to address the true magnitude of student need, the college is working to deepen its partnership with the United Way of Rhode Island to bring more community resources to students.

CCRI is making strides to help more of its students transfer to 4-year colleges. This is a particularly important equity issue in a region of the country where a bachelor's degree is required for many living-wage jobs. Data from the National Student Clearinghouse is used to understand which colleges our students are choosing and to reduce barriers to their successful transfer. One example of how CCRI is using evaluation to inform its decision-making is the creation of a transfer coordinator position. Since January 2022, the transfer coordinator has been working directly with students, senior leaders, and our key transfer institutions to ensure students who wish to transfer have a smooth experience.

Table 2.1 Graduation and Completion, Workforce Development, and Mission-Specific Metrics

Metric	5-Year Average*	Most Current	% Change Most Current v. 5-Year Average	Peak Performance
% of first-time, full-time cohort graduating in 2 years	4%	18% Fall 2020 Cohort	+350%	18% Fall 2018 Cohort
% of first-time, full-time cohort graduating in 3 years	15%	24% Fall 2019 Cohort	+60%	30% Fall 2017 Cohort
% of first-time, part-time cohort earning 12+ credits in first year	44%	32% Fall 2021 Cohort	-27%	46% Fall 2017 Cohort
Total certificates and associate degrees awarded	1,984	2,159 AY21-22	+9%	2,431 AY19-20
% of high-demand, high-wage certificates awarded	98%	95%	-3%	99% AY20-21
% of high-demand, high-wage degrees awarded	54%	52%	-4%	53% AY19-20
% of transfer-out students earning a credential before transfer	22%	30% AY21-22	+36%	32% AY20-21
% of first-time cohorts completing Gateway college-level math with C or better in first year	13%	21% Fall 2021 Cohorts	+62%	24% Fall 2018 Cohorts
% of first-time cohorts completing Gateway college-level English with C or better in first year	29%	39% Fall 2021 Cohorts	+34%	44% Fall 2019 Cohorts

*Baseline statistics based on the most recent 5 previous cohorts available in spring 2018.

Appraisal

Our Key Performance Indicators above demonstrate that the college’s implementation of Guided Pathways, a master schedule, focus on advising and student services, and teaching excellence is leading to student success and improved completion. We see evidence of the efficacy of these interventions in our increase from the baseline first-time, full-time 2-year graduation rate of 4% increasing to 18% for the Fall 2020 cohort and the 3-year graduation rate improving from 15% to 24% for the Fall 2019 cohort. It’s clear that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the lives of our students, as reflected in the

recent decline in part-time students earning 12+ credits across in their first year from a baseline of 44% to 32% for the Fall 2021 cohort. We anticipate that our plans to increase the number of seven-week courses coupled with recent expansion of summer and winter term offerings will help part-time students have more flexibility to reach that milestone. The College is also continuing to bolster its Guided Pathways by providing faculty-student mentorship through our newly revised College Navigator roles. With the additional support of our College Navigators, we expect the percent of first-time students taking college-level math to rebound, which grew to 24% for the Fall 2018 cohort but slipped to 21% for the Fall 2021 cohort. Similarly, the percent of first-time students taking English in their first year declined from 44% for the Fall 2019 cohort to 39% for the Fall 2021 cohort, which is still a significant increase from 29% for the previous 5 years. Evaluating these metrics have allowed the college to prioritize the aspects of the Strategic Plan and Academic Master plan that will most impact student success. We will continue to use the Key Performance Indicators to measure our progress in improving student success outcomes.

To better understand the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of academic programs, Academic Affairs has supplemented the 5-year Academic Program Review (APR). While the evaluation of programs through APR or programmatic accreditation contains useful information, in our fast-moving environment, we needed more frequent information to inform academic planning. We improved our annual program assessment reporting in 2018, and added Departmental Health Checks for all departments, not just those with academic programs, in 2021. Both have filled in the gaps, but we are still seeking to tighten linkages between academic program evaluation and planning. Additionally, student surveys were paused during the COVID-19 pandemic. CCRI values student input, which points to the need to implement student feedback surveys once again. With a full-time general education director and director of academic program review and accreditation, we also expect to have more offerings for “closing the loop” sessions so that survey and assessment results are shared with faculty and staff, and feedback is sought in how the college uses assessment and evaluation results.

Finally, while the college has tried to link budget requests to the strategic plan priorities, with a new vice president for administration and finance, CCRI will have the capacity to better align and evaluate the alignment of the resource allocation process with the strategic plan.

Projection

- The CIO is developing an Information Technology Strategic Plan. Key priorities have been identified. Next steps include obtaining stakeholder feedback, establishing key performance indicators, finalizing the plan, and creating a timeline for implementation.
- The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (IE) will begin implementation of student surveys after a COVID-19 related interruption. IE will create documents explaining the survey results and share them with departments through a SharePoint site in order to close the loop so that survey results inform decision-making.
- For FY24, the division of administration and finance revised the budget request process to be more efficient, transparent, and able to be aligned with strategic priorities. The new vice president of administration and finance will evaluate this process and further improve alignment between strategic priorities and resource allocation.

STANDARD THREE: ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

Strengths	Opportunities
The college enjoys strong support from the Council on Postsecondary Education and external stakeholders.	The college’s new internal governance system provides an opportunity to strengthen the community’s engagement in governance.
The Senior Leadership Team is cohesive and includes seasoned administrators.	As a community college, the strength of our transfer pathways relies on our ability to foster strong relationships with the four-year institutions in Rhode Island.
The 2022-2027 strategic plan is comprehensive and strong.	Recovering from the enrollment impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and shifts in demographics, the college needs predictability in funding through tuition policy and greater levels of state funding.

GOVERNING BOARD

Description

The Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI), Rhode Island’s only public, open access community college, operates under the jurisdiction of the Council on Postsecondary Education and receives its authority from the [Rhode Island General Laws Title 16](#). Since 2014, several changes have been made in CCRI’s external governance. The Board of Governors for Higher Education was replaced by the Council on Postsecondary Education in 2014. CCRI does not have a dedicated, institutional board. The [Council on Postsecondary Education](#) was created as an independent public corporation vested with the responsibility of providing oversight for the system of public higher education in Rhode Island, which includes Rhode Island College (RIC) and the Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI), along with the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (OPC) (see [RIGL 16-59-4](#)). The [Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner](#) is the administrative, policy, and research arm of the Council on Postsecondary Education. The authority, responsibilities, and relationships among the governing bodies and the college’s administration and faculty are clearly described in Rhode Island’s General Laws.

The Council on Postsecondary Education is comprised of eight volunteer members, the chairperson of the Rhode Island Board of Education (ex-officio) and one non-voting, college student member. Council members are appointed by the governor, and they serve three-year terms except for the student member who serves a two-year term (see [RIGL §16-59-2](#)). Council members must file financial disclosures to the State of Rhode Island Ethics Commission annually and are prohibited from having a financial interest in the college. As an external governing body, the Council ensures community college students are provided with high quality educational services that meet community needs.

In 2014, the General Assembly amended the Council’s enabling statute ([R.I.G.L. 16-59-1](#) et. seq.) to give to the presidents of Rhode Island’s three¹ public higher education institutions additional powers and authority previously held by the Board of Governors for Higher Education. Specifically, the additional powers of the CCRI president ([R.I.G.L. 16-33.1-2-1.1](#)) include the authority to "create and consolidate

¹ Now two, because legislation allowed the University of Rhode Island to separate from the Council and appoint a new independent board in 2021.

departments, divisions, programs, and courses of study within the college with the assistance of the commissioner of postsecondary education within the approved role and scope adopted by the council on postsecondary education.” The statute further states that the presidential powers must be consistent with “shared governance” and the president and “committee of the faculty, with the approval of the board of governors [now the Council on Postsecondary Education], arrange courses of study, prescribe any qualifications of the admissions of students and any rules of study, exercise, discipline, and government as the president and committee may deem proper.”

The Council’s powers include the hiring and termination of presidents, approval of the appointment of vice presidents, approval of collective bargaining agreements for all unionized Council employees, approval of tenure, approval of property transactions and leases, approval of tuition and fees, review and approval of annual budgets, review and notice of all new programs and courses of study, and creation of a classification system for Council employees who are not in the state classified service. The Council is the employer of record for all non-classified employees at RIC, CCRI and OPC. To maintain appropriate communication among its members and with institutions, the Council meets [monthly](#) (except in August) to review and discuss items that fall under its powers as well as hear regular reports from the presidents and commissioner on updates, initiatives, and work on strategic plans. Agendas are provided well in advance and include reports by the Commissioner, committee chairs and college presidents. All meetings are open to the public and subject to the state’s open meetings laws. In addition, each president updates the chair of the Council on important matters on an as-needed basis. The Council has been supportive of the college’s mission, leadership, and strategic plan.

The Council reviews the president on an annual basis. The review process includes the president providing a management letter that outlines the work and achievements in a variety of areas including, but not limited to, faculty and staff relations, accountability on affirmative action goals and implementation, partnerships with employers and community-based organizations, and other external relationships including with elected officials and the other public higher education institutions. The Council responds to this letter and shares areas of success and other feedback. Contract review occurs every three years and begins with the president preparing a self-assessment. President Hughes has enjoyed significant support from the Council and her contract has been renewed twice since she assumed the presidency. In March 2023, President Hughes announced she would step down from her position at the end of August 2023. The Council acted quickly to appoint Vice President of Academic Affairs Rosemary Costigan as interim president.

The Council holds an annual retreat where it reviews its goals for the upcoming year. When new Council members are appointed, they are invited to campus to meet with students and the president’s Senior Leadership Team. The Senior Leadership Team orients them to the mission and purpose of CCRI. The President provides reports to the Council on the college’s key performance metrics related to strategic student success goals. These reviews allow the Council to evaluate the college’s progress year over year.

The Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner is the policy and coordinating office for the Council on Postsecondary Education. The Office’s mission includes data collection, policy development and administration, strategic planning, regulatory enforcement, and advocacy. The Commissioner of Postsecondary Education sits as a peer to the two college presidents. The office is staffed by educational professionals and serves as the resource for information on and the interpretation of policy.

Although the Governor and General Assembly do not have direct oversight of the college, these relationships are critical to CCRI's ongoing success. CCRI continues to build relationships with individual legislators and the president spends considerable time meeting with key leaders during the legislative session which runs from January to June annually. The college welcomes elected officials to campuses and ensures that they spend time getting to know students. This strategy has been effective in deepening the understanding about who CCRI serves, the college's mission, and its critical role within the state economy.

Appraisal

When CCRI went through accreditation 10 years ago, NECHE noted that an area of emphasis to monitor was the impact of the changes to our external governance structure on the college. Since 2014, there have been additional changes to the external governance, however, the structure which provides for a Council focused on higher education has proved beneficial. The Council on Postsecondary Education and the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner have experienced significant leadership changes over the past several years. Since 2016 when President Hughes was hired, the Council has had four chairs. The current chair, David Caprio, was appointed in summer 2022. In that same timeframe, four commissioners have led the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner. In spring 2021, the Council hired Dr. Shannon Gilkey as Commissioner.

Throughout these leadership changes, CCRI has continued to focus on student success and its strategic plan with the dedicated support of the Council and Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner. With each change in leadership and resulting changes in priorities, CCRI has maintained its focus on its mission and maintained an important working relationship with each successive Chair and Commissioner.

Two areas for development are to work with the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner to 1) strengthen transfer pathways between CCRI, Rhode Island College, and the University of Rhode Island and 2) secure more funding for the state's three public higher education institutions.

In 2021, legislation allowed the University of Rhode Island to separate from the Council and appoint a new independent board. At the same time, a new president was appointed. The impact of both new leadership and an independent board that has a majority of members who are not Rhode Islanders has yet to be fully realized. As the state's flagship land grant university sets its future strategy, we expect that the focus will be more globally focused compared to its trajectory under the Council's stewardship. As URI and RIC remain our student's primary transfer institutions, we are focused not only on maintaining our current transfer rates but growing them significantly. The key to doing so is removing institutional barriers to allowing a student with an associate degree from CCRI to transfer to URI or RIC as a junior. To achieve that goal, President Hughes asked URI, RIC, and the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner to join CCRI in an application to the Aspen Transfer Initiative that would strengthen transfer efforts. With this work underway, we have confidence that we will see meaningful increases in the number of students with an associate degree transferring successfully into their junior year.

CCRI enjoys support from the Rhode Island General Assembly and the Governor's Office. Support for the college was clear when, in 2017, Governor Raimondo created a pilot Rhode Island Promise Program and, in 2022, Governor McKee signed the program into law making the program permanent. The Rhode Island Promise Program is a last dollar two-year free tuition program for graduating Rhode Island high school students attending CCRI. Support was also clear in 2021 when the General

Assembly placed CCRI on the ballot asking voters to approve a \$12 million general obligation bond to fund capital projects, CCRI's first in 10 years. The case was made for this investment after developing the college's first [comprehensive facilities master plan](#) in many years. In 2021, the General Assembly also provided an additional \$100m (over five years) in new capital dollars through the budget process. This investment will advance improvements that will support students' success throughout the four campuses. CCRI intends to continue to ask for general obligation bond support from the voters every two-year cycle.

Even with the support of elected officials, CCRI continues to have concerns about higher education funding. The lack of predictability presents challenges to budget forecasting and management. It also affects students who cannot predict the costs of their education. A tuition policy adopted by the Council could be helpful in creating predictable tuition increases. Understanding the intense competition for public dollars, we note that Rhode Island is typically in the bottom five to ten states for public higher education funding. Despite this challenge, CCRI and the Council are committed to ensuring that an associate degree stays affordable for Rhode Islanders. Each year, after careful weighing of the college's financial position, the president makes a recommendation on tuition to the Council. Two critical considerations are 1) affordability within the New England region and 2) remaining significantly under Pell limits. Annually, we recommend a tuition structure for the following fiscal year that keeps CCRI's tuition in the middle of our regional peers and below Pell funding. This process of carefully assessing our position regionally and within federal parameters is a critical part of our strategy to keep Rhode Island's only community college competitive with neighboring states' community colleges and growing online options.

INTERNAL GOVERNANCE

Description

CCRI's president manages an administrative structure that ensures effective management of the institution so it may fulfill its mission and purpose. Currently, the president's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) consists of four vice presidents, one associate vice president, executive director of marketing and communications, senior advisor to the president, director of human resources and institutional equity, chief information officer, director of diversity, equity and inclusion and organizational development, and executive director of Strategic Initiatives. This team meets weekly to support the president's leadership of the college, including matters such as enrollment, labor, capital improvement, development and monitoring of the budget, and progress towards strategic goals. The President's Council has 28 members and consists of the SLT, deans, directors, chairs of the Faculty Senate and Staff Assembly, and union presidents. The President's Council meets bi-monthly to share information, provide feedback to the president, and review and recommend policies. The president meets weekly with her direct reports. The vice president for academic affairs meets biweekly with her deans and monthly with department chairs. The other vice presidents and associate vice presidents hold regular meetings with their teams. In January 2022, CCRI invested in the position of director of diversity, equity, inclusion, and organizational development. The purpose of this position is to provide professional development opportunities around diversity, equity, and inclusion to achieve the goal of becoming an anti-racist college.

The college's non-classified employees are organized within five unions, all of which are represented by the [National Education Association of Rhode Island](#) (NEARI). The college has collective bargaining agreements with its full-time Faculty Association, Part-Time Faculty Association, Professional Staff Association, Education Support Professionals Association, and its Driver Education instructors. Each collective bargaining agreement has a three-year term. The Education Support Professionals Association represents the college's classified employees. As of April 1, 2023, the Council, in partnership with the college, has completed negotiations with all but the Faculty Association. In April 2023, the Faculty Association rejected the tentative agreement for the second time and the matter is going into mediation. A [Personnel Policy Manual](#) communicates personnel policies for non-classified, Council employees.

Communication with bargaining unit leadership occurs frequently. Every six weeks the president meets with union leadership teams. The special advisor to the president and human resources staff are in conversation with union leadership often. When mutually agreeable solutions cannot be reached, the grievance processes in the bargaining agreements are used to reach a resolution.

College policies are developed through administrative action, and through the college's shared governance structure which has undergone significant changes in the past 6 years. The new internal governance system for the college includes the [Faculty Senate](#), the [Staff Assembly](#), and the [President's Council](#). Additionally, a [Curriculum Review Committee](#) was established through the collective bargaining agreement between CCRI, the Council on Postsecondary Education and the CCRI Faculty Association as an advisory committee whose mission is to consider courses of study and make recommendations on individual courses to be offered for degree credit.

By 2016, CCRI's governance system had gone through several iterations which were not successful in engaging the college. At that time, many committees were only partially populated, and many did not meet regularly. President Hughes charged the college to populate the committees and provided a coordinator to support this work and to develop a framework for re-engagement. As a result, a Governance Coordinating Committee (GCC) was formed and subsequently, a governance manual was adopted. The GCC, consisting of the chairs of the governance committees, managed the creation and approval of governance policies and the bi-annual amendment process. In Fall 2020, an amendment was put forward that would create a Faculty Senate. It was adopted and senators were elected soon after. The Faculty Senate convened in winter 2021. Their first action was to develop by-laws and a constitution. The Faculty Senate incorporated the academic committees existing in the previous governance system and added additional committees.

To support the development of effective by-laws and a constitution, President Hughes contracted with the [Association of Governing Boards for Universities and Colleges](#) (AGB), an organization with extensive experience in higher education governance. President Hughes charged an ad hoc committee consisting of the vice president for academic affairs, the then vice president of administration and external affairs (now Special Advisor to the President), Faculty Senate Chair, and the chair of the GCC to work with the consultant. Top recommendations included a structure with a smaller number of committees and fewer members on each committee to make policy formation and passage more efficient. After a six-month engagement, the Faculty Senate amended their by-laws reflecting recommendations from the consultant.

The Faculty Senate handles all matters relating to instruction and academics that do not fall under the Curriculum Review Committee's purview. The Faculty Senate consists of 41 members of the full-time faculty along with four seats for members of the college's part-time faculty. Members of the Faculty Senate participate in eight standing committees: 1) Academic Standards and Policy, 2) Academic Technology, 3) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, 4) General Education, 5) Online Learning, 6) Student and College Success, 7) Teaching and Assessment, and 8) Constitution/By-laws/College Governance Manual/Elections. The charge of each committee is located on pages seven and eight of the [Faculty Senate](#) bylaws. Committees within the Faculty Senate meet monthly. In addition to faculty, the president, vice president of academic affairs, deans, and directors sit on the Senate as ex-officio members. Student government representatives are also a part of the Faculty Senate. Policy recommendations in the form of bills are developed at the committee level. Once approved in committee, the policy is then voted upon by the full Faculty Senate. The policies generated by the Faculty Senate are recommended to the president for approval. The president and vice president of academic affairs attend Faculty Senate meetings and meet with Faculty Senate leadership to support a transparent and collaborative governance structure.

To ensure staff were appropriately represented in governance, a group of faculty and staff worked on the development of a Staff Assembly. In 2022, the Chair of the GCC led an initiative that would engage staff in the governance process by creating an entity that would take on the non-academic business and administrative work of the college. A group of faculty and staff managed an election process to seat its members and elect officers. The Staff Assembly's by-laws and constitution were modeled on the Faculty Senate's documents, were informed by AGB's feedback, and completed in December 2022. After the election of the Staff Assembly officers, the then vice president of administration began meeting with the leadership of the Faculty Senate and Staff Assembly to discuss how the governance manual should be amended to reflect the new governance structure. They collaborated on the development of a statement that outlines the roles of each entity involved in governance, and, after a college Town Hall hosted by the three representatives, it was put to a vote and adopted by the college in December 2022.

The Staff Assembly consists of 30 staff members from all the non-academic divisions in the college (librarians are considered faculty) plus four ex-officio union seats, four non-voting seats for part-time employees, eight seats for students (two on Assembly and one on each of the six standing committees). The Faculty Senate Chair and Vice-Chair have an ex-officio seat. The Staff Assembly has six standing committees: 1) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, 2) Elections, 3) Operations, 4) Strategy and Finance, 5) Student Success, and 6) Technology and Data. These committees meet monthly. The Staff Assembly committees generate policies that are voted on by the full Staff Assembly. Once approved, they are sent to the President's Council for review and recommendation to the president. The president meets with the Staff Assembly leadership and attends the Staff Assembly's monthly meetings. The senior advisor to the president serves as the liaison to the Staff Assembly. Deans, directors, and others whose expertise is critical to a committee's work sit on the committee as ex-officio members or subject matter experts.

Appraisal

The college has made considerable effort to create an appropriate and effective internal governance structure that assures the integrity and quality of academic programming, involves participation from all appropriate constituencies, and results in effective management of the institution. The Faculty Senate and the Staff Assembly both have a foundation built on their respective approved by-laws and constitutions. Decision-making processes and creation of policies are clearer and more consistent because of these efforts to strengthen internal governance. The Faculty Senate and the Staff Assembly both intend to develop key performance metrics so that the college can measure and evaluate their effectiveness. Working with the unions and new governance structure, we are committed to continually improving our communication and transparency.

The effectiveness of the college's efforts in this area is demonstrated in two significant moments. The first came in 2017 when the Faculty Association held a vote of no confidence of the president and vice president for academic affairs because the college was advancing an abbreviated Winter Term (J-Term). The union leadership expressed concern about the pedagogical implications of a new abbreviated structure. Although the administration presented considerable evidence that abbreviated terms are a proven tool used by two-year colleges for students acquiring credit more quickly, saving them time and money, their concerns were not assuaged. The faculty proceeded with the no confidence vote and the Winter Term was held without CCRI full-time faculty teaching courses. The administration subsequently shared J-Term success data that demonstrated to faculty how these courses contribute to earlier graduation for students. When a Winter Term was offered in 2019, it was held successfully with the support of the faculty union. CCRI has held a J-Term each year since. The number of students participating has increased every year and it is a key part of the college's student success strategy.

The second moment was when the college experienced a significant financial challenge in 2020. The combination of a \$5m dollar state budget cut with only 3 weeks left in Fiscal Year 2020, a predicted 25% reduction in Fall 2020 enrollment due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and a FY21 state budget that had not yet been adopted due to pandemic disruptions, the college made the difficult decision to lay off approximately 60 employees. Unionized employees from the Education Support Professionals Association were most of the retrenched positions. In response, the union held a 'no confidence vote' on the president and vice president of administration. Working with our partners in state government, the Rhode Island Department of Health absorbed these employees into their COVID-19 operations for six months. The employees continued to earn their salaries, and when the college's finances stabilized and a FY21 budget was established, the college reinstated most employees to their previous positions.

We continue to work with the leadership of the five unions on several initiatives as the COVID-19 pandemic impact wanes. This includes the implementation of a remote work policy that allows many employees to work from home up to two days a week. This policy is popular among eligible employees and a competitive recruitment tool for new employees.

Projection

- The college will transition to new leadership, with a permanent leader expected to be in place by 2025.
- In collaboration with the Council, the interim president and interim vice president of academic affairs will continue to advocate for the seamless transfer of students throughout Rhode Island public higher education through the implementation of the Aspen Transfer initiative recommendations.
- The interim president will continue to advocate for the resources the college needs to deliver on its commitment to students. With half of the college's budget coming from the state, senior leaders must continue to build relationships with elected officials.
- The internal governance structure will undergo a self-assessment that will include developing key performance metrics to benchmark their effectiveness.

DRAFT

STANDARD FOUR: THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Strengths	Opportunities
Implementation of Guided Pathways and Rhode Island Promise have led to increased graduation and student success rates.	Redesign General Studies degree into transfer pathways.
To support the college’s strategic plan, the college has launched an academic master plan to prioritize academic improvement efforts.	Improve gateway math and English readiness.
A major general education revision is complete and being assessed.	Increase transfer rates and credentials earned by transfer students.
Several new technology applications, including an online catalog and curriculum management platform, ensure integrity in the award of academic credit.	Implementation of work-based learning in all programs.
	Continue to improve assessment processes and use assessment results for program improvement.

The Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) offers [98 academic programs](#) leading to an Associate in Arts (AA), Associate in Science (AS), Associate in Applied Science (AAS), Associate in Applied Science Technical Studies (AAS-TS) and Associate in Fine Arts (AFA), diploma, or certificate across its four major campuses and two satellite campuses. All degree programs take at least one year to complete. Degrees and certificates are offered in many disciplines, from nursing and allied health to technology and general studies. Students earn a minimum of 60 credits within associate degree programs following a required or recommended sequence of courses. Certificates range from 18 to 43 credits and include a recommended sequence of program-specific course requirements. Information about certificate and degree programs, including program outcomes, is available on academic department webpages and the College Catalog.

Programs are designed to align with CCRI’s mission to prepare students to transfer to a baccalaureate institution or to enter the workforce by providing affordable access to higher education. Established in 2017, CCRI is the sole state institution awarding the [Rhode Island Promise](#) scholarship, providing opportunity for all Rhode Islanders coming right out of high school to pursue an associate degree, tuition free. CCRI’s academic programs align with our mission by educating students in the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed to respond to community needs and contribute to Rhode Island’s economic and workforce development.

CCRI’s academic programs are of appropriate depth and breadth, as indicated by agreements with the college’s main transfer-out institutions, the University of Rhode Island (URI) and Rhode Island College (RIC). Through the [Joint Admissions Agreement](#) (JAA), CCRI has 46 pathways with 32 separate concentrations with URI and 23 programs with 11 concentrations with RIC. Thirty-two percent of CCRI’s transfer-out students earn a degree or certificate before transfer (see Standard 8.2 data first form).

CCRI has been nimble in designing career-oriented programs to meet the needs of students seeking immediate employment. For example, courses and a certificate in court reporting were developed and approved to meet the growing demand for individuals who can record legal proceedings. In response

to Rhode Island's healthcare employee shortage during the first year of the pandemic, the Nursing Department offered a summer cohort of 40, second-year nursing students the opportunity to expedite their graduation and ability to enter the workforce. In January 2022, CCRI again responded to the state's nursing shortage by creating an early start for students to begin clinical rotations in acute care. Career programs have advisory boards that meet annually to foster communication and partnerships with members of industry.

CCRI launched the Environment, Sustainability, and Management Associate in Science degree in fall 2022, which is an interdisciplinary achievement of the business and biology departments, with input from industry advisors, the Food Policy Council, and the Rhode Island Nursery and Landscaping Association. It offers a two-year exit ramp for students interested in immediate employment. It also sets up a seamless transfer to students interested in completing a four-year degree at the University of Rhode Island. The program includes a work-based learning component required of all students, regardless of their choice of two-year or transfer options.

ASSURING ACADEMIC QUALITY

Description

The college assures academic quality of the curriculum and instruction for all courses and programs under the leadership and administrative oversight of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President, academic division deans and directors, department chairpersons, and program directors/coordinators all engage in continuous improvement processes through the Academic Master Plan; work with shared governance committees including the Faculty Senate, its subcommittees, and the Curriculum Review Committee; and assessment and the Academic Program Review process. Further discussion of the Faculty Senate and assessment can be found in Standard 3 and Standard 8, respectively.

Improving the academic planning process has been a priority within the college. Joining the National Community College Cost and Productivity Project was highlighted in our 2019 interim report, and it was intended to guide CCRI's academic planning but did not ultimately suit our planning needs. We began working with EAB and their Academic Performance Solutions product to provide data to chairs, deans, and Academic Affairs staff in 2020. APS is the primary method in Academic Affairs for planning instructional costs, workloads, and faculty load to inform academic staffing plans and program improvements. Overall planning within Academic Affairs is guided by the Academic Master Plan. Following the launch of the [Strategic Plan 2022-27](#), the Academic Master Plan committee was assembled. The committee engaged in an inclusive process of gathering, analyzing, and reviewing data to create an [Academic Master Plan](#) for 2022-2027. The committee's goal was to reach a common vision of academic strategies and success measures. The three goals of the Academic Master Plan are to 1) drive student success, experience, and completion, 2) expand partnerships and programs, and 3) strengthen institutional effectiveness. All of the goals and strategies in the plan are oriented around improving the quality of our outcomes and processes.

Chaired by the vice president for academic affairs (VPAA) or her designee, the [Curriculum Review Committee](#) (CRC) consists of 13 full-time faculty. The Curriculum Review Committee ensures consistency of course content, appropriate to the field of study, and reflects the level and amount of student learning through its oversight of all developed curriculum. All curriculum originates from the

faculty with approval from their designated department and is documented through the CourseLeaf Curriculum Information Management (CIM) online proposal forms. Proposals for new or existing programs and courses are submitted to the CRC for approval before becoming a formal part of the curriculum. The use of an online curricular management system improves transparency and expedites the review process. CIM allows reviewers to leave suggestions and questions on each proposal and serves as a documented historical record of changes made throughout the workflow. Certificate programs and diplomas go through the same level of oversight as degree programs. The CRC reviews course and program learning outcomes to ensure the level of academic quality is consistent across its degree programs.

Proposals approved by the CRC are subsequently presented to the vice president for academic affairs and the president for final review and approval. Following internal approval, the Rhode Island Council on Postsecondary Education is notified of any new or substantially changed (more than 25%) degree and certificate programs. For any revised program requirements, the department chairperson must share supplemental information with their respective dean and the VPAA related to any arrangements needed for enrolled students so they may complete their education with minimum disruption. Depending on the circumstance and timing of revision, such arrangements may include independent study coursework, course substitutions, and allowance to continue fulfilling the previous requirements.

To ensure academic programs have adequate resources, department chairs, in partnership with the divisional dean, assess the need for additional faculty hiring each fall semester for the upcoming academic year based on an analysis of course need and capacity. An academic program may be eliminated due to consecutive years of low enrollment, a change in the priorities or direction of the department/division, a decrease in academic quality, or lack of external demand for the program. Proposals include a teach-out plan. Once fully approved for termination, a notice is sent to the Council on Postsecondary Education, in the same process as a new or revised program.

Once programs are in place, syllabi are reviewed every semester. The [Syllabus Components and Design](#) template in the [Faculty Handbook](#) provides guidance to faculty of the required components of a syllabus. The Faculty Senate's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) committee is updating the common syllabus template for inclusivity. Faculty are learning inclusive teaching methodologies through programs such as [ACUE's Effective Teaching Practices](#), [Caring Campus](#), the [Effective Practices in Teaching Online \(EPTO\) program](#), and the [SUNY Online Course Quality Review Rubric \(OSCQR\)](#) standards.

Under the Faculty Senate, the [General Education Committee](#) is the governance committee responsible for overseeing the process of defining general education, college-wide learning outcomes, evaluating courses for approval, and assessing outcomes. A faculty position of director of general education was created in fall 2022. The director is responsible for working with academic departments to create an assessment schedule for general education courses. Faculty assess artifacts of student work according to the outcomes for which general education courses are certified. The director serves as the primary administrative resource for general education assessment and coordinates with the Faculty Senate's General Education Committee to recommend changes to courses, processes, and the General Education Policy in response to assessment results (see Standard 8 for more information on general education assessment).

Another subcommittee of the Faculty Senate is the [Online Learning Committee](#), which includes representation from all academic divisions and recommends academic policy related to online learning.

With support from the [Online Learning & Technology \(OL&T\) Department](#), CCRI faculty select, build, and teach online courses using the same learning outcomes as in-person courses approved by the CRC. OL&T in the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs provides direction and guidance for effective teaching in online and hybrid courses. Ninety-three percent of full-time faculty and 43% of adjunct faculty are internally certified to teach online, improving online learning outcomes for students.

An example of effective academic planning and oversight is that prior to COVID-19, approximately 13% of CCRI's course sections were offered online. In March 2020, 88% of courses were transitioned to online modalities. As CCRI emerged from the pandemic, many online courses were transitioned back to in person; however, many students continued to enroll in online courses. In fall 2022, 37% of CCRI courses were offered online, with approximately 3,000 students enrolled exclusively in online courses. At that time, the Online Learning Department and Center for Instructional Technology were merged to form OL&T. Combining Instructional Design and Learning Management System (LMS) services increases collaboration between both areas and streamlines the availability of resources for faculty and students in the online environment. During the 2022-2023 academic year, OL&T has focused on assessment to improve online course design, faculty teaching preparedness and the incorporation of measurement of student learning outcomes of online courses. In alignment with CCRI's Academic Master Plan, the assessment of online courses commenced in September 2022 utilizing the Online Course Quality Review (OSCQR) process. The OSCQR rubric consisting of 50 quality standards was divided into three parts; Level 1 was rolled out in fall 2022; Level 2 was rolled out in spring 2023; and Level 3, covering the final remaining standards, will be rolled out in fall 2023. Instructional Designers provide training and professional development on the OSCQR standards. Ongoing reviews and action plans are facilitated by faculty trained in OSCQR review methodology in collaboration with CCRI's instructional designers.

All faculty members are expected to engage in academic assessment activities, including designing assessment plans, determining and reviewing course and program learning outcomes, evaluating program curricula, collecting samples of student work, and serving on committees related to assessment. CCRI has several bodies that participate in the assessment process so that student learning outcomes can be evaluated and improved on an ongoing basis. Up until 2022, the Academic Quality Assessment Committee (AQAC) reviewed and recommended college policies and procedures regarding assessment. AQAC organized the Academic Program Review (APR) process and provided peer feedback to the programs evaluated each year. Beginning in 2022, the Faculty Senate's [Teaching and Assessment Committee](#) replaced AQAC. The Teaching and Assessment Committee evaluates the Academic Program Reviews for degree-granting programs on a [five year](#) cycle. The APR is a process intended to assist each academic program in fulfilling its mission and that of the college. It is a comprehensive evaluation of a program's mission and purpose; curriculum; student support services; teaching, learning, and scholarship of faculty; resources; and educational effectiveness. Departments assess enrollment trends, program demand, and student outcomes. Programs with specialized accreditation submit the self-study documents prepared for their accreditation body as demonstration of academic quality. In the absence of an external accreditor, these programs have an advisory board that meets annually, providing input and guidance related to industry skills and need. Over the past three years, we increased the amount of assistance to program faculty engaged in the Academic Program Review process. An orientation, along with a Blackboard site with related resources, model documents, and help for accessing data is offered.

Located within the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the director of academic program review and accreditation is the primary administrative resource for departments completing Annual Assessment Reports and Academic Program Reviews. The director of academic program review and accreditation offers professional development to faculty, provides assistance with assessment reporting tools, and collaborates with college departments on assessment-related initiatives. The director is also responsible for tracking and managing academic program review recommendations, including updates to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. In 2023, an Assessment Coordinator was added to the Academic Affairs staff, increasing the capacity of the college to support faculty with assessment.

CCRI graduates are expected to demonstrate collegiate-level English skills upon graduation. All degree programs require students to complete ENGL 1010 (Composition I) or a similar college-level writing course. There is a scaffold for English language learners from entry to completion of ENGL 1010 Composition I. The English department offers co-requisite courses using the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) model. The course ALP ENGL 1010A Composition I pairs gateway ENGL 1010 (Composition I) with ENGL 1005 (College Writing). Students who test into ENGL 1005 (College Writing) take both ENGL 1005 (College Writing) and ENGL 1010 (Composition I) in the same semester, taught by the same instructor who is skilled in teaching developmental education and writing. Between 31%-44% of students who placed into ENGL 1005 (College Writing) between 2019 and 2022 enrolled in the ALP ENGL 1010A (Composition I). Pass rates for students in ALP ENGL 1010A (Composition I) were higher than those in the ENGL 1005 (College Writing) and ENGL 1010 (Composition I) courses alone, as seen in the high enrolled, low pass (HELP) course data. Overall pass rates for ENGL 1010 (Composition I) have improved as well. The baseline five-year average of students completing gateway English with a C or better in their first year was 29% for 2013 through 2017, and up to 38% in AY20-21. In fall 2022, the ENGL 1010A Composition I (ALP) success rate was 73%.

All programs within the Health and Rehabilitative Sciences (HARS) division have contracts in place for clinical affiliations. CCRI follows the Rhode Island Board of Education's Regulations for Dual Enrollment. This policy allows students to enroll in public postsecondary education courses to satisfy academic coursework requirements in high school and earn credits at a public postsecondary institution in a dual or concurrent enrollment capacity.

Appraisal

Data-informed decision making has been improved by the implementation of Academic Performance Solutions (APS), specifically with its Department and College Analytics and Course Planning Optimization (CPO) dashboards. These dashboards serve to provide key performance indicators to academic leaders to guide decision-making. These dashboards display trends and comparisons on key college and department metrics such as enrollment, class capacity utilization, course completion, instructional workload, and instructional costs. Department chairs, in collaboration with their academic deans, analyze and assess their department and program health and strategic goals aligned with CCRI's mission and strategic plan. The CPO dashboard allowed the college to discontinue the manual creation of an enrollment tracker, freeing up an estimated 35 hours per year in the Institutional Effectiveness (IE) office for other projects. With the dashboard's easily accessible data, department chairs and academic deans make informed decisions related to adding or canceling course sections for current and future semesters. This dashboard empowers academic leaders to make smarter, data-informed course planning decisions to support student demand. While APS informs decision-making and planning, we are still working toward improvement for allocating resources as a component of

academic planning overall. CCRI's new Vice President of Administration and Finance will support this effort.

CCRI has made strides in assuring academic quality and has identified areas for growth. The Curriculum Review Committee (CRC) is better able to systematically approve new and revised course and program proposals with the implementation of the CIM platform. As proposal reviewers are able to more easily ask questions and make comments through on the online proposal in advance of the curriculum meetings, the CRC's meetings now have more robust discussions on a proposal's quality. While program and course assessment has expanded (for more details, see Standard 8), the college is in the process of implementing the Blackboard Assessment tool with the goal of engaging a broader group of faculty members to participate in assessment. Academic Program Reviews also provide a valuable opportunity for a program to evaluate every five years what it is doing through its curriculum, learning objectives, and student learning. While the Academic Program Review includes information on external advisory boards and the process currently involves a peer review of faculty from external departments, more could be done to more fully integrate an industry or external perspective to the review. Overall, the director of academic program review and accreditation provides coordination of new assessment software implementation, systematized assessment policies and procedures across the academic program, and provides professional development related to course and program review.

UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS

Description

As an associate degree granting institution, CCRI offers coursework appropriate to the first two years of an undergraduate degree. To prepare students for degree and certificate programs, developmental education courses offer the foundational knowledge needed for students to seek mastery of a disciplinary area. All associate degrees require both a major field of study, allowing students to explore a subject in depth, and general education courses which introduce them to broad areas of human knowledge. General Education requirements reflect our General Education Policy (see table below) and are based on the college's [Definition of the Educated Person](#). Program requirements for all degrees and certificates are published in the [College Catalog](#) and on the [website](#).

Table 4.1 General Education Policy Course Approval Requirements

Course Characteristic
3 or more credits (1 credit music course may be repeated)
No pre-requisite unless student can place into course or is a course required for technical and career program
Course meets at least two of the skill categories of the Definition of the Educated Person
Course is attributed to the Humanities, Math and Science, or Social Science domains of knowledge
Course should transfer to the University of Rhode Island or Rhode Island College

Appraisal

CCRI's developmental education program continues to need improvement despite efforts made with the co-requisite model for math and English courses. The challenge has been how to prepare highest

needs students in math and English to successfully transition to the college curriculum to achieve degree completion. The college is investigating moving the highest-needed levels of developmental education to the Division of Workforce Partnerships, while lower-level need courses would move entirely to a co-requisite model. Another way that the college is addressing student success is through a workgroup comprising faculty and administration to examine the college's scheduling options for students. In spring 2023, the group investigated the implementation of a 7-week, compressed course delivery model. The workgroup looked at course success and withdrawal rates by course length as well as a review of the literature and lessons from peer institutions who had made similar changes to their schedules. The workgroup recommends reducing college-wide scheduling options to either 15-week or 7-week classes wherever possible, and scaling up the scheduling of 7-week classes to support student success.

GENERAL EDUCATION

Description

CCRI's general education program rests on foundational skills described by the [Definition of an Educated Person](#). The faculty and staff established four critical abilities that define the learning outcomes of a CCRI graduate. The core abilities guide students, faculty, and staff in establishing educational goals and assessing learning within and across the primary domains of knowledge: arts and humanities, science and mathematics, and the social sciences. The four core abilities include 1) effective communication, 2) critical thinking, 3) quantitative, mathematical and scientific reasoning, and 4) awareness of oneself and the world. CCRI's general education program requires all degree-seeking students to complete a minimum of 20 credits in general education courses. distributed across the four abilities and three domains of knowledge (e.g., humanities, math and sciences, and social sciences).

CCRI's [General Education Committee](#) (GEC), a formally convened committee of the Faculty Senate consisting of faculty with support from relevant members of administration representing both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. The GEC is responsible for the General Education Policy and the General Education Assessment Plan. The committee reviews and approves all general education courses. The General Education Policy mandates assessment of all general education courses. A General Education Assessment Plan is developed by faculty in conjunction with the general education program director and revised annually, as needed. Faculty assess student work in general education courses to determine proficiency. Student work is determined to fall in categories of "beginning" (student work demonstrates only some components of the key indicators for the outcome and/or demonstrates with many errors), "emerging" (student work demonstrates most of the key indicators with some errors), or "competent" (student work demonstrates all components of the key indicators with minor errors). For fall 2022, 101 individual faculty, across 18 different courses (with multiple sections) representing seven of the eight subcategories, were asked to participate in general education course assessment. Of those, 69% submitted data on a total of 2,289 students in general education courses.

The Definition of an Educated Person was updated in 2018, resulting in changes to general education course designations. The General Education policy was approved in 2022 with the goal to support greater focus through a reduced set of general education courses and to maximize transferability. All general education courses were reevaluated according to the new policy between 2019 and 2022 and are reflected in the catalog for the 22-23 academic year. The general education curriculum consists of

134 courses (down from 270). Cutting the number of general education choices in half streamlines offerings for students and improves transfer. Since 2020, transfer of general education has increased to 94% to the University of Rhode Island (URI) and 77% of CCRI general education courses transfer to Rhode Island College (RIC).

Of particular note, the Definition of an Educated Person identifies information literacy as an important skill category necessary for all CCRI graduates. The CCRI Library has an established Information Literacy Initiative offered by librarians in collaboration with other faculty. Information literacy sessions augment classroom work by teaching the skills necessary to effectively identify, find, evaluate, and use information. Information literacy forms a foundation for students to build upon to further their education and career goals. Information literacy has been included as a measurable competency and is assessed in general education courses.

Appraisal

Part of the college's success in General Education and our ability to assure academic quality has been related to technological upgrades that support processes that ensure rigor, consistency, and transparency. For instance, the adoption of CourseLeaf's Curriculum Information Management (CIM) better integrates the notice of new or revised general education courses with the Curriculum Review Committee. Both committees (CRC and GEC), review student learning outcomes for courses and programs and alignment with general education outcomes. Use of CourseLeaf's Catalog (CAT) ensures that students are informed about which courses fulfill which [general education requirement](#). [DegreeWorks](#) tracks a student's progress through the general education requirements and makes clear to both students and advisors which requirements have been met and which need to be completed. This enables students to carefully target their electives and minimize unnecessary credits.

While CCRI has made great improvements in its ability to assess our Educated Person outcomes, the college can do more to better integrate the assessment activities of the Library around information literacy with the college's Information Literacy outcome. CCRI librarians assess information literacy competency in many instructional sessions via a student-completed worksheet. As shown in the Credit Hours and Information Literacy tab in the data first forms, information literacy sessions are offered as sessions embedded in a class, such as with the Evidence Based Practice Project for Nursing students; or as a standalone session. From June 2021-May 2023, assessment data was collected for 60 general education courses that received library instruction. In those courses, 785 students received library instruction and 795 assessment worksheets were collected (some classes completed more than one assessment). Of the total 795 assessments collected, 746 were completed in which students successfully found a journal article, book, and/or website. This results in an overall 94% success rate for the assessments completed. The library also offers two credit-bearing courses teaching information literacy: LRCT 1010 Introduction to College Research (one credit) and LRCT 1015 College Research (three credits). Only LRCT 1015 College Research meets the general education requirement and transfers to URI and RIC. The success of the current initiative can be built upon by scaling participation to reach more departments and programs.

THE MAJOR OR CONCENTRATION

Description

CCRI offers a [program of study](#) that affords the student the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills in a variety of academic disciplines. All academic programs include major requirements and learning outcomes and are designed to prepare students for transfer to baccalaureate institutions or direct entry into the workforce.

Associate degree programs require a minimum of 60 credits, all of which can be fulfilled through in-person, hybrid, and online modalities. All are designed to meet the educational needs of the community. Courses with co-requisites and prerequisites are designed so students can complete programmatic course work in the proper sequence. Externally accredited programs, are based on their professional organization's standards. For example, in the case of the Associate in Arts in Early Childhood Education and Childhood Development, the program refers to the National Association for the Education of Young Children's Professional Standards and Competencies. For programs with external accreditation or that offer students some elective choices, total credit hours may exceed 60. The [College Catalog](#) lists the program requirements and sequences for courses in each academic major. All courses are based on program and course learning outcomes which are clearly stated in course syllabi and program webpage.

There are certificate programs throughout the curriculum that offer students the opportunity to complete a concentrated number of courses in a particular career path or area. Many new certificates are stackable into degree programs. For example, the [Business Administration, Basic Accounting Skills Certificate](#) provides students with the necessary knowledge and skills through 20 credit hours to qualify for entry-level account clerk and bookkeeping jobs and is also stackable into the accounting concentration of the Associate in Science in Business Administration degree. Another example includes completion of the non-credit [Certified Nursing Assistant program](#), which advantages students in their application to the [Practical Nurse \(PN\) diploma program](#). The PN program then allows students to enter the Associate in Science in Nursing program through an [LPN-to-RN admissions process](#).

The General Studies degree program is intended as a liberal arts transfer degree and requires at least 31 credits in general education courses. General Studies students focus their studies by selecting one of the seven Academic and Career Paths upon enrollment. The Guided Pathways program was developed through CCRI's award of a Title III grant. The Pathways initiative gives students a concentration of courses in one area, something that was lacking in the General Studies program before its implementation. Course recommendation lists by path help students understand how to focus their General Studies program to meet their academic, transfer, and career goals. Another feature of the Guided Pathways program is an enhanced first-year experience course. A team of faculty developed PATH 1010 to assist students in navigating the experience of higher education and encourage them to explore their academic and career goals. A financial literacy unit is built into the course so that students develop personal finance skills related to academic and career goals. In 2022, about seven percent of the college's first-time, full-time students took PATH 1010. Overall, the Guided Pathways initiative has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of students undecided in their major. The table below demonstrates improvement across several success metrics.

Table 4.2 Guided Pathways Metrics

	2019 Baseline	2022
Number of undecided students	3705	508
Percentage of all CCRI students enrolled in a Pathway	0%	88%
Percentage of General Studies students enrolled in a Pathway	0%	92%
Two-year degree completion rate	6%	18%
Three-year degree completion rate	18%	24%

Appraisal

As of fall 2022, 53% of CCRI’s matriculated students are enrolled in the General Studies degree program. National research behind the guided pathways model has found that community college students are more likely to complete a degree if they have some disciplinary focus. Since being awarded the Pathways to Progress grant in 2019, CCRI has directed students to choose one of the seven [Academic and Career Paths](#) to focus their studies. As of fall 2022, 88% of all CCRI students are enrolled in an Academic and Career Path, exceeding the college’s target of 60% by year three of the [Title III Pathways to Progress](#) grant. Students not enrolled in a path predate CCRI’s Guided Pathways implementation or are high school students in dual enrollment programs. While implementation of Guided Pathways has shown promising initial results, it could be integrated more fully into the workings of the college. In the final two years of the Title III Pathways to Progress grant, focus will turn to improving outcomes of the PATH 1010 course, building the faculty Pathway Navigator role into true academic and career mentors for General Studies students, and improving student awareness about their pathways through Blackboard organizations called Digital Learning Communities.

In fall 2022, 92% of General Studies students were enrolled in a pathway. Thirty-five percent of General Studies students are in the Health and Health Administration path while they take prerequisite courses to get into competitive health programs. Because so many of our students are in General Studies, reforming the curriculum through the Guided Pathways model is a positive step toward increasing retention and graduation rates. Twenty-seven percent of General Studies students are in Joint Admissions Agreement programs with Rhode Island College and the University of Rhode Island, further focusing their studies on the receiving institution’s curriculum. A General Studies Redesign work group is currently examining ways to create concentrations within General Studies aligned with JAA agreements, to further focus students in that degree program.

TRANSFER CREDIT

Description

The process for transferring credits into CCRI is clearly outlined on the Records Office [webpage](#). A grade of C- or higher is required to transfer courses into the college from other regionally accredited institutions. Students can petition to transfer credits back to CCRI to complete the associate degree. Reverse transfer credits are awarded to students who complete at least 15 credit hours at CCRI but

transfer out before completing a degree. Between fall 2016 and spring 2023, 443 graduates have been awarded associate degrees through the reverse transfer process.

As an associate degree granting institution most of the transfer activity involves transferring credits out of the college. Forty-seven percent of graduates from fall 2018 to summer 2021 transferred on to other colleges. Out of the 6,723 graduates in that time, 37% transferred to Rhode Island College (RIC), 32% transferred to the University of Rhode Island (URI) and 31% transferred to other institutions. In addition to these statistics for CCRI graduates, on average 7% of students who left CCRI without a credential during those same years also went on to other colleges.

CCRI was invited to participate in the [Aspen-AASCU Transfer Student Success and Equity Intensive](#) with our two primary transfer partners, RIC and URI. The three institutions agreed on a common definition of transfer and a state-wide shared methodology to track transfer data. The Transfer Intensive completed in October 2022.

A major outcome of the institute is a transfer strategic plan with statewide vision and transfer impact statements. The Postsecondary Commissioner is involved in the process, focused on improving transfer across the three state institutions through policy reform and the purchase of Transferology to help students explore their transfer options. Annual transfer and articulation meetings were standard practice before COVID-19. The practice resumed in February 2023.

CCRI continues to add programs to the Joint Admissions Agreement with URI and RIC, as well as articulation agreements with other colleges and universities, expanding options for students to complete their bachelor's degrees. As of December 2022, 2,707 CCRI students are enrolled in JAA agreements, 1,720 students enrolled for URI and 987 students aligned with RIC. The [RI Transfer Guarantee](#) allows for transfer to in-state private schools. Benefits for students include waived application fees, transfer of all credits, guaranteed admission, and financial incentives. CCRI's transfer website is comprehensive and up to date, with three pages of information for students: a [general transfer information page](#), a [Joint Admissions Agreement page](#), and a [page listing other transfer articulation agreements](#).

Appraisal

The improvement of relationships between the three Rhode Island state institutions will be of lasting impact to CCRI students and graduates. The Postsecondary Commissioner is highly engaged in improving transfer policies and communication between state institutions. Work still needs to be done to ensure greater coordination and smooth transfer of credits. Results of the Aspen-AASCU Intensive: Transfer Student Success and Equity initiative and the leadership in the state's Office of Postsecondary Commissioner will assist in propelling transfer initiatives forward.

In addition to these public partnerships, CCRI is always looking to add articulation agreements with private, baccalaureate institutions. Many of these agreements offer students who complete an associate degree junior standing as well as tuition discounts. For example, Johnson and Wales University (JWU) accepts graduates from CCRI's AS in Cybersecurity program into their BS in Cyber Threat, Intelligence, and Defense. JWU directly articulates every course in the program, accepting 61 credits. JWU offers scholarships to students who finish the AS at CCRI with a 2.7 grade point average or above. Similarly, graduates from CCRI's General Business associate degree are guaranteed to transfer all their credits to [Nichols College](#), with pricing discounts when they enroll in Nichols bachelor's

degree programs in General Business. CCRI students have many such opportunities, all articulated on the [Joint Admissions and Transfer Articulation webpages](#).

The RI Transfer Guarantee program has strict requirements. Bryant University and Salve Regina University require a 3.0 minimum and Roger Williams requires a 2.4 minimum to transfer. It is not a robust transfer program for CCRI, as students with a 3.0 often receive scholarship opportunities at many institutions. In fall 2020, 15 students transferred to Roger Williams University, six transferred to Bryant University, and one transferred to Salve Regina University under this program.

Students who graduate from CCRI transfer on to continue their education at a much higher rate than students who leave the college before completing a credential. This is another reason to focus on retention of students through graduation.

INTEGRITY IN THE AWARD OF ACADEMIC CREDIT

Description

CCRI defines the credit hour based on the Carnegie Unit described in the [Course Credit Policy](#). Lecture courses, taught face-to-face, meet for 50 minutes per credit hour for 15 weeks. For each hour of faculty instruction, students are required to complete two hours of out-of-classroom work over the 15 weeks. A typical three-credit course meets for 150 minutes per week, three 50-minute sessions per week, or any configuration that meets the course requirements. Online, hybrid, and condensed courses, such as those in summer and winter sessions, are expected to meet the same number of hours of learning to facilitate students meeting the course outcomes. Laboratory and field/clinical courses meet from 120 to 180 minutes per week over 15 weeks. The alignment of hours of instruction with the number of credit hours for each course are reviewed through the course proposal and revision process and approved through the Curriculum Review Committee.

CCRI ensures that minimum degree requirements for its associate degree programs are 60 semester credits, as displayed on individual [Programs of Study](#) pages within the [College Catalog](#). CCRI demonstrates restraint to some extent in allowing credits above the minimum for its associate degree programs. Many of CCRI's externally accredited programs (e.g., [Dental Hygiene](#) and [Radiography](#)) are subject to over 70 credits per their program's accreditation standards. CCRI's credit-hour residency requirement (i.e., credits taken at CCRI versus transfer), is 25% of the total required for the program.

The award of credit is consistent with NECHE policy. CCRI publishes all required and elective courses in its publicly accessible online [College Catalog](#), with availability to print. Course offerings are scheduled to give students the chance to graduate within each program's published length. Current and upcoming schedules are visible via CCRI's [Course Scheduler](#).

CCRI's use of [Elucian DegreeWorks](#) provides students the ability to generate degree audits. DegreeWorks provides real-time degree evaluation, which allows for more efficient academic planning and counseling capabilities to ensure students are on track to graduate within their enrolled program. No credit is awarded toward graduation for developmental courses taken. Unofficial and official transcripts are produced for students when requested which accurately reflect student attainments. As outlined in the College Catalog, a student must meet all degree requirements and complete the Intent to Graduate application to be recommended for graduation.

Independent study opportunities are provided to eligible students with at least 30 credits and a 2.0 GPA who need a course as a graduation requirement or as a prerequisite to a required course, if it has not been taught at CCRI in two semesters or projected to be offered in any semester prior to their graduation.

Policies regarding academic standing of enrolled students and requirements for continuation in, termination from, or re-admission to its academic programs are published in the [College Catalog](#). These policies include the Academic Standards Policy, Dismissal from College, Graduation Awards, Confirmed Graduates, and Returning to CCRI. Student withdrawal and related information is found on the [Dean of Student Development webpage](#). These policies are applied by faculty and administrators and are clearly articulated in the [Student Handbook](#).

Occurrences of academic dishonesty in the forms of cheating and plagiarism are considered violations of academic integrity and may result in warning to expulsion from the college, depending on degree of offense. Faculty must include an academic integrity statement in their syllabus, referencing the [Student Handbook](#). CCRI uses software tools integrated with Blackboard such as [Safe Assign](#) and [Respondus LockDown Browser](#) to enhance student academic integrity.

CCRI students regularly include online courses in their educational programs and continue to choose online courses in greater numbers. Programs and courses are the same as those offered face-to-face and use the same course learning outcomes. For authentication, all students are issued unique student ID numbers, usernames, and passwords required to access email and course materials on CCRI's learning management system (LMS) that can only be reset through in-person identification or use of an online tool tied to their account. Faculty are encouraged to implement pedagogical practices and technical settings that reduce academic dishonesty. In Fall 2018, Respondus Monitor – a video recording add-on to their Respondus LockDown Browser, was implemented, validating student identity. To assist CCRI with more efficiently gathering and analyzing student performance on institutional and program learning outcomes for ongoing program improvement, the college is in the process of implementing the Blackboard Assessment module. This system will leverage what students and faculty are doing already in Blackboard Learn, with the aim of streamlining CCRI's data collection and analysis to provide faculty with more timely insight into how students are performing on course, program, and general education outcomes for continual improvement.

All students, regardless of enrollment modality, have sufficient opportunities to interact with faculty regarding course content and related academic matters. All full-time faculty must have six office hours per week per the CCRI Faculty Association [collective bargaining agreement](#), except those with 16 or more hours of work load who must maintain four hours. Office hours can be conducted in person or virtually, providing greater flexibility and accessibility for students. Student-instructor interactions are facilitated by course discussions, announcements, publisher/third-party platforms, and grading feedback. Digital communication tools are integrated into the LMS including email, Zoom, Starfish, and Blackboard Collaborate. Blackboard Collaborate enables faculty to record sessions for students to view at any time. Recent online student survey results show students and faculty utilize all the above communication methods and 67% of students receive non-graded feedback from faculty at least weekly.

CCRI is a member of the College Consortium for International Studies (CCIS), which allows students to participate in the [Study Abroad Program](#). With prior approval, all credits earned while studying abroad transfer to CCRI and count toward graduation.

CCRI offers students opportunities to gain workplace experience related to their programs of study. Students in a cooperative education course have 15 hours a week in a supervised work experience while participating in an online seminar taught by career services staff. All incoming degree-seeking students from Fall 2024 and beyond must complete at least one work-based learning experience before they graduate. Many degree programs have clinicals, fieldwork, or practicums built in as part of the existing academic program. Academic Departments are now building these experiences into all degree programs. The experiences range from a project with an industry partner built into a course, to a full internship. A Work-Based Learning Manager, initially hired through the Title III Pathways to Progress grant, is working with faculty to develop relationships with employers. Students with relevant career experience already may receive credit for prior learning to meet the work-based learning requirement.

CCRI offers a wide range of [dual enrollment and concurrent enrollment](#) options to high school students, including [Running Start](#), [Accelerate](#), [High School Enrichment](#), and [Pathways in Technology Early College \(P-TECH\)](#). Credit awarded through dual and concurrent enrollment courses is consistent with NECHE policy. Students attending CCRI through dual enrollment programs engage in the same courses as matriculated and non-degree students. A multi-measures approach is used to place high school students in dual enrollment programs who elect to take courses which require placement. Concurrent enrollment courses are taught at the high school by a college-approved high school teacher. The high school teacher must have the necessary qualifications and experience required by CCRI and participate in training/professional development. They are evaluated using the same Student Ratings of Instruction survey that is deployed across the college. College credits earned at CCRI through dual and concurrent enrollment programs are included on a student's academic transcript. These credits can be applied toward academic certificates and degrees at CCRI and are transferable to other institutions.

CCRI recognizes college-level learning can occur outside the traditional learning environment in ways such as military service, corporate training, work experience, or other experiential learning. As described in the Prior Learning Assessment Policy, CCRI offers various Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) options. Credit requirements are outlined on the [Credit for Prior Learning webpage](#) and are reviewed and approved by faculty. Credit for prior learning is outcomes-based and is granted for students who provide evidence of, or demonstrate, significant prior learning in courses directly applicable to their program of study. Since 2022, CCRI has had a dedicated full-time staff position to oversee credit for prior learning. Located within the Admissions office, the prior learning coordinator is the first point of contact for student inquiries regarding CPL and meets with students individually to discuss their specific options. Recognizing and awarding students with academic credit for their prior learning can increase the likelihood of their program completion by more than 30% (CAEL & WICHE, 2020). Awarding CPL can reduce the amount of time and money students spend and contribute to a deeper sense of accomplishment.

Appraisal

Academic Affairs has implemented strategic improvements in several areas, including dual enrollment, credit for prior learning, access to data, technological enhancements and methods to support academic quality. These strategic improvement initiatives are described below.

CCRI is committed to advancing equity in dual enrollment and is enhancing all dual enrollment opportunities to ensure the expansion of equitable access to all communities in Rhode Island. This work is happening by establishing close partnerships with large urban districts that have been largely

underrepresented in our dual enrollment programs. Our continued work with the Providence district in particular, through the expansion of the Met High School and Accelerate programs, demonstrates how CCRI is striving to increase the racial/ethnic diversity of the students we serve before they even matriculate to the College.

Table 4.3 Fall 2022 Race/Ethnicity: Overall CCRI Population v. Dual Enrollment Population

	Fall 2022 Overall		Fall 2022- All Dual Enrollment Programs	
	N	%	N	% of Dual Enrollment
American Indian/Alaska Native	40	0%	1	0%
Asian	331	3%	26	3%
Black or African American	1,356	11%	106	14%
Hispanic or Latino	3,426	28%	269	35%
Other/Unknown	523	4%	69	9%
Two or More Races	805	7%	33	4%
White	5,782	47%	270	35%
Grand Total	12,263	100%	774	100%

When we disaggregate by dual enrollment program (DEP), we see further variance in the racial/ethnic compositions of students who participate in each program. The Accelerate program is particularly noteworthy; we started this program in partnership with RIDE and the Providence Public School district in fall 2020 with the goals of 1) combatting COVID-learning loss and 2) enrolling more Black and Latinx high school students in CCRI dual enrollment programs. Accelerate has helped the College make progress toward both goals.

Table 4.4 Fall 2022 Race/Ethnicity: Disaggregated by Dual Enrollment Program (DEP)

	Fall 2022-Accelerate		Fall 2022-HS Enrichment		Fall 2022-HS Met		Fall 2022-Pathways in Technology		Fall 2022-Running Start		Fall 2022-Concurrent	
	N	% of DEP	N	% of DEP	N	% of DEP	N	% of DEP	N	% of DEP	N	% of DEP
American Indian/Alaska Native	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Asian	3	5%	8	3%	3	2%	7	6%	4	3%	1	7%
Black or African American	21	32%	42	14%	17	11%	19	15%	5	4%	2	13%
Hispanic or Latino	33	51%	100	34%	82	54%	28	22%	24	20%	2	13%
Other/Unknown	4	6%	28	9%	16	11%	13	10%	4	3%	0	0%
Two or More Races	3	5%	11	4%	4	3%	9	7%	6	5%	4	27%
White	1	2%	107	36%	30	20%	50	40%	76	64%	6	40%
Grand Total	65	100 %	297	100 %	152	100 %	126	100 %	119	100 %	15	100 %

Other external partnerships are with employers who host students for work-based learning. Written agreements with employer partners are inconsistent across the college; however, some programs such as in the healthcare field are in compliance. CCRI is working to systematize processes as it rolls out work-based learning across the curriculum.

Finally, the table below shows the number of credits and students awarded through Credit for Prior Learning (CPL), demonstrating that while the number of students receiving CPL credit has remained stable, the number of credits received declined over the past three academic years. We expect that the new full-time CPL coordinator will be able to increase credits awarded for prior learning as the new [work-based learning policy](#) is implemented starting in fall 2024.

Table 4.5 Credit for Prior Learning Awards and Students

Academic Year	Credits Awarded through CPL	Students Awarded Credit through CPL
2020-21	1,303	137
2021-22	1,270	142
2022-23	829	131

Projection

Projections in this area are driven by CCRI's [2022-2027 Academic Master Plan](#) goals and strategies.

- Faculty committees are evaluating and redeveloping the delivery of developmental math, English, and English Language Learner courses to support successful student outcomes.
- A task force is leveraging existing data to design a strategic course scheduling plan.
- Academic Affairs will strengthen transfer pathways and partnerships by building upon Joint Admissions Agreement (JAA) with URI and RIC.
- The director of academic program review and accreditation along with a faculty advisory committee will design a process to better include an external perspective in Academic Program Review.
- The guided pathways director will lead initiatives to increase the number of credits awarded for prior learning and experiential learning.
- Academic Affairs will be responsible for expanding assessment using the Blackboard Assessment tool and increasing the number of instructional designers available to faculty to improve educational quality.
- A work group is investigating a redesign of the General Studies degree program into more specific transfer concentrations.

STANDARD FIVE: STUDENTS

Strengths	Opportunities
Student population represents the demographics of the state.	Continue to target services for dual enrollment and adult students.
Recognized by Excelencia in Education as a Hispanic Serving Institution.	Improve faculty use of the Starfish early alert and communication tool.
Support for student health and well-being has increased.	Revitalize orientation and student activities for greater student engagement.
Student Affairs has been reorganized to provide enhanced services.	Implement and evaluate Student Affairs strategic plan.

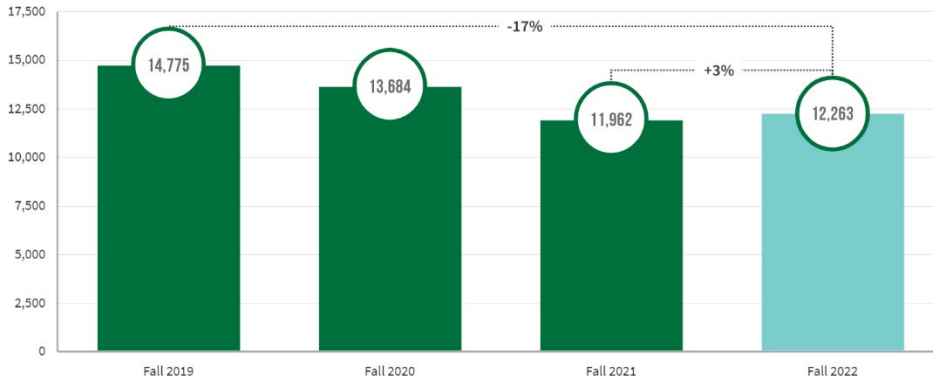
CCRI has an open admissions policy and serves a [diverse student body](#) which includes high school students in dual enrollment programs, recent high school graduates, and adult learners. The college's student body is reflective of the state population, as noted in the recent [United States Census Bureau](#) data.

Table 5.1 Fall 2022 Student Demographic Data

Overall Fall 2022 Enrollment (as of Fall Census)		
Total Fall Enrollment	12,263	
Full-Time or Part-time Status	N	%
Full-time (12+ credits)	4,964	40%
Part-time (11 or fewer credits)	7,299	60%
Race/Ethnicity	N	%
Asian	330	3%
Black or African American	1,354	11%
Hispanic or Latino	3,399	28%
Other/Unknown	621	5%
Two or More Races	793	6%
White	5,766	47%
Pell Eligible Status	N	%
Pell Eligible	6,106	50%
Not Pell Eligible	6,157	50%
Credential-Seeking Status	N	%
Degree/Certificate Seeking	11,271	92%
Non-Degree/Certificate-Seeking	992	8%

While CCRI has experienced significant enrollment declines, which is consistent among community colleges nationally, enrollments began to increase incrementally as of the spring 2022 semester. The increases have continued, as fall 2022 enrollment was up 3% over the previous fall (12,263 in fall 2022 compared to 11,962 in fall 2021).

Figure 5.1 Fall 2019 – Fall 2022 Enrollment Trends



White students make up the largest racial majority, followed by Latinx/e students, and then Black students. Aligning with our institutional priority to foster an equity-minded culture that actively focuses on eliminating barriers for student readiness and success, we have seen significant increases in Black (11%, up 16%) and Latinx/e (28%, up 13%) students as of fall 2022 compared to fall 2021. To increase awareness of racial disparities, we have incorporated student race/ethnicity data in our daily enrollment reports. Enrollments of Black and Latinx/e students have increased at a faster rate than White students since the onset of the pandemic. CCRI is a [Hispanic Serving Institution \(HSI\)](#) as recognized by Excelencia in Education, as CCRI has met the threshold of 25% Latinx/e students in the 2021-2022 academic year.

As reflected in the current strategic plan, CCRI is actively seeking to expand equitable access to early college opportunities for Rhode Island school districts. Our dual enrollment programs continue to grow and serve hundreds of students every semester. In fall 2022, CCRI served 774 students through full- and part-time dual enrollment opportunities, with the goal of increasing the number of students served. As part of our educational access mission, we intend to grow these programs through prioritizing dual enrollment opportunities in underserved urban school districts and consequently historically under-resourced Latinx/e and BIPOC students. To ensure effective support for dual enrolled students, the Admissions staff has onboarded a Dual Enrollment Specialist, with plans to onboard two early college academic advisors who will provide specialized support for dual enrollment students.

Also aligning with the strategic plan, CCRI is seeking to provide access and onboarding support to returning adult learners who have achieved some college credits but have not earned a credential. A Reenrollment Coordinator position has been added to the Admissions team to provide specialized outreach and enrollment support to assist adult learners to get back on track and earn a credential. In fall 2023, the College will launch the Fresh Start Scholarship to provide free tuition to eligible adult learners, including assistance with reinstating Pell eligibility, as well as support for incidental basic needs and outstanding balances through a partnership with the state’s RI Reconnect initiative.

ADMISSIONS

Description

Admissions information and policies are clearly outlined and easily accessible on the CCRI [website](#) and in the online [College Catalog](#). The Admissions [How to Apply](#) webpage effectively directs students to application and enrollment steps. As an open access institution, no students are denied admission to the college. Consistent with our mission to eliminate equity gaps and represent all students, our diverse community is reflected in all institutional publications and webpages. Support for educational access is provided through gateway courses in math and English as well as through ELL courses. See Standard Four for a description of developmental programs.

CCRI's performance-based health science (PBHS) programs are selective admissions programs. Students are accepted through a clearly defined points system outlined on the college website, and students are accepted after demonstrating successful completion of prerequisite requirements. Admissions meets with the health sciences department leadership regularly to evaluate and update admissions guidelines and information to ensure compliance with current requirements. Resources are available to ensure that admitted students are supported including virtual and in-person orientations, tutoring and academic coaching through the Student Success Center, and individualized student success networks and early intervention alerts through the Starfish platform.

In service to the post-pandemic demand for more online course modalities, CCRI has increased the number of online sections from 13% in the beginning of spring 2020 to approximately 40% in spring 2023. In spring 2023, 56% of students took at least one online course: 31% took a blended schedule of online and in-person, 26% enrolled in only online courses, and 43% enrolled in only in-person courses. Hybrid course modalities are also available. CCRI students take courses at four campus locations across the state, in addition to courses offered at two Educational Centers in Woonsocket and Westerly. Offering course modality and location options facilitates CCRI's ability to fulfill its mission by meeting the wide-ranging educational needs of a diverse student population.

CCRI uses a multi-measure placement process to ensure students are placed in the most appropriate English and math courses based on their academic skill level. Through a combination of Accuplacer test scores, high school transcript, and SAT scores, academic advisors can determine the student's appropriate placement. Students can register for classes through virtual drop-in sessions, on campus walk-ins, or booked appointments. CCRI offers an array of student support services including the Academic Writing Center, Tutoring Center, Disabilities Services for Students, and personal counseling/crisis intervention services.

Appraisal

Dual enrollment programming has been modified to better serve students' needs. Dual enrollment courses were more likely to serve students from wealthier districts than those from under resourced communities, and the academic supports for students, while available, were not tailored enough to the needs of high school students taking college courses. In fall 2020, CCRI launched the [Accelerate for High School Seniors](#) dual enrollment program through a collaboration with the Providence Public School District (PPSD). Accelerate is a full-time, dual enrollment program providing high school seniors with an opportunity to explore an academic and career pathway and earn transferable college credits. The program includes a dedicated advisor, increased academic support, and college transfer planning resources. Accelerate resulted in doubling the number of Black and Hispanic/Latinx/e students served

by dual enrollment programs. In 2019, prior to the existence of the Accelerate program, of the 158 total students enrolled in dual enrollment, there were 56 students of color (35%). As of fall 2022, of the 180 total students, 95 are students of color (53%) in full-time dual enrollment programs. CCRI seeks to expand opportunities to additional under-resourced communities.

Financial aid staff are exploring multiple strategies to enhance services to students with financial need. Since 2022, the financial aid appeal process has been streamlined to address the increasing number of students who are not maintaining satisfactory academic progress (SAP). The position of SAP Coordinator was added to the financial aid staff to facilitate this process redesign. Another area of focus has been the alignment of the financial aid emergency aid process with the application for Foundation scholarships. Students who need funds to pay for books, transportation, housing, or other living expenses can fill out a single application and, if approved, have their needs met through various funding sources. This process eliminates the step of students having to identify the correct course of action to take in situations where they are facing urgent financial constraints. We will also be implementing ways for students to use their financial aid to purchase meals on campus, as soon as the first day of the semester, as well as allowing them to use emergency funds in campus vending machines during times when the cafeterias are closed.

STUDENT SERVICES AND CO-CURRICULAR EXPERIENCES

Description

CCRI's Student Services Division offers a robust array of high-quality and effective services designed to help students achieve their academic and personal goals. A comprehensive student services system across four campuses and online, supports students from day one through graduation. These services include admissions counseling, academic advising, onboarding, and orientation. Upon enrollment, all matriculated students are assigned a caseload advisor who provides support throughout each student's academic journey. All new students are encouraged to participate in a comprehensive orientation program that includes academic success strategies, training on the Blackboard Learning Management System, use of the Starfish platform, and other resources. All information is available on the CCRI website, through the student MyCCRI portal, as well as through a communication plan which includes email, text, and social media messaging.

The institution endeavors to effectively organize student support services, making them accessible, efficient, and transparent. Enrollment processes are continually evaluated, modified, and modernized. For example, a manager of impact initiatives position was created to focus on assessment and implementation of technology tools to support enrollment and advising processes. We have incorporated dynamic personalized enrollment checklists in the student MyCCRI portal, which enables students to view current information about completed enrollment, financial aid, and scholarship steps, as well as highlighting remaining tasks to be completed. In spring 2023, the college migrated to Self Service Banner 9, which facilitated additional improvements in the student user interface experience.

An example of CCRI understanding the needs of its student population and making provisions to respond is CCRI's involvement in the [Caring Campus Initiative](#). CCRI is one of seven community colleges nationwide to participate. Caring Campus is led by the Institute for Evidence-Based Change (IEBC) with funding through Ascendium Education Group. The objective of Caring Campus is to

improve students' sense of connectedness to the college by cultivating caring environments through intentional behaviors by faculty and staff.

CCRI is cognizant of the growing mental health needs of students. CCRI has partnered with [MySSP](#) (My Student Support Service) to provide 24/7 mental health telecounseling and well-being support, including real-time and scheduled access to professional counselors. Staff in the following offices are required to participate in mental health related professional development: Advising and Counseling, Athletics, Dean of Students/Conduct and Civility, Disability Services for Students, Student Life and TRIO Student Support Services. These staff members are required to maintain current certification in the [QPR Institute's](#) suicide prevention course and [Mental Health First Aid](#). This compliance policy was adopted in fall 2018 and is being reviewed with plans to expand required training to include all student-facing employees in Student Affairs.

As of fall 2022, the Advising and Counseling department has adopted a caseload advising model, providing each student with an assigned advisor. The goal of caseload advising is to provide a framework that places student success at the center. The department has a staff that includes 30 caseload advisors. Eleven of the advisors are student development counselors (four of which are licensed mental health counselors), who are all available to provide short-term personal counseling and crisis management. Caseload advisors engage in an outreach plan that aligns with key academic dates and milestones to communicate important and timely messages to support students throughout each semester. Students schedule appointments to meet with advisors both virtually and online to discuss course scheduling, assistance with navigating academic, personal, and financial challenges to encourage persistence, and career exploration.

In addition to the academic support students may access from professional advisors, students also have access to faculty outside of class. Faculty are required to maintain and publish office hours so that students can seek their assistance. Also, faculty can notify Student Services via the Starfish platform when a student is in danger of failing or has expressed a personal concern that could require a well-being check or a referral to the Benefits Hub office.

CCRI offers students basic needs assistance grounded in respect, trust, and equity. In 2019, CCRI created the Community and Social Resources office, now re-named the [Benefits Hub](#) to assist students in overcoming barriers that interfere with academic success and completion. A basic needs assessment is embedded into the student onboarding process, helping the college identify and connect students with essential resources in areas such as transportation, food, housing, and childcare in advance of their first semester of enrollment. Since the inception of the Benefits Hub, more than 1,000 students have been referred for confidential assistance with addressing basic needs. In fall 2022, 318 students were referred with 70% of students accepting assistance. In summer 2022, CCRI piloted a student Basic Needs Assessment (BNA) as part of the student onboarding process (see Standard Two). Since its inception, 357 students have taken the BNA, 55% of which are first time college students.

In fall 2022, CCRI transitioned away from a limited food pantry model and launched a broader food security initiative that provides free meals at all campus cafeterias as well as \$100 grocery gift cards. Students must apply, be Pell eligible, and be enrolled in six or more credits. Since its inception, the free meals program has served 126 students with requests steadily increasing each month. The grocery gift card program has distributed \$7,200 to 72 eligible students. The college is seeking additional funding to expand these two initiatives, and in 2023 has launched a healthy snacks program.

There are ample opportunities for students to access both academic and personal support and guidance. In 2023 the Student Success Center has been renamed the Tutoring Center, which employs professional and peer tutors who provide subject-matter academic support for students on each of the college's four campuses. Academic coaches provide personalized support for time management, note-taking, reading strategies and test-taking strategies. In addition to CCRI tutors and academic coaches, students can access outside tutors 24/7 through a partnership with TutorMe. Three federally funded TRIO Student Support Services programs collectively provide comprehensive, individualized support services to 540 students who are first generation, low-income, and/or have a disability. These services are available at each of the four campuses at no cost to the student.

The Office of Accessibility, Inclusion and Disability Services for Students provides reasonable accommodation to students who self-identify as having a documented disability. The office offers day and evening hours at all campuses as well as maintains a remote presence.

In fall 2019, CCRI began its implementation of a Guided Pathways model, with the assistance of a [Title III Strengthening Institutions](#) grant. One purpose of the grant is to provide more focus to General Studies students, who are 53% of the student population. The seven academic and career pathways that were established allow students to choose a set of electives within General Studies that may direct them toward a future major and career. Students may also attend Path Days to learn about academic pathways and their associated careers.

The [Title III Pathways to Progress](#) initiative resulted in creating pathway navigator positions and a new course to help students envision their future careers. Pathways navigators are full-time faculty members on a two-course release who help academic departments communicate their program offerings to prospective and incoming students. These and other faculty also teach a new PATH 1010 First Year Experience Seminar for General Studies course which guides students through academic and career exploration and orients them to college resources. The course is recommended to all first-year students in General Studies.

New Student Orientation helps students prepare for their first year at CCRI. New Student Orientation outcomes include: 1) help students to understand the Rhode Island Promise enrollment steps and how to maintain it in Year 2; 2) ensure students are aware of the benefits of Joint Admissions Agreements and how to enroll; 3) demonstrate to students how to access and use online technology and resources; 4) assist students with understanding guided pathways and academic programs and the relationship to individual career goals; 5) ensure students understand processes and requirements for academic advising & financial aid; 6) inform students of the support services and resources available to them; 7) aid in building community and connections with faculty, staff and other students.

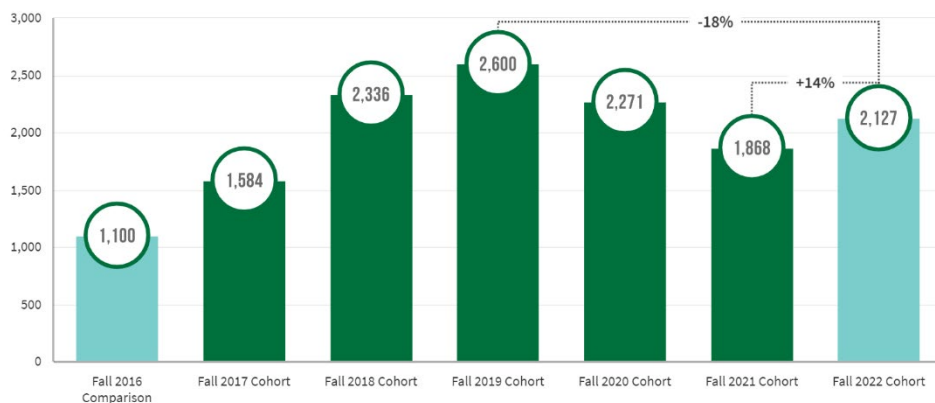
CCRI also offers several onboarding and orientation programs specifically for targeted populations. The TRIO Student Support Services program provides a day-long orientation designed to assist students with low incomes, first-generation status, or a documented disability in successfully navigating the college environment. The Office of Accessibility, Inclusion and Disability Services for Students offers a summer bridge program to assist students with disabilities with college readiness.

Two key efforts to improve equitable student success and completion are the Rhode Island Promise program and access to early college opportunities for high school students. To increase the enrollment of recent high school graduates and GED completers, as well as to decrease equity gaps, the Rhode Island Promise program provides free tuition and fees to state residents who attend directly out of

high school, and nearly half of all enrolled students are Pell grant recipients. Since the program’s inception in fall 2017, it has consistently experienced meaningful enrollment growth in the first-time, full-time direct from high school population, even amidst pandemic-related challenges. Additionally, the number of low income and students of color enrolling at CCRI continues to exceed pre-Promise 2016 comparison data.

The fall 2022 Rhode Island Promise cohort included 2,116 students, representing a 13% growth over the previous year’s cohort, and a 92% increase of high school students entering immediately after high school graduation relative to the fall 2016 pre-Promise population. In the returning fall 2021 Rhode Island Promise cohort, 1,142 students have either re-enrolled this fall (1,124) or graduated with an associate degree (18), representing a 60% fall-to-fall retention compared to 55% the previous year. In its sixth year, the Rhode Island program continues to sustain significantly increased graduation rates. Previously, only 4% of first-time, full-time students graduated from CCRI in two years, and 15% in three years. Even during the pandemic, our students have maintained graduation rate gains, largely due to the impact of the Promise program. The most recent CCRI two-year graduation rate is 18%, which is four times the historic two-year graduation rate for the college. Also, 24% graduated in three years, as compared to CCRI’s historical three-year 15% graduation rate.

Figure 5.2 Rhode Island Promise Enrollment Data



The second key effort to improve equitable student success and completion is providing high school students with early access to college experiences. CCRI currently serves more than 1,000 high school students through early college opportunities. Programs include [High School Enrichment](#), [Running Start](#), [Accelerate for High School Seniors](#), [concurrent enrollment](#), and CTE programs such as [Pathways to Technology](#). These programs offer a variety of options for students to earn college credit while in high school. To expand access to these programs, CCRI revised eligibility requirements on full-time dual enrollment programs to provide increased program accessibility. Plans are also in place to increase partnerships with high schools.

Community First and TRIO Student Support Services are intentionally designed to increase college access and completion among underrepresented student populations and outcome data from these programs demonstrate their effectiveness. The Community First Initiative is a partnership with the United Way of Rhode Island to provide college and community resources to historically under-resourced students through a mobile van. With the goal of removing barriers to social and economic mobility, recruitment efforts have been refocused to expand dual enrollment opportunities to increase equitable access to college enrollment and increase post-secondary credential attainment. These

efforts will include providing related support services in areas most affected by intergenerational poverty and economic immobility.

The Financial Aid Office administers all federal, state, and institutional assistance programs for students. Since 2020, the office has also administered emergency assistance such as CARES and HEERF. The financial aid application process is fully automated, resulting in nightly awards processing during peak application periods. Financial aid services are available in person on three of four campus locations, as well as over the phone, email, and text. Detailed consumer information and instructional videos are provided on the [departmental web page](#). Depending on the type of aid, eligibility is based on one or more of the following criteria: financial need of the individual (in the case of dependent students, family need is used), educational costs, academic program, and availability of funds. This information is clearly presented on the CCRI [website](#).

CCRI provides students with clear and timely information about financing their college education. Information about the College Financing Plan is readily available and accessible to students through their MyCCRI portal. The College Financing Plan is a consumer tool that participating institutions use to notify students about their financial aid package. It is a standardized form designed to simplify the information that prospective students receive about costs and financial aid so that they can easily compare institutions and make informed decisions about where to attend school. Loan borrowers are required to complete student loan entrance counseling, as well as a Master Promissory Note. Students completing PATH 1010 First Year Experience Seminar for General Studies complete a unit on financial literacy and complete a financial literacy assessment. A Title III Pathways to Progress key performance indicator is the percentage of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students in PATH 1010 will pass the financial literacy assessment with a score of 70% or greater will increase from 0% to 90% between in AY21-22. In fall 2022, 43% of students passed the financial literacy assessment in the first-year seminar course. Additionally, financial literacy is a required service provided by the college's TRIO-funded Educational Opportunity Center and Student Support Services programs.

The [Office of Student Life](#) coordinates a wide array of co-curricular programs for students in the form of student clubs and organizations, which are listed on the college website, publicized through email, student communications, and promoted at orientations, student involvement fairs, and through social media. [Student Government](#) operates on all campuses. Student representatives are incorporated into all governance committees and elected according to the by-laws of Student Government. In spring 2023, student leaders participated in a national American Student Government Association Student Government leadership conference.

CCRI is a member of the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA), has seven intercollegiate athletic teams, and strives to be the most respected athletic program in New England. The athletic department provides onboarding for all student-athletes, coaches, and staff. Onboarding includes reviewing NJCAA policies and procedures, CCRI athletic policies and procedures, academic standards, concussion protocol baselines, and opportunities for additional involvement in athletic activities and leadership opportunities. While adhering to all NJCAA academic eligibility rules, we have also developed an academic-based evaluation for coaches emphasizing student academic performance. Coach evaluations include a point system according to graduation rates, GPAs, and student retention. Faculty athletic representatives serve as liaisons between the team, athletic department, and the institution. Integrity is proven by the yearly submission of the Equity in Athletics report, a tool from the Office of Postsecondary Education designed to provide reports for public inquiries relating to equity in athletics data.

CCRI maintains a rigorous hiring and performance evaluation process that ensures all student services staff possess the knowledge and experience required for their roles as outlined in standardized job descriptions. Embedded in the hiring process are the values and qualities CCRI seeks in employees to ensure they are highly qualified to support students' needs. The newly formed Office of Organizational Development and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, located within Human Resources, provides student services personnel with the training and professional development needed to address the needs of an increasingly diverse study body. New leadership and a reorganization within student services has resulted in new opportunities for personnel to participate in external professional development and networking opportunities. Student Affairs personnel follow [NASPA professional standards](#) and guiding principles of good practice.

College policies regarding student rights, responsibilities, and the grievance procedure are clearly outlined in the online [Student Handbook](#), which is prominently featured, easily navigated, and accessible on the college website and linked in course syllabi. Policies on student rights and responsibilities, including student conduct and grievance procedures, are clearly stated, well publicized, readily available, and fairly and consistently administered. The dean of students is available to assist students with the grievance process. College staff abide by the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA notification regarding student privacy with respect to educational records is published in the College Catalog and in faculty, staff, and student handbooks. Staff receive FERPA and confidentiality training as part of the onboarding process. Student record information is securely maintained. Records Office forms relating to student privacy, including Student Release of Records, Student Request to Inspect and Review Education Records, and Request to Review Education Records by School Official [are available on the college website](#).

Appraisal

CCRI is strongly committed to actualizing its mission of meeting the wide-ranging educational needs of a diverse student population. Faculty, staff, and administrators are keenly aware of the characteristics and needs of CCRI's student population and are working diligently to respond to them. These efforts are guided by the strategic plan.

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) was administered for the first time in spring 2023. Overall, CCRI students feel supported at CCRI. Our standardized score for survey items related to "Support for Learners" was 53, higher than the national average of 50 and the average score for other community colleges in New England, 47.9. Related to this, CCRI students had similar levels of satisfaction with academic advising. Some 62.4% of CCRI students were very satisfied compared to 63.2% of other New England community college students. With regards to career counseling, 57% of CCRI students were very satisfied, while 55.1% of other New England community college students were also very satisfied with career counseling at their college. Peer tutoring had similar levels of satisfaction (55.8% very satisfied at CCRI, compared to 58.9% for other New England colleges), as did student satisfaction with financial aid advising (67.9% for CCRI students, and 64.4% for other New England community college students), transfer advising (57.6% compared to 57.7%), and services for students with disabilities (62.5% compared to 62.1%). Because this was the first survey administration, the results of this survey will be presented to key stakeholders across Student Affairs offices in order to use the data to inform planning.

One notable area where CCRI trails behind its peers in the CCSSE results is satisfaction with student organizations. Only 46.8% of students are very satisfied with student organizations at CCRI, compared

to 56.1% of students at other New England community colleges. Fostering robust student engagement and participation in campus organizations has been challenging since the COVID-19 pandemic forced all in-person activities to be held remotely. Recognizing the connection between student engagement and academic persistence, CCRI recently hired an inaugural dean of student engagement. In fall 2022, Student Life staff and students created an action plan to re-invigorate and re-imagine Student Government participation. This work will include review and recommendations and has resulted in a revised Student Government constitution, and will include student leadership training opportunities.

Overall, the institution has expanded personnel resources in response to increasing student demand in the offices of Advising, Benefits Hub, Disability Services for Students, and Financial Aid. The Student Affairs division has been reorganized to meet the holistic needs of students. Caseload advising involved hiring several new advisors and assigning students to a dedicated advisor. For a student population of approximately 12,000 – 12,500, the student to advisor ratio is approximately 375:1, with an institutional goal of 350:1 by fall 2023. The Community and Social Resources office has now expanded into the [Benefits Hub](#), a resource for referrals for basic needs assistance. The Disability Services for Students Office now offers daytime and evening virtual walk-in hours, and comprehensive information for students transitioning from high school.

A committee consisting of faculty, advisors, and staff from Student Life and the Student Success Center was formed in fall 2022 to develop an action plan to re-imagine student orientation and onboarding. Orientations are accessible to all students and incorporate peer student ambassadors with the goal of fostering student engagement and inclusivity. New students are able to select dates and sessions that accommodate their needs. Sessions will include academic success strategies, introduction to college resources, and information on navigating the Blackboard LMS and Starfish platforms. The online module introduces students to the resources and services of the college that are important to their success.

Student onboarding will also be improved through the reach of the First Year Experience Seminar for General Studies course, PATH 1010. First included in the catalog in 2022-2023, this course helps students understand the physical, social, emotional, and academic requirements of college and explore program options, CCRI resources, and support services. Despite developing these important skills, PATH 1010 currently reaches a small number of students due to its lack of transferability and lack of room in academic programs with full course requirements. In fall 2022, 250 students enrolled in PATH 1010. The director of general education continues to work with her partners at URI and RIC to gain transfer approval as a general education course, which will allow more students to enroll in it and make it an option to fit into more degree programs without adding required credits.

To better connect students to support, CCRI is using Starfish to improve communication between faculty and Student Affairs. Currently, there are 275 unique faculty users of Starfish Progress Surveys, individual alert flags, or kudos for students, representing about 32% of faculty. A working group held faculty focus groups and discovered several issues related to why faculty have not adopted this early intervention tool. Some faculty feel it is not an effective way of communicating with students, not aligned with how they evaluate students or that flags are closed by advisors without enough effort to work with the student. Others find the tool difficult to use or feel it takes too much time. To respond to these challenges and increase the percentage of faculty using the tool, the working group held a Starfish Day with success stories, food, and support tools. The language in the flags and marketing materials were updated to be more faculty-friendly and kudos flags were a highlighted feature. Plans are underway to continue holding Starfish Day at the start of each term, prioritizing automation between

Blackboard, Banner, and Starfish to minimize faculty administrative work, adding Starfish to New Faculty Onboarding and Orientation, and having faculty advisors provide peer training and support.

CCRI's athletics program has been streamlined because of COVID and the goal to further strengthen outcomes for student-athletes. In 2018-2019, CCRI had seven men's sports teams and eight women's teams with a total of 142 students participating in athletics. In 2019, men's baseball won the regional championship and qualified for the College World Series. In 2020-2021, no sports were played. An evaluation of college athletics took place in 2022. In spring 2022, the median cumulative GPA of athletes was 2.64 and 2.98 for non-athletes. In 2022-2023, seven sports (men's and women's soccer, women's volleyball, men's and women's basketball, men's baseball, and women's softball) were selected to remain. In 2022-2023, 109 students participated in athletics and three teams won regional championships (men's soccer, women's basketball, and women's volleyball) and two qualified for nationals (women's basketball and men's soccer). Along with these changes, the college is broadening the athletics director role to include recreation and wellness to establish a strategic direction that supports the broader student community as well as excellence in intercollegiate athletics. CCRI will onboard the inaugural Director of Athletics, Recreation and Wellness in Fall 2023.

A description of the facilities upgrades is found in more detail in Standard Seven, but most of the major facilities upgrades are to improve the student experience. For instance, Workforce Partnerships is building training facilities to become a Global Wind Organisation (GWO) training provider so students can work in the wind energy field. Bathrooms have received ADA accessibility improvements and the main student space on the Liston Campus has started renovations. The Newport Campus is the final campus to receive security lock upgrades. Finally, the most significant improvement is the creation of a student services hub on the Warwick campus that aligns with the changes in Student Affairs personnel, which will allow students to have a seamless and modern "one stop" enrollment experience.

Projection

- To better recruit and support dual enrollment and adult students, the Admissions Office is expanding staff in these areas. A dual enrollment specialist has been hired as well as a re-enrollment specialist who will support adult learners with some college credit but no credential throughout the application, financial aid, and enrollment processes to have a “fresh start” toward achieving a college credential.
- To provide a more modern, streamlined enrollment experience, CCRI will be implementing a “one stop” student services model. To support this transition, an inaugural dean of enrollment management, systems and innovation will begin in fall 2023, and will oversee a newly-created director of one stop position.
- To increase faculty usage of Starfish, the assistant dean of academic affairs is leading a working group in partnership with the divisional assistant deans, the director of guided pathways, and the manager of impact initiatives to continue focus groups and further integrate Starfish into faculty processes.
- With a new dean of student engagement and support from faculty, CCRI plans to revitalize its orientation and launch a high-quality, accessible student onboarding program.
- The college plans to scale the PATH 1010 student success course to serve more students and serve them more effectively.
- Following recent organizational changes and the development of a strategic plan for Student Affairs, the division will collect and organize comprehensive and streamlined evaluation data with a focus on the multiple student bodies the college serves.

STANDARD SIX: TEACHING, LEARNING AND SCHOLARSHIP

Strengths	Opportunities
CCRI has prioritized recruitment, hiring, and retention of diverse faculty.	Improve faculty engagement with professional development, particularly for part-time faculty.
Significant resources have been invested in the faculty-led Center for Teaching Excellence.	Assess the effectiveness of the Center for Teaching Excellence.
A greater proportion of faculty have participated in online course development training due to the move to online instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic.	Strengthen collaboration between faculty development and assessment of student learning.

CCRI's institutional commitment to investing in faculty, teaching, and learning through professional development is evident through the dedication of substantial resources and structural changes over the last five years and through the COVID-19 pandemic. A fully-released, year-round faculty director of the Center for Teaching Excellence, redesigned and intentional New Faculty Onboarding, faculty cohort participation in the Association of College and University Educators, faculty grants, innovation funding, and substantial increases in conference travel funds all demonstrate the immense resources devoted to this area. These initiatives ensure the necessary support and follow-through to achieve our instructional goals and ultimately serve our students.

FACULTY AND ACADEMIC STAFF

Description

The college has an adequate number of faculty and academic staff for the fulfillment of the college's mission. As Data First Form 6.1 illustrates, the ratio of full-time (287) to part-time instructors (585) is approximately 1:2. Roughly 67.1% of instructors are part-time, and 32.9% full-time. Nationally, [56% of faculty](#) from all higher education sectors are full-time. Between fall 2020 to fall 2023, 47 new full-time faculty were appointed at the assistant professor level and 42 full-time faculty at various levels left, a combination of departures and retirements. Librarians are considered faculty and are included in these numbers.

Faculty employment categories are clearly defined as full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, and visiting lecturers. The [Faculty Handbook](#) as well as collective bargaining agreements for full-time and adjunct faculty lay out the responsibilities for instructors. Faculty devote their time to teaching, assessment, and professional improvement. Full-time faculty belong to the Community College of Rhode Island Faculty Association (CCRIFA). The [collective bargaining agreement](#) outlines conditions of employment, including an assignment of 12-16 (typically 15) credit hours of teaching load each semester and 6 hours of office hours each week. The remaining 19 hours in each work week are expected to be spent preparing for classes, grading student work, service to the college, and professional development.

CCRI faculty are not required to advise students. The Advising and Counseling office has 30 advisors who work with students on a caseload basis. All advisors are trained to conduct academic advising with students, with the counselors and student development counselors having additional responsibilities related to student wellness and academic success. All advisors are full-time within the Advising & Counseling department. With the recent investment in training and infrastructure for virtual advising,

the plan is to continue to offer virtual advising long-term to increase student access since the virtual sessions are popular with students. Several shared governance structures exist where experiences and data about academic programs and services to students can be reviewed. Among them are the Faculty Senate's Student and College Success Committee and the Staff Assembly's Student Success Committee. The Staff Assembly is a new entity, and the committees are in the process of forming and establishing processes.

Instructional designers support faculty in course design and delivery of fully online and hybrid teaching and learning. Instructional technologists combine technology and instructional design principles to help faculty achieve their teaching and learning goals. Since October 2018, CCRI has had one full-time instructional designer. Four part-time instructional designers were added in 2022. Digital learning technologies, course design support, faculty technology development programs, and workshops are provided throughout the year that include one-on-one consultations, live and recorded webinars, and tutorials.

In fall 2022, 26% of full-time faculty held PhDs, and 72% of full-time faculty held master's degrees. Full-time faculty without a terminal degree are required to earn 30 additional graduate credits during their first 6 years of employment, ensuring their qualifications to teach at the college level. This additional education for those without master's degrees is also required to be considered for promotion and tenure. Article XIII of the CCRIFA contract requires that those in the ranks of assistant professor, associate professor, and professor hold at least a master's degree. Associate professors and professors must have at least a master's degree and an additional 30 graduate credits in a field related to their teaching.

CCRI employs an open and orderly process for recruiting and appointing faculty. The Department of Institutional Equity and Human Resources maintains a listing of all currently available faculty positions and advertises in a variety of academic publications and on appropriate websites. The Talent Acquisition team ensures equal employment opportunity consistent with federal and state guidelines. Search committee members for all positions are required to attend training prior to reviewing applications. This training includes coverage of implicit bias and how it can impact hiring decisions.

Faculty participate in the search process for the hiring of new full-time faculty. The search committee for a faculty position consists of full-time faculty, and may also include staff, who interview candidates and make recommendations to the vice president for academic affairs. Starting in fall 2020, Academic Affairs introduced the [Academic Performance Solutions](#) (APS) decision-support platform to the faculty line request process. Department chairs use this platform to evaluate trends in enrollment, efficiency in staffing courses, and average instructor workloads. As a result of this process, new full-time faculty position requests are informed by data and faculty are recruited for departments where they will have the most impact on student success.

CCRI endeavors to hire faculty of diverse backgrounds to reflect the college's mission and student body. Among all CCRI faculty, 88.5% are White with 89.5% of full-time faculty and 88% of part-time faculty identifying as White. CCRI has set targets for increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion among its faculty and staff in the [Strategic Plan](#). The goal to strengthen institutional effectiveness includes a strategy to increase the pipeline, recruitment, and retention of diverse faculty and staff. The [Academic Master Plan](#) provides more detail on strategies to recruit, hire, onboard, and retain diverse faculty. These strategies include revising the faculty hiring and onboarding process, supporting faculty development in preparing promotional portfolios, and expanding partnerships with Historically Black

Colleges and Universities and minority-serving academic associations to cultivate a pipeline of diverse talent.

In fall 2022, a semester-long New Faculty Onboarding program was implemented to inform new full-time faculty of resources on campus, review effective teaching practices, and ensure they feel welcome and included in the CCRI community. An informal new faculty mentorship program has been a part of New Faculty Onboarding. New faculty hires are provided with the collectively bargained contract as appropriate, which set levels of faculty salary and benefits that assure equity in pay across faculty rank. At hiring, faculty are also provided with the faculty handbook.

The full-time faculty collective bargaining agreement sets levels of faculty salary and benefits. The full-time faculty salary ranges can be found in the [faculty collective bargaining agreement](#). Part-time faculty are members of the CCRI Part-Time Faculty Association (CCRIPTFA). The [part-time faculty collective bargaining agreement](#) sets three levels of faculty salary and benefits, with levels set by amount of experience (measured by contact hours), and completion of evaluations by department chairs or other faculty.

Per the CCRIFA contract, departments meet twice each semester. Some departments include part-time faculty in these meetings. All faculty are welcome at the vice president for academic affairs' regular faculty meetings. There are faculty seats reserved on all committees affecting academic policies and curricula. Institutional governance is further addressed in Standard Three. Committee meetings, such as the Faculty Senate and the contractually required Curriculum Review Committee, are open to all faculty as observers. In these ways, faculty can be integrated into their departments and the institution.

Since 2008, we have had a faculty-led group that offered professional development opportunities to CCRI faculty. After the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, CCRI recommitted to faculty professional development through the chartering of the [Center for Teaching Excellence](#) (CTE), which launched in fall 2021. CTE and its precursors have always been supported by a board of faculty who are representative of all academic divisions. CTE has dedicated space and budget for professional development activities and the addition of a fully-released, year-round director recruited from the faculty. The CTE has become a hub of professional development opportunities for all faculty. Partnerships have been developed with Online Learning & Technology; Guided Pathways; Academic Program Review and Accreditation; the Office of Organizational Development and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion; and Disability Services for Students. Academic Affairs allocates funds annually for faculty travel to conferences and training. The full-time faculty contract (Letter of Understanding #9) requires at least \$25,000 to be allocated annually in a faculty development fund, but a substantially higher amount has been set aside in the past several years.

Sabbaticals are available to full-time faculty after 6 years of service for pursuit of scholarly, creative, or professional development activities in line with their teaching assignments and the needs of the college. Sabbatical applications are reviewed by a committee consisting of faculty and academic deans. Further support for the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) comes from the teaching excellence grants through the Center for Teaching Excellence. Faculty Innovation Awards, granted through the CCRI Foundation, support faculty who apply in amounts up to \$2,500, granted for the purpose of supporting and expanding faculty engagement with students, professional development opportunities, classroom or curriculum enhancements, or unique programming opportunities. Eight awards were announced in 2023.

The [Faculty Handbook](#) includes policies for teaching and learning and is readily available on the Academic Affairs' website. [CCRIFA](#) and [CCRIPTFA](#) contracts are current and readily available. They include stipulations for evaluation, retention, grievances, and promotion and tenure, where applicable.

All employees are expected to act responsibly and ethically. CCRI has several policies which communicate the details of these expectations. The Department of Institutional Equity and Human Resources distributes regular email reminders of important ethical and behavioral policies that help to keep faculty and staff aware of expectations. The policies include those for Academic Program Review, Intellectual Property, General Education, Online Learning, Prior Learning Assessment, Grading, Course Credit policies, including the Incomplete Grade policy, Code of Ethics, Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action policy, and various technology policies.

Faculty are regularly evaluated to demonstrate their teaching effectiveness. Faculty evaluations are governed by the Evaluation Review Committee, which approves criteria and procedures for evaluation of faculty. Full-time faculty are reviewed by their chair once a year for their first three years, with subsequent reviews occurring every three years. Full-time faculty, which includes librarians, are evaluated on the schedule listed in Table 6.1. The [full-time faculty contract](#) specifies when faculty are to be evaluated by students, their peers, and/or the department chairperson. Librarians are evaluated based on participation in the library and the college, membership in library organizations, student and faculty evaluations, feedback from colleagues (peer evaluation), and ability and willingness to explore and add additional skills.

Students use the Student Ratings of Instruction (SRI) to evaluate full-time and part-time faculty. It is a standardized form that was approved at all levels of the college and has been used since Spring 2008 across all departments. Students can provide narrative feedback to the faculty member regarding the faculty member's strengths and recommendations for improving instruction in the course. Online courses are evaluated by students after each term and incorporated into faculty evaluations (self, peer, and/or chair evaluations).

Table 6.1 Schedule of Full-time Faculty Evaluations

Years 1-3	Years 4-6	Year 7 and beyond*	Year - Off Year
Comprehensive: 1. Peer review 2. Student evaluation 3. Chair evaluation 4. Self-evaluation (optional)	According to departmental plan**	Comprehensive: 1. Peer Review 2. Student Evaluation 3. Chair Evaluation 4. Self-evaluation (optional)	According to Departmental plan

*Every third year after tenure is a comprehensive evaluation year

**During a faculty member's fourth, fifth, and sixth year after hire, either the dean or department chair, or both, may require the inclusion of peer and/or student evaluative reviews in the annual evaluation.

Teaching effectiveness is the first consideration in promotion and tenure decisions, with all other categories of consideration subordinate. The Faculty Evaluation Committee is defined in the collective bargaining agreement with faculty and is overseen by an academic dean. Minutes of committee meetings are published online.

As an associate degree-granting institution, CCRI has no formal expectations for faculty to conduct research. Those who do choose to conduct research typically obtain funding through grants, institutes,

or discipline-specific sources. Several faculty members are engaged in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) to improve teaching and learning. Since 2020, Academic Affairs has funded \$22,500 in SoTL grants, which are administered and supported through the Center for Teaching Excellence. CCRI belongs to the federally-funded [IDeA Networks of Biomedical Research Excellence](#), a network of state colleges that provides students and faculty members with access to opportunities in the research field. This partnership encourages student research and provides professional development for faculty.

CCRI protects and fosters academic freedom of all faculty. The college's policy on academic freedom is posted on the Academic Affairs [website](#), is included in the CCRIFA Contract (Article III), the CCRIFTFA Contract (Article XII), and is included in the faculty handbook. There have been zero grievances related to academic freedom in the past 5 years.

Academic Program Review (APR) and several other internal processes are used to evaluate the sufficiency of and support for academic staff. The APR process includes an assessment of the number of faculty instructors involved in their department, program, or certificate, as well as support staff, capital improvements, and other needs. New academic programs introduced through Curriculum Review Committee must provide forecasting of faculty and academic staff required. Based on the data collected, department chairs work directly with deans to assure programs and certificates have adequate staffing and resources. The requests and their fulfillment are documented on the APR forms.

Appraisal

Part-time and full-time faculty contribute to a rich educational experience for students, fulfilling the college's mission to "meet the wide-ranging educational needs of our diverse student population." Both part-time and full-time faculty provide diversity of backgrounds and professional experiences, with full-time faculty dedicating meaningful instructional hours. Though the college employs a greater number of part-time faculty, the majority of course sections within a given term are taught by full-time instructors. In fall 2022, 61% of sections were taught by a full-time faculty member and 39% were taught by a part-time faculty member, representing a significant amount of student contact. Instructors are highly qualified for their assignments.

Course modality changed dramatically during the COVID-19 pandemic as colleges and universities across the world shifted to online learning. The percentage of course sections offered in an online-only format increased from 13% in early spring 2020 to 37% in fall 2022. As of spring 2023, 26% of students are taking only online classes, which is double the number from before the pandemic. A small number of courses are hybrid, with meetings and work occurring in person and online. Before COVID-19, the college employed one instructional designer. The transition to fully online learning during the pandemic allowed an opportunity to support faculty collectively through a contract with Blackboard Academy. Called the Faculty Fall Readiness Initiative, these series of workshops supported faculty as they purposefully built their remote fall courses. Additional instructional designers were hired in fall 2022. Students vote with their registration choices. Many students are still choosing online sections over on-campus. This appears to be because online learning meets their scheduling needs as employees, parents, and caregivers.

Prior to 2021, the entire advising department would typically meet once a semester for training and updates. Since 2021, the department has changed their training schedule to a weekly meeting where advisors are updated with changes related to policy and technology. Since the Faculty Senate and Staff Assembly structures are relatively new, institutionalized procedures for sharing and reviewing data to improve academic programs and services to students have not been completely formalized.

As faculty increase their use of Starfish, CCRI may find that more advisors, tutors, librarians, academic coaches, and disability support coordinators are needed to respond to student needs.

An opportunity exists to develop a better through-line that begins with New Faculty Onboarding, continues with faculty professional development, and culminates in the faculty evaluation process (self-evaluation, peer evaluation and chair evaluation). One of the goals of New Faculty Onboarding is to ensure all new faculty are included in college life and community, and that they are equipped to continually improve teaching and learning. The effects of this program on inclusion and faculty retention are not measurable yet, but evaluation is planned for three years after the 2022 start of the program. The academic master plan also requires a formalized faculty mentor program, which will be implemented and evaluated beginning in 2024. This program will address CCRI's internal goals of inclusion of new and continuing faculty.

Some academic departments struggle to find instructors to teach all their course sections. More full-time faculty would solve this problem and make more people available to serve on governance committees, department committees, and Faculty Senate, thus increasing equity of workload across department members, particularly in smaller departments.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Description

Steps are taken to ensure that the content and methods of instruction meet generally accepted academic and professional standards and expectations. Many of the academic programs and departments are accredited by external bodies. Externally accredited programs include nursing, business, occupational therapy, massage therapy, dental auxiliary, health education, physical therapy education, radiologic technology, clinical laboratory science, respiratory care, diagnostic medical sonography, activity professionals, music, and early childhood education programs. All programs not externally accredited go through the college's Academic Program Review cycle every five years.

Most courses are offered in-person on one of CCRI's four campuses. Experiments to restructure the classroom experience include refitting five classrooms with flexible, active learning furniture, and developing a faculty learning community and [toolkit](#) around active classroom techniques. For the transition back to in-person classes, after the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic, most classrooms had a first phase technology upgrade to support a mix of virtual and in-person learning, with initial provisioning of swing arm cameras and room microphones.

The Online Learning & Technology department (OL&T) oversaw three faculty cohorts who participated in the [Association of College and University Educators](#) (ACUE) effective teaching practices course. Sixty-one full-time and three part-time faculty completed the course over three years. A wide range of practical teaching topics were covered. To finish a module and move on to the next, faculty must apply the lesson in their classroom and complete a reflection based on their experience with students. Faculty members then complete an action plan once they finish the curriculum, allowing them to highlight which modules were most effective or relevant in their courses.

CCRI was selected in 2021 as one of seven community colleges nationwide to participate in the [Caring Campus](#) Initiative led by the Institute for Evidence-Based Change. Caring Campus is a faculty-led program to instill proven behavioral changes that promote student success. Through this program,

faculty can learn about instructional techniques that can be implemented in any discipline and support the needs of students. Since CCRI's participation, 83 faculty have completed the training. Academic Affairs has invested in four faculty members who are currently working to modify the training as an on-demand version to achieve greater reach.

OL&T offers training and intensive workshops on the college's learning management system and supporting technologies. The Guided Pathways team seeks to help faculty with ensuring students are learning. The director of academic program review and accreditation hosts many workshops and events on assessment. The Office of Organizational Development and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion offers professional development to all employees, such as Professional Development Day, and is also developing an equity toolkit to support faculty in closing equity gaps in their classrooms. Disability Services for Students offers training to help faculty understand the legal requirements for accommodations. CCRI subscribes to Academic Impressions, accessible to all employees with a CCRI account.

Each year at least three faculty are selected by the academic deans and vice president for academic affairs to receive the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) award, which is given to those faculty that demonstrate excellence in teaching, learning, and leadership at CCRI.

All course sections, regardless of format, have a course shell in the Blackboard learning management system, for ease of sharing information with students. All courses, regardless of location or modality, are subject to the assessment processes. Faculty teaching online must have demonstrated familiarity with online teaching practices and use of the learning management system. Faculty are initially certified to teach online in the Effective Practices for Teaching Online (EPTO) course, and regular refresher seminars are offered through professional development workshops. The EPTO course covers current teaching philosophies and best practices for various course modalities. Modules focus on building instructor presence, developing effective assessments, providing feedback, and guidelines and regulations related to online courses such as copyright, accessibility, and accreditor expectations. The college uses the [Blackboard Ally](#) tool to help faculty make digital content accessible. Faculty are provided opportunities to assess their online courses with the [Online Course Quality Review Rubric \(OSCQR\)](#), a course-level quality rubric for reviewing and improving the instructional design and accessibility of online courses based on online best practices. Faculty can work with instructional designers to review student engagement in online courses using the EesySoft reporting dashboard in Blackboard. This tool provides module level data on student activity and engagement with the course content. It was used during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic to monitor student and faculty engagement in Blackboard and will continue to be used to track adoption rate of engagement tools.

The general education program ensures students take courses in a variety of departments and disciplines. The balance between consistency and flexibility is held. Courses and programs have agreed-upon learning outcomes common to all sections of a course or courses in a program. The methods of instruction, particular course policies, and specific topics for each class section are typically determined by the instructor of that course section. This allows for academic freedom, exposing students to faculty's personal areas of expertise and interest while keeping course sections consistent overall. Student learning outcomes for courses and programs are approved by the college's internal Curriculum Review Committee and are used by all faculty who teach a given course.

Appraisal

CCRI offered the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) to all students in 2023. While CCRI was above the standardized national average (50.0) for benchmarks for “Student Effort” (50.6), “Academic Challenge” (51.1), “Student-Faculty Interaction” (52.0), and “Support for Learners” (53.0), CCRI students rated their engagement with “Active and Collaborative Learning” as slightly lower than the national average, at 47.8. The Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) will evaluate the CCSSE in order to target future programming related to active learning. Overall, 87.4% of students report that their educational experience at CCRI is “good” or “excellent,” on par with the 87.6% of community college students nationally. This demonstrates that the quality of teaching and learning is on par with those at other community colleges nationwide, though we have goals to improve these outcomes, close equity gaps, and be an innovative leader among community colleges.

CTE instituted CTE Knights Certificates in 2022 to recognize faculty participation in, and application of, a variety of professional development activities. The initial goal was to incentivize participation in professional development opportunities each year, and to publicly acknowledge faculty who devote considerable time to these efforts. CTE Knights earn points for taking part in professional development activities and applying the learned content to the classroom. Points leaders are listed on the CTE Knights webpage and CTE Knights awardees are announced to the college community via email communications (e.g., CC Daily and CTE Newsletter) at the end of the academic year. In 2022, 21 faculty were awarded Knights Certificates across two levels, and in 2023, 50 were awarded across two levels, indicating increased faculty engagement with professional development in multiple areas. More than doubling the number of certificates awarded in one year was a very strong start in the first two years of the program, and we hope to continue increasing the number of certificate earners by at least 5% each academic year for the next 5 years. CTE plans to make more professional development opportunities available to part-time faculty in the future, which may further increase the number of certificate earners.

One of the goals of Academic Affairs is to enhance the quality of teaching and learning across modalities, and many options for professional development exist for faculty. In the 22-23 academic year, for example, 66 distinct professional development opportunities were offered across multiple modalities and campus locations; 56% of full-time faculty and 17% of part-time faculty participated. Online learning professional development opportunities, including the required training for teaching online have been made available for many years in an on-demand format. As of the 22-23 academic year, 84% of full-time faculty and 45% of part-time faculty have taken advantage of this training.

Reaching faculty who do not participate in any professional development opportunities is something that Academic Affairs will need to strategically plan to do, particularly when it comes to adjunct instructors who may work full-time. Considering the schedules and availability of part-time faculty when planning professional development opportunities is crucial. According to a recently-signed article with the CCRIFTFA, when part-time faculty are required to “participate in mandatory training/professional development” they are to be compensated. Determining which training or professional development opportunities will be required for part-time faculty and allocating funding will need to be carefully considered in order to maximize efforts and funds.

The Center for Teaching Excellence and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (IE) collaborated to design a confidential process by which faculty could receive disaggregated data about student success in their classes. Faculty choose how the data is disaggregated based on their line of inquiry. They can

meet with the CTE director to clarify their data requests, if needed. The director then submits the request to IE and receives a confidential PDF of faculty data compared to that of their department. If the faculty member wishes, they may set up an appointment with the CTE director to review the data. Because this process is relatively new and only a small number of faculty have participated, there is still work to be done to guide faculty through reflection and development of an action plan in response to the data they receive. The CTE director has developed an interactive workshop for departments to review their data as a unit across a single course. This is still in the pilot stages and will need more time to be thoughtfully implemented. Contractually, \$25,000 per year is set aside for faculty to attend conferences and trainings. Recognizing that this amount is inadequate for meaningful faculty participation, the Office of Academic Affairs has contributed significant additional amounts toward training and conferences. Since 2015, there has been a 300% increase in this area, growing from \$31,000 to \$100,000 in 2023. As professional associations decide whether future conferences will be hybrid, online, or in person, CCRI will need to monitor the amount of travel funds needed to be sure that funds for conferences and trainings are available to a wide number of faculty.

While faculty and academic staff are provided with substantial opportunities for continued professional development throughout their careers like the ones described above, learning opportunities have been offered by several departments across the college without coordination. In December 2022, the assistant dean for academic affairs convened the Teaching, Learning, Scholarship and Assessment Group to identify overlaps in efforts across Academic Affairs, develop collaborations to maximize efficiency, and organize and prioritize working plans and interventions. Made up of the directors of the Center for Teaching Excellence, accreditation, online learning, and general education, the benefits of working together more closely are already evident. So far, this group has developed a shared calendar of professional development opportunities, developed participation metrics for professional development activities, and have started planning for ways to create tracks for different levels and themes for professional development so that we can engage more faculty in teaching and learning improvement and assessment.

Projection

- Increase the retention of racially diverse full-time faculty by continuing to offer and refine a semester-long onboarding process for new full-time faculty so that it is culturally responsive and contributes to retention of racially diverse full-time faculty.
- Continue to collaborate with HBCUs to offer student teaching opportunities and assess the impact of the collaboration.
- The Teaching, Learning, Scholarship and Assessment group will align professional development activities to strengthen and scale faculty participation and adoption of strategies that will foster an inclusive environment and close equity gaps.
- A recommendation will be made to the faculty Evaluation Review Committee (ERC) to develop and approve a standardized peer and chair observation process.
- The Center for Teaching Excellence will plan to incorporate more part-time faculty into professional development scope and reach, increasing their participation year-over-year.
- The Center for Teaching Excellence will develop a self-assessment of faculty engagement to demonstrate impact and use the self-assessment to determine benchmarks for faculty participation.

STANDARD SEVEN: INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

Strengths	Opportunities
In process of implementing multi-campus, multi-year Facilities Master Plan.	Numerous accessibility, safety, and green initiatives are in progress that include renovations to achieve full ADA compliance.
The majority of college funds are expended in direct support of instruction, academic support, scholarships, and student services.	There is a need to improve HR processes and retention strategies.
The college has continued to focus on enhancing the hiring process to increase diversity.	Cybersecurity program implementation is in process according to national standards.

CCRI is committed to providing appropriate institutional resources to accomplish its mission. One of the major strategic planning goals identified in the college’s [2022-2027 Strategic Plan](#) addresses the need to strengthen the institutional effectiveness of the college by aligning institutional resources with strategic goals. CCRI has engaged in successful efforts to provide the appropriate resources and effectively manage resource capacity.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Description

CCRI’s employees are critical to the institution’s success and the ability to achieve the goals of the strategic plan. CCRI’s mission is fulfilled through a combination of 716 full-time and 896 part-time employees. Forty percent of the full-time employees are instructional and 7% are executive staff.

The department of Institutional Equity and Human Resources has responsibilities related to labor relations, recruitment and hiring, performance management, compensation and benefits, and employee relations. Employees are either Classified (State of RI employees) or Non-Classified (Council on Postsecondary Education employees). Classified employees are organized within five units, all of which are represented by the [National Education Association of Rhode Island](#) (NEARI). The college has collective bargaining agreements with its full-time Faculty Association, Part-Time Faculty Association, Professional Staff Association (PSA), Education Support Professionals Association, and its Driver Education trainers. The UNAP Local 5019 (United Nurses and Allied Professionals) representing nursing staff has no members due to recent retirements. Each collective bargaining agreement has a three-year term. All [labor contracts](#) are available on the college’s website.

Since July 2018, all newly hired employees meet with human resources for an orientation covering benefits, contracts, employment practices, and important policies. Employees are oriented using the HR website, which includes many resources including labor contracts and employee handbooks. Regular college-wide emails about policies are sent throughout the year. Policies are developed, reviewed, and accessed in PolicyStat (a document management software for managing policies, procedures, and other important documentation whose implementation began in April 2020).

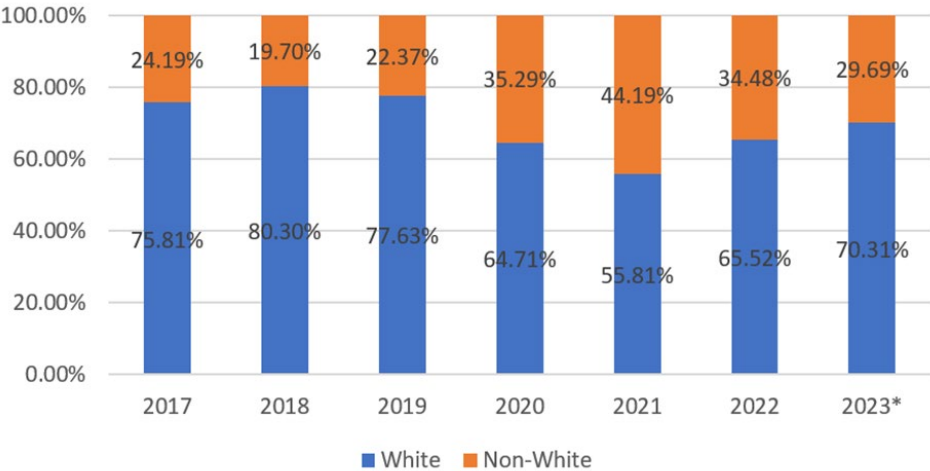
The college’s full-time employees are less racially diverse than the student population. Fifty-three percent of students identify as Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) while approximately

18% of employees identify as BIPOC. The department of Institutional Equity and Human Resources has been charged with developing a more diverse, inclusive work environment that is more reflective of the student population. Several steps have been taken, beginning with establishing the Office of Organizational Development & Diversity, Equity, Inclusion to focus on building inclusive environments and equitable outcomes for the CCRI community, hiring more faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds, and providing appropriate resources and training. The [Academic Master Plan](#) provides details on strategies to recruit, hire, onboard, and retain diverse faculty. See Standard Six for a more comprehensive description of these efforts.

Table 7.1 Comparison of Full-time Employees and Fall 2022 Student Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Full-time Employees		Fall 2022 Students	
	#	%	#	%
American Indian/Alaska Native	5	1%		0%
Asian	16	2%	330	3%
Black or African American	49	7%	1,354	11%
Hispanic or Latinx/e	55	7%	3,399	28%
Other	1	0%	621	5%
Two or More Races	6	1%	793	6%
White	607	82%	5,766	47%
Grand Total	739	100%	12,263	100%

Figure 7.1 New Hires by Race/Ethnicity from FY17 to FY23 (July 1 to June 30)



The Department of Institutional Equity and Human Resources provides hiring managers and search committees resources for diversifying candidate pipelines and training on implicit bias and affirmative action monitoring. In 2020, a [Campus Inclusion Plan](#) was published, which focuses on providing

strategies to make every student, faculty and staff member feel a sense of belonging. CCRI allocates a variety of resources to support this such as the Institute for Evidence Based Change in the [Caring Campus](#) initiative to promote inclusivity across all areas of the Institution. CCRI is one of four community colleges participating in a National Science Foundation grant with Howard University, Hampton University, and Morgan State University. The project, [Howard Hampton Morgan Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate \(HHMS-AGEP\)](#), was formed with the expressed purpose of developing and evaluating a training model to increase the number of “underrepresented minorities” entering and succeeding in the professoriate. The partnership officially launched in fall 2021.

In 2022, the Office of Organizational Development and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion was established to provide professional expertise, strategic leadership, administrative oversight, and collaborative guidance on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion matters within the institution, including professional development initiatives and opportunities. The office works closely with leaders across the college to administer key organizational and programmatic initiatives, expanding outreach, and contributing expert knowledge and skills to achieve racial equity amongst faculty, staff, and students. In 2023, the office created a framework that focuses on the key areas to drive student success, increase employee engagement, and build inclusive excellence. The office is creating action plans that align with the goals of the strategic plan and academic master plan. These plans will be tracked and regularly reported on to ensure progress is being made towards the goals.

The performance evaluation process is conducted annually for full-time staff positions (both bargaining and non-bargaining). Faculty have a separate evaluation process. The staff review process is used for employee engagement, retention, and goal setting only. However, as part of the 2022-2025 collective bargaining agreement for the Professional Staff Association, the college agreed to establish a procedure for awarding lump sum merit bonuses for FY23 and FY24 to recognize and reward members for meeting certain specified performance criteria.

Sufficient opportunities for professional development are provided to employees. Employees may take credit courses tuition-free at any of the three Rhode Island public colleges. They have access to learning resources, including United Educators and self-paced online learning opportunities through a subscription to Academic Impressions, which provides training tailored for a higher education audience, including resources, webinars and articles. Colleagues also have the opportunity to participate in in-person training focused on cultural awareness and building inclusive environments.

Appraisal

Considering recent labor market trends such as the Great Resignation and its resulting recruitment and retention challenges, the general feeling is that staff resources are lean, and employees work extremely hard. However, sufficient personnel are employed to fulfill CCRI’s mission. Nonetheless, recruiting challenges have resulted in new hire diversity trending down from 35% in 2020 to just under 30% in 2023.

When vacancies occur, hiring replacements is a lengthy process with salary offers and HR staff turnover being two of the major challenges, and internal staff are often assuming the duties of the vacated position. This happens often and while HR attempts to address salaries related to internal equity, we have not been able to make comprehensive salary structure changes based on the labor market. This results in HR needing to increase morale in creative ways that demonstrate to employees that their hard work does not go unnoticed or unappreciated. The [Remote Work Policy](#) is an example of how the college has become more flexible and more accommodating for employees.

In past years, the completion rate for annual performance reviews has been exceptionally low. This is due to several factors, including the pandemic and a strong union culture of deemphasizing the annual review feedback process. CCRI's president lead a concerted effort asking for a 100% completion for the 2022 review cycle. This resulted in a much more robust return rate of completed staff reviews (77%). We are continuing our efforts for a 100% completion rate for the 2023 annual review cycle.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Description

The college has a capable finance department staffed with seasoned professionals experienced in higher education. In February 2023, a new vice president of administration and finance with considerable experience in higher education was hired. This individual leads the finance and facilities teams to ensure the proper stewardship of the college's financial and physical resources. Under the vice president's leadership is the budget director and controller, who are professionally qualified to fulfill their responsibilities. Administration and Finance provides financial and budgetary information, compliance guidance, and the framework to safeguard college assets. Auxiliary services are offered through bookstores and the food service provider.

The college has two main sources of revenue; 1) tuition and fees and 2) state appropriations. State appropriated support of the college's total unrestricted budget for the last several years has been consistent. (In the table below, data for FY19 – FY22 reflect actual levels of state support. FY23 reflected the enacted level of state appropriations.)

Table 7.2 FY19 – FY23 Revenue Sources

Source (in millions)	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
State Appropriation (exclusive of GO Debt)	\$50.5	\$46.6	\$52.3	\$53.8	\$55.7
College Revenues	\$58.9	\$61.4	\$60.9	\$66.4	\$62.7
Tuition and Fees	\$54.0	\$56.6	\$53.5	\$48.5	\$51.5
Lost Revenue – HEERF	-	-	\$0.2	\$9.4	\$7.0
Other College Revenues	\$4.9	\$4.8	\$7.2	\$8.6	\$11.9
Subtotal College Revenues	\$58.9	\$61.4	\$60.9	\$66.5	\$70.4
Total Unrestricted College Revenues (exclusive of GO Debt)	\$109.4	\$108.0	\$113.2	\$120.3	\$126.1
State Proportion of Unrestricted	46.2%	43.1%	46.2%	44.8%	44.2%

In FY20 – with the onset of the pandemic – state revenues were uncertain. The final appropriation of \$46.6 million reflected a reduction of \$5.4 million, enacted with two weeks remaining in the fiscal year. Despite this late reduction in funding, the college balanced the budget at year end due to many actions taken as the pandemic emerged and resulted in significant operational changes that began in March

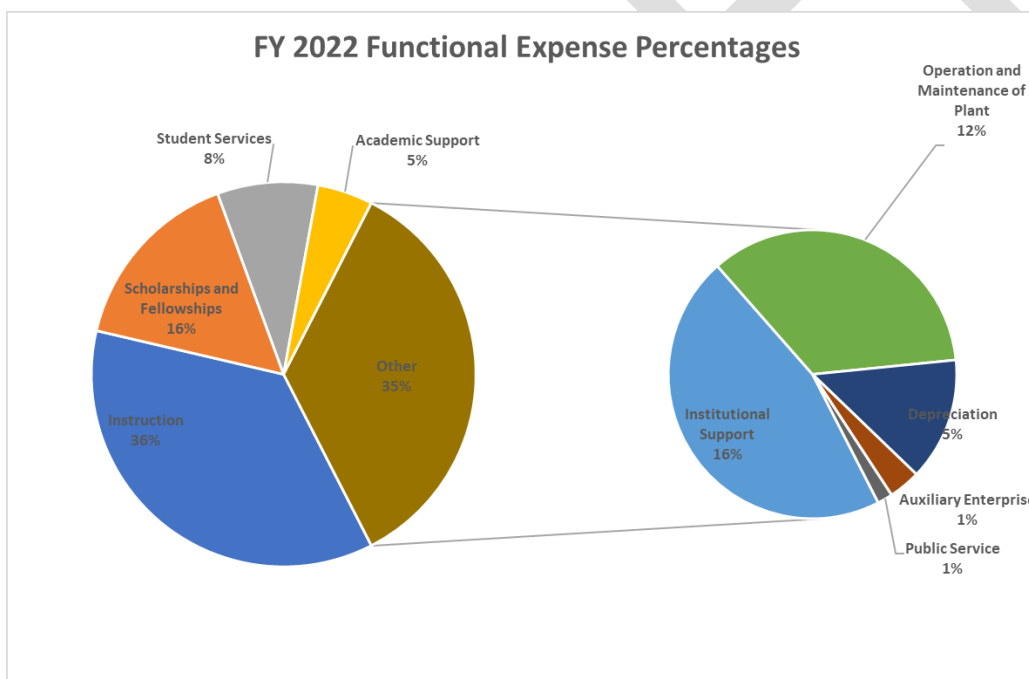
2020 (e.g., moved to working remotely for employees, limited spending to essential items, substantially curtailed part-time employees).

In FY21, the reduction in the FY20 state appropriation was restored to the college base state support. For FY22 and FY23, state appropriation totals reflect increases of \$1.58 million and \$1.86 million (3.02% and 3.45%), respectively. Since FY19, state general revenue appropriations have increased 10.3%.

In FY22 and FY23, college funding included \$9.2 million and \$7.0 million in Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF) funds used to compensate for lost revenues. The federal stimulus funding allowed the college to manage its finances through a period of significant enrollment declines. While federal HEERF funds were fully expended in FY23, the enacted level of state appropriations for FY24 will provide a stable base as enrollment continues to recover.

In FY22, 65% of all expended funds were in direct support of instruction, academic support, scholarships and fellowships and student services. The operating expense allocation for FY22 is consistent with prior years.

Figure 7.2 FY22 Functional Expense Percentages



CCRI, with Council on Postsecondary Education approval, has continued to increase tuition and fees in modest increments over the last few fiscal years. The increases are listed in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3 FY20-FY24 Tuition and Fees Increases

	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Instate Tuition and Fees	\$4,700	\$4,806	\$4,980	\$5,090	\$5,326
Change in \$	136	106	174	110	236
Change in %	3.0%	2.3%	3.6%	2.2%	4.6%

Consistent increases over time have provided a stable base and avoided large fluctuation from year to year. Keeping the increase of tuition and fees modest has allowed CCRI to maintain its position as the third least expensive community college in New England. The FY24 full-time tuition and fee rate of \$5,325 positions costs well below the anticipated Pell maximum award of \$7,295.

The anchor stabilizing the college’s financial resources during the pandemic has been HEERF support, which CCRI utilized over four years. In May 2020, CCRI was awarded \$73.45 million in HEERF funding, of which \$29.37 million was allocated for emergency awards directly to our students. As of June 30, 2023, the entire award was allocated to COVID-19-related responses such as emergency student awards, student scholarships, campus safety, lost revenue replacement, and student debt discharge.

The lost revenues provision under HEERF allowed CCRI to recover anticipated revenues that declined during the pandemic. Lost revenues from HEERF replaced \$16.6 million in revenue from academic sources (recorded in the unrestricted fund) and \$4.7 million from auxiliary sources (recorded in the restricted fund). HEERF funding significantly improved CCRI’s cash position. The cash balance as of June 30, 2022, was \$32.5 million - an increase of \$12.4 million from the prior year of \$20.1 million. And, the cash balance as of June 30, 2023, was \$45.9 million - an increase of \$13.4 million during the year. The cash balance as of June 30, 2023, is enough to support operations for approximately 104 days (about 3.5 months).

Operating cash is held in collateralized checking accounts with excess cash earning higher returns in an FDIC Insured Cash Sweep Program (ICS). Funds deposited into the ICS program (\$35.2 million at June 30, 2023) can be accessed on the same day in an emergency. The college has established a contingency/reinvestment policy allowing for the set-aside of funds to provide resources for unexpected needs. These funds may also be used for one-time investments in new initiatives that support strategic priorities. The June 30, 2023 cash balance includes \$7.9 million of such funds. The portion of the June 30, 2023 cash balance which is designated as contingency/reinvestment funds is expected to be increased upon completion of the FY23 audit.

CCRI created a collaborative HEERF committee that reviewed and approved 28 initiatives totaling over \$1.6 million. The committee solicited input from the college community to determine appropriate uses of the funds to support the student experience while also allowing a safe learning environment. The initiatives supported academic and mental health, instructional equipment and supplies, enhanced distance learning, technology for students, and campus safety.

As part of the annual budget process, the Council on Postsecondary Education requires that the college present a multi-year budget, which includes two years of actuals results, the current year budget, the request for the next fiscal year, and a preliminary projection for an additional year. These budgets are developed with guidance from the Commissioner for Postsecondary Education’s office as

well as with the planning values and state funding targets provided by the State Budget Office. By state law, the budget requests are due by October 1 of each year for the following fiscal year. The Finance and Facilities Subcommittee of the Council on Postsecondary Education reviews the requests and recommends action to the full Council. Once approved by the Council, the budgets are presented to the Board of Education for review and approval. The approval process is the same for the college's 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan.

In summer 2022, the director of budget and financial planning worked with the Senior Leadership team on an innovative approach to establishing strategic priorities for the development of the FY24 budget. Easy to use, fillable forms were completed by each college division to submit priorities for funding or options for areas of savings and where the savings could then be used to reinvest in other areas of operations. The forms required that each of the initiatives be linked back to the college's strategic plan. These options became the basis for open and transparent discussions. Over the next few months, the college refined its request for additional state funding for FY24 and generated over \$6.0 million in new state funding to support strategic priorities and \$1.1 million was included in the enacted appropriation: \$540,000 is for technology and \$550,000 for healthcare workforce initiatives. This funding was in addition to a \$1.7 million increase in the Current Service Level appropriation.

CCRI prepares its financial statements in accordance with GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) as promulgated by GASB (the Governmental Accounting Standards Board). The statements are subject to an annual audit by a certified independent financial auditing firm. The 2022 financial statements received an unmodified opinion from CliftonLarsonAllen LLP (CLA). The FY22 audit was the first one performed by CLA. O'Connor & Drew were the predecessor auditors for several years before a required rotation off the engagement.

CCRI applies for and receives grants and sponsored projects from various funding sources representing new sources of revenue. To maintain a strategic approach for sponsored project management, institutional monitoring and approval are required for any proposal that is submitted on behalf of the college. Within the approval process, all proposals are reviewed by the academic dean as well as subject matter experts associated with the project such as Information Technology and Physical Plant. The project scope is reviewed to ensure the goals are aligned with the institution's mission statement and the strategic plan. The Controller's Office, Office of Institutional Advancement, and if applicable, the CCRI Foundation, review and approve proposals prior to submission to ensure compliance with all state and federal laws and regulations, Council on Postsecondary Education policies, college policies and procedures, as well as specific terms and conditions. For final approval and submission, the authorized signatory must provide signature approval. CCRI follows Council, state, and internal policies that are established and publicized independently.

The Council on Postsecondary Education is an independent public corporation vested with the responsibility of providing oversight for the system of public higher education in Rhode Island. The Council is charged with formulating a broad policy to implement the goals and objectives established by the Board of Education. The Council provides governance over CCRI's financial resources and practices. The Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (RI OPC) posts the Council's monthly meetings and minutes along with all approved policies on their website. All CCRI employees are bound by the CCRI Code of Ethics as well as the Rhode Island Code of Ethics.

CCRI follows the Rhode Island Department Administration enterprise policies. For internal policies, in April 2020, CCRI began implementing a new policy development and maintenance platform. The

platform, PolicyStat, centrally maintains college policies. In implementing PolicyStat, CCRI looked to improve functionality for employees including the ability to search for policies by title, owner, department, or keywords. The system allows those responsible for implementing and maintaining policies to stay up to date when policies require review. Policies may be drafted within the system, which allows for collaboration with various stakeholders, removing the need to rely upon draft versions and email. Advanced approval queues create efficiency by automating the many steps a policy takes from initiation to approval and implementation.

The Council on Postsecondary Education has several policies in place to allow for evaluation of the financial status of the institutions under its authority. These policies are posted on its website. Under the oversight of the Council, staff of CCRI's Division of Administration and Finance are responsible for implementing these policies. Cash balances are monitored to ensure adequate working capital to fund college operations. The vice president is responsible for the proper investing of these funds. Capital projects are monitored and reviewed with senior level staff on an ongoing basis to ensure timely completion and that adequate resources are available.

The mission of the [CCRI Foundation](#) is to secure financial and advocacy support through dynamic campaigns and public awareness of the college's value to the community. The CCRI Foundation fundraises to support students and fulfill CCRI's institutional goals. Its work is conducted in accordance with policies that stipulate the conditions and terms under which gifts are solicited and accepted. CCRI solicits its donors, tracks actions in a secure and confidential database, and informs staff of all restrictions and intentions of donors by following the Foundation's Gifts Policies and Procedures governed by the Foundation independent board of trustees. The Foundation follows the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA). Over the past three years, the Foundation has intentionally increased efforts to capture the impact of investments and donations through stewardship and communications. The Foundation follows an annual, externally audited compliance process of documenting philanthropic support appropriately, which is approved by the Foundation's Finance and Investment committee. The Foundation's gift acceptance policies protect the institution's academic freedom and integrity. The Foundation represents itself, its capacities and needs of prospective donors by accurately portraying the impact that their gifts can be expected to have. Creating impact reports for donors to understand how their funds were used and what benefits they provided CCRI and its students in addition to required compliance reporting are central to the Foundation's impact work.

Ongoing assessment of the use of Foundation and institutionally funded grants and scholarships is completed to ensure that awarded dollars result in intended outcomes. Innovative programs have been developed as student needs evolve. For example, the Comeback and Finish scholarship programs were both created to welcome back students who had previously experienced the loss of financial aid due to not maintaining satisfactory academic progress.

Appraisal

CCRI's financial resources, both for operations and for capital expenditures, necessary to support its mission have increased significantly in recent years. However, such resources remain dependent on annual appropriations supplemented by periodic general obligation bond approvals.

Due to the stabilization effects that HEERF relief funds help to provide, it is expected that enrollments will rebound with the help of scholarships, new customer relationship manager software, and increased recruitment of adult learners.

Table 7.4 FY19 – FY23 Enrollment and Financial Trend Data

5 Year Trend					
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Fall FTEs	9,777	9,130	7,799	7,778	?
Tuition and Fee Revenue	\$54.00	\$56.60	\$52.30	\$53.80	\$53.00
Change in unrestricted net assets	(0.01)	(1.92)	15.78	15.57	?

Fall FTE enrollments dropped significantly in the early years of the pandemic from 9.7K in 2019 to 7.8K in FY21. We believe that the FTE enrollment of 7.7K in FY22 is a low point and will slowly rebound as students who paused their education during the pandemic reengage in the pursuit of a degree or certificate. We also see a flattening of the effects on the pandemic with tuition and fee revenue declining from \$54M in 2019 to a low of \$52.3M in FY21 and hovering around \$53 M for the last two years. The infusion of HEERF funds bolstered the change in College's unrestricted net assets from slightly negative growth in F19 and FY 20 to approximately \$15M per year in the FY21 to FY23 time period. The trend of growth in the net restricted assets is expected to return to a much steadier position in FY24 and forward.

Likewise, the outlook for state appropriation support and capital funding is positive. The governor's FY24 budget recommendation included \$2.5 million of state funding for a new Fresh Start scholarship program. This program will provide one semester of tuition and fees for adult learners with at least 15 credits completed toward a degree or credential. This will allow students that have stopped-out to return to school and complete their degrees. During that first semester back, Student Services staff will work with the students to ensure they are meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress to make them eligible for federal financial aid. Returning and retaining students will have positive impacts on the college's revenue stream as the college continues to recover enrollment to pre-pandemic levels.

A common criticism of the budget process has been that it is confusing. In the past, budget requests were collected in multi-tab excel spreadsheets that intimidated employees. Budget requests were consolidated, prioritized, reviewed with senior leadership, and allocated accordingly. Often, department personnel would be uncertain about the specific items in approved budgets. The college has since collected feedback from Finance Forums, Open Houses, and one-on-one conversations with employees. The college responded by further centralizing the process due to staff shortages and the need to respond quickly to emergency conditions. Modernizing the budget request process will also involve expanding the collection of data and ideas at the department manager level, utilizing a self-

service tool. The requests will be incorporated from a baseline budgeting model. The results will be shared with constituents in more easily understood budget reports. This reciprocating approach of gathering and disseminating data will complete the cycle of aligning resources with strategic plans and with the needs of end users who are serving students.

The college has invested in several financial reporting tools such as Argos and Fast Administrative Support Tools (FAST) which have been utilized in year-end reporting, budget preparation, and expenditure inquiries. The college plans to expand its reporting base and deliver analytics to a wider audience. The impact of the financial report expansion will increase financial knowledge across the college, empowering managers to make better informed budget and planning decisions.

In FY21, the college implemented a streamlined chart of accounts which is the foundation for new reporting initiatives. The chart was converted to use all numeric codes, expanded program codes, and uses location codes to identify campus locations. Financial manager roles for departments have been systematically linked to the chart of accounts in the Banner system. The standardization of these roles eliminates redundant set up and maintenance of financial modules such as travel, payroll, and procurement. Further efficiencies are anticipated as the college connects more functions such as hiring, onboarding processes, and workflows.

With the continued implementation of the FAST system, the Finance department provides financial managers and divisional leadership with weekly budget reports detailing departmental financial positions. These reports are delivered in two formats – Excel and PDF files – for ease of use. In addition, each financial manager receives weekly reports of all outstanding encumbrances. These reports are being further developed to include line-item transaction details and tailored for other areas of the college such as Athletics and Student Life groups.

Over the past two years, the [Finance and Strategy website](#) has undergone an extensive overhaul. The main goals were to consolidate key information onto one page (such as our forms and resources), create a user-friendly environment that promotes customer self-service, and generate educational material on common processes and procedures. Additionally, we are making a more concerted effort to gather feedback on our content for future continuous improvement through mechanisms including surveys, focus groups, and one-to-one discussions.

At the beginning of FY22, CCRI began utilizing Chrome River (CR), an expense management application, for travel (authorizations and expense reports), in-state mileage, monthly purchase card (P-Card) expense reports, and employee reimbursement. Chrome River technology allowed CCRI to transform the P-Card program into a fast, flexible purchasing method that delegates small dollar purchasing power to individual employees. Chrome River has standard reports that allow managers and administrators to see encumbrances in real time. Learning events such as finance forums and group training provided opportunities for users to demonstrate the new technology and ask questions relevant to their areas. Training will be instrumental to the continued success of the CR program and foster a culture that embraces new technology and improvement.

CCRI has a variety of financial aid programs available to provide students access to higher education and an opportunity to persist once enrolled. Since the inception of the [Rhode Island Promise Program](#) in 2017, Rhode Islanders who attend full time directly following high school graduation or GED attainment receive two years of free tuition. Students within this same cohort who are Pell eligible were supported with the Promise-Plus scholarship, which was privately funded by a donor to reward

the achievement of essential milestones such as meeting with an advisor each term. For the past three years, the receipt of HEERF funding has allowed us the opportunity to fill many financial gaps. Although we will not be able to match the full extent of this resource, we are working to establish similar programs to provide long-term solutions for issues such as food and housing insecurity.

Figure 7.4 below illustrates how we have reduced student borrowing through the awarding of HEERF and other funds while reducing student debt levels from \$10.5 million in FY 2020 to \$7.2 million in FY 2023.

Figure 7.3 Sources of Financial Aid from 2019 - 2022

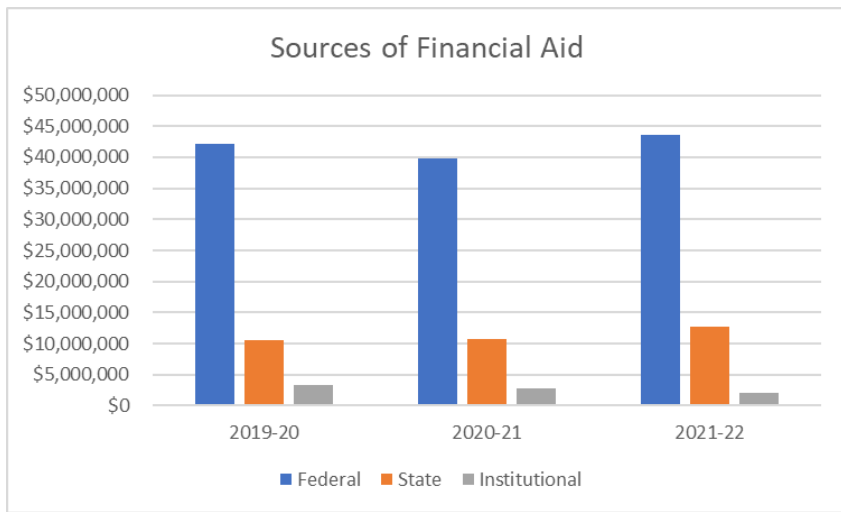
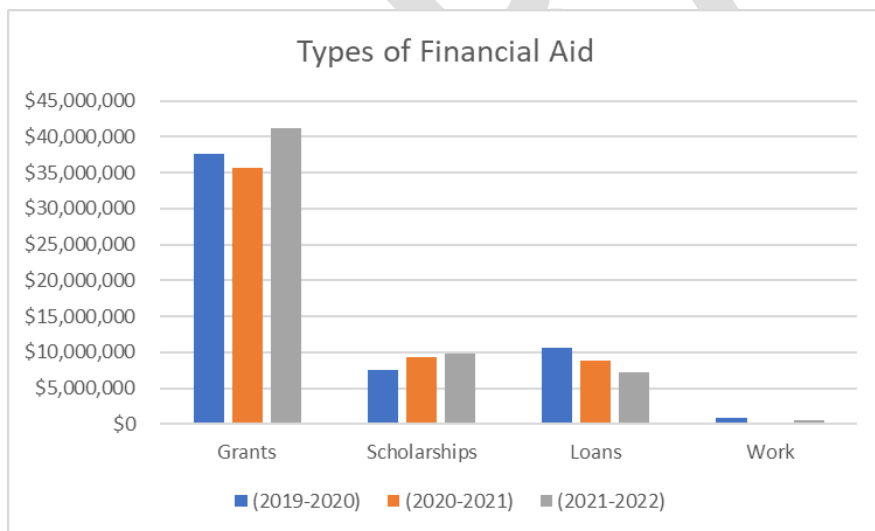


Figure 7.4 Types of Financial Aid from 2019 - 2022



INFORMATION, PHYSICAL, AND TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Description

The Information Technology (IT) department, led by a chief information officer, is organized into Enterprise Applications, Customer Service, Infrastructure and Operations, and Information Security. Ellucian's Banner ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) modules support the offices of Admissions, Student Records, Bursar, Financial Aid, Human Resources, and Finance. The Banner portal provides a web interface for self-service features used by faculty, staff, and students.

Support to all faculty, staff, and students is provided by the Customer Service group, which has staff on all campuses. Walk-in computing facilities are available for student use at each campus offering access to popular software applications and the Internet.

The college made a significant investment in student-facing technology resources. Computing labs and technology-enhanced classrooms are widely distributed across the four campuses. Wireless connectivity is available in all areas of all campuses. Additionally, loaner laptops are available to students on a first-come first-served basis.

Since the 2014 self-study, the Blackboard Learn learning management system was moved to the cloud. Recent institutional data center improvements and increased cloud utilization require robust, reliable network infrastructure and internet access. The college has extended the meshed network to include redundant 10GB connections to the state data center with the primary Internet connection at the Knight Campus and the secondary Internet connection at the state data center. To support increased demand for wireless access, a major upgrade of wireless infrastructure was completed in 2016 on all four campuses.

To ensure availability, integrity and confidentiality of data, the college enhanced cybersecurity. In 2015, IT acquired and maintained cybersecurity insurance to protect college resources in the event of a security incident. In 2017, a security assessment based on the NIST Cybersecurity Framework for Higher Education was performed. In 2018, IT contracted with a third-party vendor, GreyCastle Security, to assist in developing and implementing plans and to serve as a resource in the event of a cybersecurity incident. This planning included the preparation of a CCRI Incident Response Plan and the execution, in 2023, of a related tabletop exercise which was facilitated by GreyCastle. GreyCastle concluded that although opportunities for improvement were identified, the overall outcome of the tabletop exercise indicated an organization with a prepared, well-trained, and educated Incident Response team.

Additionally, the virtual desktops described in the 2014 NECHE report have been complemented by new systems to manage all PC and Mac desktops as well as Windows servers. The college's [responsible use of IT policy](#) is available on the website.

CCRI leverages the State of Rhode Island data center as well as a local data center on the Warwick campus to ensure optimal availability in the case of a failure. Redundant network connections are maintained between campuses as well as to the Internet. Additionally, several backups are made throughout the day and are sent to an off-site facility weekly.

Since 2016, the college acquired and implemented a Cisco WebEx site license to provide unified communication and collaboration tools via desktop application to allow all faculty, staff, and students to interact both synchronously and asynchronously. Additionally, in 2020, the college acquired and

implemented a Zoom Meetings site license to further support remote teaching and learning, due to the application's ease of use and accessibility features. Zoom's accessibility features, video pinning and live AI transcription, have been central to accommodation efforts for hearing impaired students who require a sign language interpreter. To date, 29 Cisco WebEx videoconferencing codec units have been installed in major conference and meeting rooms across all four campuses, supporting both WebEx and Zoom, fostering effective unified communication among the college community.

CCRI strives to have a five-year replacement cycle for computers. Inventory is proactively managed. Budget fluctuations have an impact on the replacement cycle, resulting in more of an average of five years, rather than a fixed rule. At fiscal yearend 2023, CCRI purchased \$1.1 million of IT hardware:

- \$425k, classroom audio equipment
- \$300k, laptops
- \$150k, multi-function devices
- \$100k, VOIP phones
- \$95k, firewalls

The IT Help Desk has enhanced customer service since the 2014 report through an increase in staffing levels and staff training opportunities, and by extending support hours to accommodate evening and Saturday classes and online courses to further support student and faculty engagement. In 2019, the college acquired and implemented the ITSM self-service portal TeamDynamix to generate, distribute, and manage service request and incident tickets, track project progression, generate service metrics. In 2019, the college invested in Starfish and Signal Vine student outreach and scheduling technology. For more comprehensive information on the use of Starfish, see Standard Five. Signal Vine allows CCRI officials to share information about admissions and academic requirements or deadlines, registration information, financial aid, and other situations that are time sensitive and necessary for student success. Signal Vine text messaging is used to share student resources needed to complete tasks, sending links or infographics with key information, and ask questions to check-in on progress.

In September 2022, CCRI received a three-year \$1,060,000 federal earmark through the Department of Education. The funds will offset the cost of implementing a college-wide customer relation manager (CRM) system. Focused on providing better management and tracking of students from admissions to alumni, the CRM project's goal is to increase efficiencies within departments while improving the experience of students, partners, and donors by centralizing and enhancing the tracking of touchpoints and data, modernizing the experience, allowing for better analytics, and strengthening communication pathways. This new process management and information collection will deepen understanding of the effectiveness of efforts toward improving student success, achieving the college's mission, and driving our strategic plan. The new system will link existing technology systems such as Banner, Starfish, and Signal Vine into a suite of tools that staff will be able to use anywhere. This feature is of particular interest post-pandemic, as the number of remote workers has grown significantly. This solution will empower all teams who work with our students to collaborate towards a common outcome in an efficient manner.

CCRI has library locations across all four campuses. The library is an active participant in the college's student success mission. It supports the curriculum with collections that contain approximately 76,500 print books, 225,000 e-books, more than 350 print periodicals, and more than 5,800 DVD/Blue rays and CDs. Personal computers and laptops in each library location provide access to the library catalog, periodical databases, and Internet resources.

The CCRI Library is a member of the Higher Education Library Information Network (HELIN) Consortium. The other HELIN members are Johnson and Wales University, Providence College, Rhode Island College, Roger Williams University, Salve Regina University, and Wheaton College (MA). Together, the HELIN Consortium libraries contain more than 4 million volumes of materials. CCRI students may borrow materials from the circulating collections of the HELIN member libraries using their library card.

The library budget has remained stable, as have library collections. Access to library and information resources, services, and facilities remains stable in terms of hours of operation. The addition of the online reference service LibChat expands access to reference librarians during open hours. Three of the four campus libraries loan laptops and iPads, providing additional access to information and technology resources. Due to space considerations, Newport County only offers laptops. The purchase of the iPads and laptops in spring 2018 was in response to the growing demand by students to have access to more flexible use of devices in the library. Additional laptop purchases in 2019 and 2022 allowed the library to begin a long-term, off-campus lending program providing many students with the equipment necessary to complete online and hybrid coursework. The iPads are also used in support of the Open Educational Resource (OER) textbook project, allowing the texts to be loaded on the devices. In addition, students can access a variety of educational applications (e.g., Essential Anatomy, Pocket Anatomy, Essential Skeleton) available only on tablets.

Faculty librarians, part-time librarians, and paraprofessional employees staff the library. The college employs nine full-time faculty librarians and nine part-time librarians, all of whom carry American Library Association accredited MLS/MLIS degrees. Librarians are stationed at each campus. The college employs three full-time paraprofessional staff who assist in managing operations at the Warwick, Lincoln, and Newport Campus. The Providence campus has two part-time staff members for similar work. One part-time paraprofessional oversees billing and accounts for the library's significant materials budget.

Library leadership has been in flux since the retirement of the dean in 2018. Following this retirement, the position was reconceptualized as the dean of library and academic innovation. Because the new dean was hired at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, much of the work focused on addressing the swift transition to entirely online instruction. Challenges presented in transitioning the library to a one-stop learning center. The dean resigned in March 2022 and the division was moved under the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences dean until agreement could be made on the direction of this role. The temporary transition to the division of arts, humanities and social sciences awaits a reorganization of the library's leadership structure and place among other student success services.

CCRI maintains four campuses across the state: Knight (Warwick), Flanagan (Lincoln), Newport County (Newport) and Liston (Providence). Each campus has a main mega structure that encourages social, educational, and cultural exchanges among the entire student body. The designs of the mega structures reflect the philosophy of the college, which stresses interaction among students from all fields of study. The Warwick and Lincoln campuses have multi-sport athletic facilities and sports fields. Auditoriums are in all four locations.

The two main sources of state funding to support the college's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) are Rhode Island Capital Plan funds (RICAP) and General Obligation (GO) bond funds. The FY24-FY28 Capital Improvement plan was approved by the Council on Postsecondary Education and submitted to the state for review in fall 2022. This plan includes significant investments across the four campuses.

The CIP, as approved by the CPE, includes \$103.29 million for previously approved and ongoing projects, and \$165 million for new projects requested to be funded from GO bond referenda that would need to be approved by the voters over the next three general election cycles (2024, 2026, and 2028). The GO bond referenda are presented to the voters biannually in November for the following fiscal year.

In the annual Appropriations Act, the General Assembly provides funding for capital projects funded from RICAP funds. The act also includes out-year funding allocations to allow for planning over the 5-year horizon covered by the CIP.

The CIP also dedicates significant investment in deferred maintenance across campuses. While much progress has been made over the last few years, there are still many projects that have been identified. In the most recent CIP submitted to the state, the college has requested funds over the next three election cycles to be included in bond referenda to make these investments possible.

In addition to the \$40.0 million of RICAP for the Phase I Modernization project, a General Obligation Bond referendum was approved by the voters in March 2021 that included \$12 million in bond proceeds for CCRI construction and renovation projects. This funding is being used to create a one-stop shop for student services activities on the Knight campus. The remaining funds are being used to continue to upgrade classrooms to support student learning.

The college is making investments to be in further compliance with ADA requirements. ADA projects that were completed since the 5-year interim report include the enclosing of the main walk ramp at the Warwick campus, ADA compliant restrooms, ADA handrails in Warwick and Lincoln, and the installation of a second elevator in the Providence campus. Ongoing projects include the renovation of a large lecture hall on the Flanagan campus to allow students with disabilities to better participate in the classes held in this space. The college began a major renovation of the restroom facilities on the Warwick campus in summer 2022. This project includes upgrades that will make all these facilities accessible, as they are not in compliance with current regulations. A major renovation to create a “one-stop shop” for student services functions on the Warwick campus is under construction. Part of this renovation will add an elevator in the Student Services space so that students with disabilities can easily assess all the services to which they are entitled.

Appraisal

To identify the highest priorities for physical improvements, the college hired the architecture firm [Goody Clancy](#) in 2018 to develop a comprehensive [Facilities Master Plan](#) to inform decision-making related to capital improvements. This plan was completed in January 2020. Since then, the Facilities Master Plan has been the driving force behind the development of the Capital Improvement Plan.

The college made considerable progress in completing several projects outlined in the Facilities Master Plan related to safety and green initiatives. Warwick campus safety improvements included a new traffic rotary, security cameras, new ADA accessible entry, and a new College Police kiosk at second floor entry. New high efficiency HVAC cooling chillers and heating system were installed in Newport. New high efficiency boilers were installed in the Providence campus North building and new emergency generators were installed at the Lincoln and Providence campuses.

CCRI must be prepared to respond to the continuously evolving cyber threat landscape and the regulations and standards that adjust due to changes in attack profiles and technology. For example, the

Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (GLBA) updated their requirements which required CCRI to adjust components of our security program. There will always be an ongoing need for a very strong focus on cybersecurity.

Providing stable infrastructure, excellent support, and appropriate tools to the college community, to enable innovative pedagogy on multiple campuses (e.g.: Math Emporium, Nursing and Simulation Labs, Allied Health Programs, Machine Shop, Cybersecurity) has been a leading strength for the Information Technology department, with the success of these endeavors being measured in student satisfaction.

Despite leadership challenges, the library and college have increased their focus on information literacy efforts. The collegewide Sources and Evidence initiative, participation in the Multi-State Collaborative, and the inclusion of information literacy in course learning outcomes all serve to make information literacy an important part of the college curriculum. Information literacy is now one of the required learning outcomes in the revision of the college's [Definition of an Educated Person](#). The library continues to develop a comprehensive information literacy plan, which includes goals, learning outcomes, and a plan for assessment. Librarians collaborate with academic departments and individual faculty to offer information literacy instruction sessions, and to integrate information literacy more deeply into existing credit bearing courses.

Library-based information literacy instruction rates have been seriously impacted by changes created by the COVID-19 pandemic. In AY20 the library provided instruction sessions for 187 sections. That fell to 53 sections during the year of remote learning. Sections taught have recovered significantly to 158 in AY22 following the return to campus but remain lower than pre-pandemic levels due to the increased number of distance learning offerings across the curriculum. Distance learning sections are most often not able to conduct live sessions with a librarian and have increasingly made use of asynchronous materials provided by librarians to fill the needs previously addressed by library-based information literacy instruction sessions. In response to the changing demand, librarians have developed a variety of online resources including subject, course, and assignment specific LibGuides, and a set of instructional videos on library resources to better support both in person and online learning at CCRI.

We anticipate continued access to significant state funding for capital improvements, including those related to classroom instruction and technology, going forward. Below is a summary of the funding received to date for future years and the additional funding the College will be requesting as part of the FY 2025 appropriation and General Obligation Bonds cycle:

Table 7.5 FY25 Capital Funding Request

PROJECT (in Millions)	Current Year Request Total	Previously Approved	Additional Request	Funding Source
Asset Protection	\$18.23	\$15.36	\$2.87	RICAP
Lincoln Campus Renewal	\$12.43	\$12.43		
Phase I Modernization	\$54.52	\$47.02	\$7.50	RICAP
Phase II - IV Modernization	\$160.00		\$160.00	GO Bonds
Data Cabling and Power Infrastructure	\$19.34	\$14.34	\$5.00	GO Bonds
ADA Accessibility Projects	\$0.88	\$1.27	(\$0.39)	
Knight Campus Renewal	\$1.39	\$1.39		
Knight Science Lab Renovations				
TOTAL CAPITAL	\$266.79	\$91.81	\$174.98	

Projection

- The HR department will focus on recruiting and retention to improve and stabilize staffing levels and establish more efficient and effective workflows in the department around hiring, onboarding, and performance evaluations.
- The Office of Organizational Development and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion will focus on tracking and improving DEI metrics, providing professional development, establishing a learning management platform for easily accessible trainings, and engaging in active recruiting strategies to develop diverse candidate pipelines.
- Numerous accessibility, safety, and green initiatives in progress include renovations to achieve full ADA compliance with restrooms on the Warwick and Lincoln campuses; a new elevator on the Warwick campus for improved accessibility at the main entrance; and installation of HVAC bi-polar ionization systems at all campuses to improve air quality.
- Planned IT initiatives include continuing to build a robust cybersecurity program based in the NIST standards and ensuring ongoing compliance with requirements such as GLBA and PCI-DSS; continue with wired infrastructure modernization; improve network architecture; and leverage Infrastructure as a Service to allow IT to focus less on hardware installation, hosting, and maintenance and more on improving performance, redundancy, scalability, security, and flexibility in a cost-effective manner.
- The library faculty will collaborate with administration to develop a comprehensive staffing, leadership, and scope of services plan.

STANDARD EIGHT: EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Strengths	Opportunities
The general education assessment process has grown significantly over the last two years.	Continue to expand faculty participation and level of reflection in the assessment process.
There has been an increase in faculty engagement with assessment.	Incorporate Blackboard Assessment module into data collection process.
Graduation rates have increased.	Create student success dashboards with disaggregated data.

The Community College of Rhode Island’s (CCRI) commitment to high academic standards is central to our mission and the goals of our [Strategic Plan](#) and the [Academic Master Plan](#). Educational effectiveness is a focus throughout the college with the vice president for academic affairs prioritizing assessment supported by the director of academic program review and accreditation reporting directly to the chief academic officer. Additionally, the vice president of student affairs also serves as the chief outcomes officer, responsible for reporting student success data to stakeholders, and using data to enhance student success, with support from the director of institutional research and analytics.

Since our last ten-year visit in 2014, CCRI has made strides in developing a culture of assessment. The commitment to assessment has grown in prominence by academic and institutional leadership. In 2018, CCRI hired its first full-time director of academic program review and accreditation, who was able to evaluate the state of assessment at the college and make recommendations for improving assessment processes. New deans and assistant deans hired in the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs were chosen in part based on their previous assessment experience and willingness to champion assessment at the college. In addition to regular professional development opportunities, assessment has been added to the orientation and onboarding process for new faculty. Through the revision and assessment of general education outcomes and a continued focus on developing faculty knowledge and skills around program assessment, faculty participation in program and course assessment has grown significantly since 2019. The college invested a portion of its COVID-relief HEERF funding in enhancing general education assessment, since we knew that the general education assessment process would be an important way to understand the learning loss and student needs related to the impact of the pandemic. Finally, the college has prioritized access to assessment and student success data to improve student learning by department chairs and academic deans using technology. For example, new dashboards for deans and chairs make data from our student information system accessible for decision making. Assessment plans and reports are easily retrievable in our homegrown online assessment platform. These efforts are supported by the [Faculty Senate Teaching and Assessment Committee](#) and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness through several data platforms and surveys.

DESCRIPTION

NECHE’s response to CCRI’s 2019 Interim Fifth-Year Report requested that we give emphasis to our success in assessing the learning outcomes identified in the college’s revised [Definition of an Educated Person](#). The college revised the Educated Person outcomes following participation in the Multi-State Collaborative Project to Advance Learning Outcomes Assessment and then the [VALUE](#) Institute

between 2014-2018. The four critical abilities of an educated person include effective communication; critical thinking; quantitative, mathematical, and scientific reasoning; and awareness of oneself and the world. Under the four outcomes, eight sub-competencies were outlined: written communication, oral communication, critical thinking skills, information literacy, scientific reasoning, quantitative reasoning, historical, cultural, and global understanding, and professional and personal skills. Key indicators were also defined by the General Education Committee with input from the campus community. Between 2019-2021, a timeline that was extended by the COVID-19 pandemic, departments submitted courses for recertification as general education courses by the General Education Committee according to the new policy. With a focus on transferability, the number of general education courses went from 270, of which 58% transferred and met general education requirements at sister institutions in Rhode Island, to 134 courses transferring as general education courses, 95% of all of our general education courses. These courses represent 22 disciplines across the college.

CCRI assesses the educational effectiveness of its Educated Person outcomes. Upon the recertification of the courses, two pilot assessment programs were implemented. During the 2021-2022 academic year, eight faculty members convened to better understand the rubric development and assessment process using the personal and professional skills sub-competency. In spring and summer 2022, nineteen faculty members assessed one or more sections of the general education course they taught against the key indicators of one of the eight sub-competencies. Though this initial assessment process did not produce data from enough sections to make conclusions about student learning, it gave more faculty an understanding of the assessment process and gave us a blueprint for systematically assessing general education outcomes.

Table 8.1 Overview of the General Education Assessment Process

	Number of Gen Ed Courses Assessed	Outcomes Assessed	Number of Faculty Participating	Number of Student Artifacts Assessed
Fall 2021	3	4b (Ethical Reasoning and Teamwork)	8	50
Spring/Summer 2022	18	All	19	425
Fall 2022	19	All except 3a (Scientific Reasoning)	71	1,088
Spring 2023	28	All except 4b (Teamwork and Ethical Reasoning)	76	1,620

The general education director, the General Education Committee, and the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs share the responsibility for the assessment of the general education program. The general education director, a faculty member appointed to lead assessment, worked with the General Education Committee to approve the assessment plan. Those courses were sampled; representing the eight sub-competencies, sections taught by full-time and part-time faculty, online, and across the campuses. Faculty were asked to choose an existing assignment that best demonstrates one of the outcomes their course is aligned with. Each semester starting in fall 2022, faculty assessed the work against a faculty-designed rubric. These rubrics closely align with the VALUE rubric criteria for written communication, oral communication, critical thinking, information literacy, quantitative literacy,

and scientific reasoning. The rubrics for global/historical/cultural understanding and functioning in social and professional environments were designed by faculty via the General Education Committee. Faculty were offered training on assignment selection and rubric norming. For each outcome, between 80 and 605 artifacts of student work were assessed, improving our ability to disaggregate the assessment results by program, gender, race/ethnicity, number of credits earned, and Pell eligibility. Results were shared with department chairs and deans and discussed with the campus community at Professional Development Day. For example, while over half (53%) of student work in the Global, Cultural, and Historical Understand skill category under the Awareness of Self and the World outcome was scored as competent, participants discussed the variations in performance across the key indicators. They discussed how the college might act on the results, such as how 22% of student work was scored as beginning related to students' ability to articulate an understanding of cultural variation in verbal and nonverbal communication. This has led to working groups related to both the better alignment of assignments as well as inquiry into further clarification of the general education rubrics.

In pursuit of ensuring transfer and career success for students, faculty in each degree program developed program-level student learning outcomes aligned with the mission statements of both CCRI and the academic program, all of which can be found on the college and departmental websites. CCRI launched its systematic program assessment process in 2017. Engagement with the process has increased each year. By fall 2022, 82% of associate degree programs had a completed assessment plan and report approved on the platform. These annual reports start with a program mission statement and student learning outcomes (SLOs). The SLOs are mapped to the program's curriculum to identify which courses introduce, develop, or provide opportunities for mastery of the competency. Mapping also identifies opportunities for better scaffolding and identifying locations in the curricula for key assessments, such as formative or summative capstone projects. A plan for assessment is defined, including the assignments best used for assessing the outcomes and when and how those outcomes will be assessed. Degree programs then report the SLO assessed each year, appraise the results, and set goals for program improvement. Assessment reports also have space for external accreditation actions, if applicable, and any other program data analyzed with related plans for improvement, such as graduation data, licensure exam pass rates, or other student success data. By setting these improvement goals, division deans track progress with department chairs and program faculty. Departments use a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods to assess program outcomes (see E-Series forms). The process has resulted in increased transparency. Everyone using the assessment platform can view completed reports from other programs. The archival function of the platform helps with continuity as department chairs change.

The periodic evaluation of academic programs takes place through three primary methods: Academic Program Review for non-externally accredited degree programs (see also chapters for Standard Two and Four), the self-study process for externally accredited programs, and annual assessment for all degree programs. The 19 programs that are periodically evaluated by specialized accrediting agencies can submit their self-study as evidence of program evaluation.

Degree-granting programs that are not externally-accredited participate in the Academic Program Review (APR) process every five years. The APR is a comprehensive evaluation of a program's mission and purpose; curriculum; student support services; teaching, learning, and scholarship of faculty; resources; and educational effectiveness. Departments assess enrollment trends, program demand, and student outcomes. After the dean approves the self-study, it is submitted to the Faculty Senate Teaching and Assessment Committee for feedback. The NECHE 2019 Interim Fifth-Year Report

identified several areas for improvement with the APR process, including unsystematic gathering of outcomes data, adherence to the schedule for submitting APRs, the quality of the reviews that were submitted, and the need for more efficient methods to collect assessment data. Over the last five years, we have addressed several of these issues, increasing compliance with Academic Program Review submission process, engaging faculty in the annual assessment process so that they would have more regular outcomes data to submit, requiring dean approval before submissions go to the review committee, and updating data sources for the report to be accessible from the chairs' data platform. Since 2019, 93% of programs that were scheduled for review completed their APR, or are on track to submit in 2022-2023, a marked improvement from the previous five years. We've also followed up with departments after they receive the recommendations from the VPAA, and as a result, programs have improved their participation in assessment, rebuilt their advisory boards, improved transfer pathways, and worked to increase enrollment. To better support program and general education outcomes, efforts around the assessment of course-level learning outcomes have grown in the last five years. All course syllabi continue to list learning outcomes, which are reviewed through the Curriculum Review Committee. As courses are updated, course learning outcomes will be part of the Curriculum Inventory Management (CIM) database, which has allowed for more robust discussion and feedback around the measurability and clarity of student learning outcome statements.

In spring 2018, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness began identifying barrier courses, also known as high enrolled, low pass (HELP) courses. High enrollment courses are those courses where enrollment is at or above the 70th percentile for courses in the department, and the average course success rate (students earning an A, B, C, or P) was below 73% of students, the average success rate across all CCRI courses was 73% from the baseline year, 2017-2018. Every department had a HELP percentage calculated, which represented the proportion of all HELP courses in the department. The data from HELP courses is compiled by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness each spring and distributed to deans, the administration, and department chairs for academic planning and policy changes. HELP courses have become an integral part of the college's analysis of student success. Additionally, due to the equity concerns COVID-19 pandemic and the shift to online classes, additional layers of analysis was created to discover the differences in student success disaggregated by race/ethnicity and between online, hybrid, and on-campus classes. In fall 2021, 22% of courses were considered HELP courses, compared to 16% in AY16-17. This is directly related to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, one third of courses in fall 2021 had lower pass rates in the online sections of the course compared to the on-campus sections. These data have been used by departments to identify student learning outcomes in courses that need more reinforcement, scaffold content for additional practice, and add a metacognition reflection exercise to enhance student success skills. HELP course interventions and assessment have been incorporated into departmental goal setting and updates for the continuous improvement in HELP courses.

CCRI welcomed 1,584 new full-time high school graduates as its inaugural cohort of [Rhode Island Promise Scholars](#) in fall 2017. Six years later, CCRI enrolled 2,120 students. The fall 2020 cohort saw a 55% retention rate (see Table 8.2 for retention rate trends). This rate was lower than previous cohorts due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which greatly impacted enrollment at two-year public institutions, including CCRI. Due to the Rhode Island Promise program, the number of CCRI students on track to graduate in two years increased threefold, despite overall enrollments being disproportionately comprised of part-time students. Furthermore, Rhode Island Promise has created a positive impact on student enrollment, especially among historically underrepresented populations.

Since the inaugural cohort in fall 2017, there has been a 33% increase among Rhode Island Promise students, and the college is serving more students of color.

As noted in the NECHE 2019 Interim Fifth-Year Report, the college's retention rate has fluctuated between 63% to 69% from 2013 to 2018 for first-time, full-time associate degree-seeking students. The table below represents overall retention rates for the college, meaning the retention rates for key cohorts including first-time, full-time associate degree-seeking students and students in the Rhode Island Promise Program. Looking at a variety of different retention rate measures for the college provides a more holistic view of retention.

Data Table 8.3 presents CCRI's three-year graduation rate trends for the most five years available. The College tracks three-year graduation rates for both its 1) fall first-time, full-time cohorts (IPEDS cohorts) and 2) RI Promise cohorts (fall first-time, full-time, direct from high school, degree-seeking students). The College also disaggregates its overall graduation rate statistics by student race/ethnicity and Pell-eligibility (as a proxy for low-income status). Three-year graduation rates have increased for all cohorts overall and most student subgroups over the past five years, although these rates have declined from their pre-COVID peaks.

DRAFT

Table 8.2 One-Year Retention Rates by Cohort, Race/Ethnicity, & Pell Status

Cohort Start Term	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
First-time, Full-time Students	65%	67%	59%	55%	54%	59%
Race/Ethnicity						
Asian	74%	76%	62%	70%	62%	57%
Black or African American	56%	58%	52%	52%	58%	57%
Hispanic or Latino	57%	65%	57%	48%	46%	57%
Other/Unknown	69%	63%	54%	54%	47%	64%
Two or More Races	57%	54%	53%	50%	47%	53%
White	68%	70%	62%	60%	58%	62%
Pell Status						
Pell Eligible	61%	64%	56%	52%	49%	57%
Not Pell Eligible	70%	70%	64%	60%	59%	62%
RI Promise Students*	64%	63%	60%	57%	55%	61%
Race/Ethnicity						
Asian	75%	72%	69%	72%	62%	58%
Black or African American	54%	55%	53%	51%	59%	56%
Hispanic or Latino	58%	58%	57%	49%	48%	59%
Other/Unknown	67%	57%	53%	59%	48%	63%
Two or More Races	55%	56%	57%	53%	47%	53%
White	66%	66%	63%	61%	59%	63%
Pell Status						
Pell Eligible	59%	60%	58%	55%	50%	58%
Not Pell Eligible	69%	66%	64%	60%	60%	63%
*The first RI Promise cohort started with CCRI in fall 2017. Red values are based on Promise comparison cohorts, a group of students who would have met Promise eligibility criteria had it existed in fall 2015 and fall 2016.						

Table 8.3 Three-Year Graduation Rates by Cohort, Race/Ethnicity, & Pell Status

Cohort Start Term	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019
First-time, Full-time Students	18%	20%	30%	26%	24%
Race/Ethnicity					
Asian	17%	9%	32%	34%	34%
Black or African American	10%	8%	16%	12%	13%
Hispanic or Latino	13%	9%	21%	18%	14%
Other/Unknown	26%	21%	39%	25%	15%
Two or More Races	22%	13%	23%	23%	16%
White	20%	26%	35%	31%	30%
Pell Status					
Pell Eligible	14%	15%	25%	20%	19%
Not Pell Eligible	24%	27%	38%	34%	30%
RI Promise Students*	17%	19%	30%	27%	24%
Race/Ethnicity					
Asian	15%	14%	33%	35%	33%
Black or African American	9%	3%	16%	13%	13%
Hispanic or Latino	13%	8%	20%	19%	14%
Other/Unknown	26%	21%	37%	23%	16%
Two or More Races	16%	13%	25%	24%	16%
White	19%	25%	34%	32%	31%
Pell Status					
Pell Eligible	14%	13%	24%	22%	19%
Not Pell Eligible	21%	25%	36%	34%	30%
*The first RI Promise cohort started with CCRI in fall 2017. Red values are based on Promise comparison cohorts, a group of students who would have met Promise eligibility criteria had it existed in fall 2015 and fall 2016.					

Eleven of the college's associate degree programs require graduates to successfully complete their respective national licensure examinations, as do two certificate programs and one diploma granting program (see Data First Forms 8.3 for more details). In all, sixteen different licensure exams are administered to graduates annually across our health science programs. The pass rate across all graduates across all programs for the past three reporting periods (since the 2019-20 academic year) is 89%, ranging from a low of 67% for the Histotechnician program (n=9) to a high of 100% on seven of the exams (Radiography, Dental Assistant, and Dental Hygiene programs). Program Directors for each of these programs are analyzing exam pass rate trends each semester and implementing success measures like tutoring, additional lab time, and additional exam preparation in order to improve pass rates and meet the demands of the labor market.

In the last year, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness has added tools to better track the employment outcomes of students. Historically, the college surveyed students four to five months post-graduation about their career and transfer plans, and the percentage of graduates employed was 41% in 2018. In 2021, the methodology shifted to a graduating student survey to increase response rates, and the number of students that expected to be employed remained steady at 41%, with 37% of students reporting that their job was directly related to their degree program, despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the shift of data collection methods from 2015 to 2018. Due to the disruption associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness has not administered surveys to graduates one-year and three-years after graduation to determine their current employment status. However, some departments track what students do after they graduate. An example of this is the advisory boards for the cybersecurity program and the nursing program. Both advisory boards have industry leaders as members and track outcomes for graduating students to improve the program and match industry needs. To respond to the challenges of collecting student employment data, in 2021, CCRI partnered with [LightCast](#) (formerly EMSI Burning Glass) to analyze alumni career outcomes, and found that between 2002-2021, 47% of matched alumni (n=4,120) were employed in their field of study. Of those alumni, 47% are employed within their field of study and 71% currently reside in the region. This analysis compliments the graduating student survey data to create a more holistic picture of where CCRI graduates are employed.

CCRI is committed to helping students further their education by transferring to a four-year institution after graduation. Transfer rates are an important measure of student success. We have both direct and indirect measures of transfer rates. In the 2019 Graduating Student Exit Survey, students were asked what their plans were after graduation. The survey found that 39% of graduates “confirmed transfer to a four-year college or university,” and of those indicating they were transferring, 86% were “very confident” or “confident” about entering the transfer program. By the spring 2021 graduating student survey implementation, 31% of the graduates “confirmed transfer to a four-year college or university,” and of those indicating they were transferring, 83% were “very confident” or “confident” about entering the transfer program.

Table 8.4 Percent of Transfer-Out Students Earning Certificate or Associate Degree Before Transfer

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Unduplicated Headcount	20,165	19,379	19,106	18,806	17,380
Transfer-out Students	2,741	2,622	2,586	2,637	2,431
Percent of students that transferred with a credential	26%	27%	32%	32%	32%

Student success measures and data are fundamental for the college to create informed and strategic planning for classes, resources, and policy changes. An example of this is a ZIP Code Analysis completed by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness in spring 2022. The analysis considered ZIP codes in Rhode Island through a variety of factors including unemployment rates, associate degree attainment rates, and bachelor’s degree attainment rates. There was a primary focus on the city of Providence because of its underfunded school district that the college primarily serves. The analysis found that the college could be doing more outreach in Providence to reach the underrepresented ZIP codes and improve those areas’ unemployment rates and associate degree attainment rates by increasing

enrollment from those ZIP codes. Additionally, the convenient location of the Liston campus in the West side area of Providence is an advantage to this outreach. The recommendations of the analysis were to increase resources allocated to the Liston campus to increase the outreach to these regions of Providence, with the goal of building a stronger economy within those communities. More broadly, this analysis contributed to the rationale for the creation of the Community First Initiative. The Community First Initiative is a partnership with the United Way of Rhode Island to provide college and community resources to historically under-resourced students through a mobile van. The United Way had five events throughout September 2022 at three campus locations. This was the first phase of this initiative with plans to repeat the events in spring 2023.

After administering regular surveys of continuing students, CCRI has begun to survey students with The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) to have peer comparisons to assess practices that contribute to student satisfaction, learning, and engagement. Approximately 11% of the student population participated, which is in the range of average response rates nationally for online CCSSE administration. Results were shared with faculty, student services staff, and administrators through meetings with key stakeholders.

APPRAISAL

As seen in the Data First Forms, Sections 8.1 and 8.2, metrics for completion of degrees and transferring to a four-year college or university have improved. In Data Table 8.3, we observe three significant trends in CCRI's graduation rates. First, three-year overall three-year graduation improved significantly prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, from 18% for fall 2015 first-time, full-time students to 30% for fall 2017 first-time, full-time students. These increases are seen when we compare student within their racial/ethnic group or Pell-eligibility status against past performance; over time, rates within most groups are up. For example, Black or African American 3-year graduation rates grew from 10% for the fall 2015 cohort to 13% for the fall 2019 cohort. Graduation rates for Pell-eligible students grew from 14% to 19% over the same time period. Second, while graduation rates have improved within most student groups, there are still attainment gaps across student groups. For example, graduation rates for Pell-eligible students continue to lag behind their more affluent peers (19% v. 30% respectively for fall 2019 first-time, full-time students). Third, three-year graduation rates fell overall and across all groups during COVID-19 and have yet to rebound to pre-COVID levels; overall 3-year graduation rates fell from 30% for fall 2017 first-time, full-time students to 24% for fall 2019 first-time, full-time students. With this caveat, CCRI students are still graduating at higher rates than just five years ago. Prior to COVID, CCRI exceeded its 29% 3-year graduation target for academic year 2020-21. We anticipate that our graduation rates will continue to improve given national trends and CCRI's student success initiatives specifically designed to promote persistence. For the 22-23 academic year, we have set an overall three-year graduation target of 26%. The College has set a three-year graduation rate target of XX% for the 23-24 academic year.

In Section 8.1 of our Data First Forms, we include overall Rhode Island Promise cohort graduation rates, in addition to low-income students and students of color are also included. Three-year graduation rates for these cohorts have followed a similar trajectory to our fall first-time, full-time cohorts. The fall 2017 RI Promise cohort (the first RI Promise cohort) achieve a 30% three-year graduation rate that then fell to 24% due to the effects of COVID. Similarly, three-year graduation rates for Black or African American students peaked at 20% for the fall 2017 RI Promise cohort

compared to just 4% for the fall 2014 RI Promise comparison group. Their rates then fell to 13% for the fall 2019 cohort during the pandemic. Fifteen percent (15%) of Pell-eligible students in the fall 2014 RI Promise comparison group graduated in three years, compared to 24% of Pell-eligible fall 2017 Promise students. Their rates then fell to 19% for the fall 2019 cohort during the pandemic. Despite more recent declines due to COVID, this data is critical because it shows how the College can allocate resources to RI Promise students to help them achieve greater education outcomes.

The Data First Forms for Section 8.2 Student Success and Progress Rates and Other Measures of Student Success looks at the fall 2015 cohort and fall 2018 cohort. It is important to note that six years have passed for the fall 2015 cohort and four years have passed for the fall 2018 cohort. The college expects the numbers for the fall 2018 cohort to surpass fall 2015 after two more years have passed based on the changes in policies and increase in resources for graduating and transferring students.

Moreover, as CCRI's enrollment has declined the College has started to measure the number of enrollments required to produce a graduate. This ratio allows us to capture our performance in helping students who enroll at CCRI exit with a credential of value while controlling for the effects declining enrollment would have on graduate production. As illustrated in Table 8.5, in 15-16 it took 11.4 enrollments to produce one graduate. By 21-22, this ratio fell to 7.6 enrollments to produce a graduate. Put another way, CCRI is doing a better job of transforming our enrolled students into graduates than in the past.

Table 8.5 Ratio of Enrollments to Graduates by Academic Year

Academic Year	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22
Ratio of Enrollments to Graduates	11.4	10.1	9.3	8.4	8.0	8.0	7.6

Out of the 1,485 students that completed licensure examinations, the pass rate across all exams for the past two reporting periods (since the 2019-2020 academic year) is 89% (see Data First Forms for specific program licensure pass rates data). The overall pass rate between 2014-2018 was 92.6%, so our current pass rates reveal the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our students. We want all of our graduates to pass these exams, so remediation and test preparation have been a major focus on the health sciences programs since the pandemic affected students' clinical and didactic learning.

The LightCast database of alumni employment outcomes improves upon what can be gleaned from college surveys. The LightCast database includes career data beyond the first job post-graduation. For example, some of the top ten occupations of graduates since 2002 include registered nurses (10.9% of all alumni profiles), general and operations managers (2.5%), customer service representatives (2.4%), computer user support specialists (2.2%), and accountants and auditors (1.8%). Only 91 graduates reported employer and occupational details in the 2021 survey, making our new alumni data much more actionable.

Improving transfer outcomes has been a policy focus in Rhode Island. Overall, the number of students who transfer has risen or fallen with enrollments. In 2020-2021, 2,431 students transferred to other colleges and universities, down from 2,741 in 2016-2017. The percentage of students who transfer with a certificate or associate degree has increased, however, from 26% in 2016-2017 to 32% in 2020-2021. To better understand actual transfer rates, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness conducted an

analysis of where students transfer and attend after their graduation from CCRI using National Student Clearinghouse data. The data analyzed was from students who graduated between fall 2018 and spring 2022. As of spring 2022, 47% of these graduates transferred and 72% transferred within the next semester after graduating. CCRI has strong links with its sister public institutions in the state; 69% of students who transferred go to the University of Rhode Island or Rhode Island College. Additionally, 92% of these students earned an associate degree before transferring.

CCRI currently has [24 transfer articulation agreements](#) with colleges across the country. The college also has more than [77 program-to-program transfer agreements](#). Through the [Joint Admissions Agreement](#), students receive tentative acceptance to the University of Rhode Island or Rhode Island College, personalized advising, and seamless transfer with junior status to these schools. The college currently has a full-time transfer coordinator and dedicated advisors for the JAA program. The college is excited for the future of our articulation agreements and for the future of the JAA program. In addition to work with the public institutions in Rhode Island, in 2021, CCRI joined the [New England Transfer Guarantee](#), a program of the New England Board of Higher Education. The Rhode Island Transfer Guarantee allows graduates to transfer directly to participating four-year independent institutions in the state with guaranteed admissions and financial incentives for the attainment of certain GPAs. During the first year of the program, 17 students transferred to participating institutions. Of these students, 35% are BIPOC students. The college is currently revising the General Studies program to promote specific JAA transfer pathways within the broader degree, to build more alignment with the guided pathways program and increase transfer rates.

CCRI administered the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) for the first time in 2023. The area where we most closely met the benchmark of the top 10% of community colleges participating in the CCSSE survey was “Academic Challenge,” scored based on responses to questions related to how engaged students were in challenging intellectual and creative work. Our standardized benchmark score was 51.1 compared to 57.5 for the top 10% group. The component of student engagement where we were furthest from the benchmark for the top 10% of community colleges was “Active and Collaborative Learning” (47.8). This is an area of focus that is part of our Guided Pathways initiative to add experiential learning to all associate degree programs and the ongoing work of the Center for Teaching Excellence and the Office of Online Learning and Technology. For all of the other components of student engagement in the CCSSE, we are at or slightly above average for “Student Effort” (50.6), “Academic Challenge” (51.1), “Student-Faculty Interaction” (52), and “Support for Learners” (53). As we continue to increase the use of the Starfish communication tool, we expect that our scores on “Student-Faculty Interaction” and “Support for Learners” will increase during our next CCSSE administration in 2025.

The first round of systematic general education assessment in fall 2022 provided data that can be used to improve both student learning and the assessment process (see Table 8.6). Given the assessments of competency in written communication and quantitative reasoning, the college’s focus on developmental math and English will continue, particularly around revising English Language Learning curriculum and promoting the co-requisite model. These results have informed CCRI’s continued expansion of college-level gateway math programs, such as summer bridge and afterschool math readiness programs in partnership with several high schools. As the leadership of the Library is reimagined, a focus on information literacy will be an important objective for leading and partnering with faculty. To improve the assessment process, faculty workgroups will review the existing rubrics and make suggestions to tailor them by discipline, to make the rubrics align better with course assignments. Discussions of

benchmarks and goals will also inform how we use assessment results as we collect more data over time.

Table 8.6 Fall 2022 General Education Assessment Results

Outcome	Percent of Competent Rubric Scores
1a – Written Communication	39% (n=53)
1b – Oral Communication	65% (n=124)
2a – Critical Thinking	47% (n=116)
2b – Information Literacy	47% (n=47)
3b – Quantitative Reasoning	38% (n=246)
4a – Global/Cultural/Historical Understanding	52% (n=226)
4b – Teamwork and Ethical Reasoning	81% (n=257)

Finally, to make data collection easier for faculty, CCRI invested in the Blackboard Assessment module in fall 2022. The tool was implemented in 2023 so faculty could link their tests, assignment rubrics, or gradebook items to the Educated Person outcomes. [Add anything on early results here]

To triangulate these data with indirect measures, in the Graduating Student Exit Survey administered in May 2021 by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, the survey results indicate that a majority of CCRI graduates “strongly agree” or “agree” that they have the requisite skills and abilities that comprise the four Educated Person outcomes. While the results remain consistent from 2018, including lower confidence in quantitative and scientific reasoning skills (see Table 8.7), it will be necessary to continue to monitor the self-reported measures and the direct assessment of student learning to fully understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student learning. Given the gap between the faculty ratings of competency and student perceptions of competency across the general education outcomes, professional development for faculty around the articulation of criteria for graded assignments, like providing rubrics and examples of exemplary work, will help students and faculty alike better understand the expectations for the achievement of the Educated Person outcomes.

Table 8.7 Percentages of Graduating Students Reporting Competencies in the Educated Person Outcomes

Four Abilities of the Educated Person Outcomes	2018 Strongly Agree or Agree Percentage	2021 Strongly Agree or Agree Percentage
Effective Communication	99.1%	99.3%
Critical Thinking	99.1%	98.7%
Quantitative and Scientific Reasoning	93.3%	91.1%
Social Interaction	98.1%	97.2%

CCRI’s academic programs assess the attainment of program outcomes using a variety of direct and indirect methods: licensure exams, capstone projects, fieldwork and clinical evaluations, musical and theater performances, portfolios, and written assignments. Departments have grown in their capacity to use program assessment data to improve their programs. Some examples of this can be found in the E-series forms, with several programs summarized here.

Business Administration: The Associate in Science in Business with its five concentrations is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP). The department uses both the visiting team's feedback and the feedback from its advisory board for programmatic improvements and enhancing student success. For example, the industry advisory board gave feedback on the need for greater soft skills among program graduates. Department faculty replaced Public Speaking (COMM 1100) with Communication Fundamentals (COMM 1010), a more holistic course that addresses interpersonal communication, group interaction, and both oral and written communication for diverse audiences. In the accounting concentration, students have more opportunities for experiential learning due to CCRI's participation in the IRS's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. Finally, a simulation project was added for the Management Strategy (BUSN 2070) capstone course of the management concentration. The assessment of student learning, such as finding continued challenges in reaching the target of 60% of students earning a "C" on the final exam in Principles of Management (BUSN 2050), has resulted in the streamlining of topics addressed and the standardization of the projects and rubrics across sections. The Business and Professional Studies Department has been a model for other programs and the department chair served on a panel on program assessment for other faculty.

Communication: A new degree program that began in 2019, assessment was built into the Communication and Film/Media program design from the outset. Students have a required field experience and complete a capstone portfolio at the end of the program. To prepare students for the field experience, experiential learning was built into more courses prior to their internship, and the CCRI radio and newspaper are promoted to students as co-curricular learning opportunities. In response to writing assessments where 56% of student work was exemplary, and 44% of student work was developing, program faculty have begun using Starfish, the early alert system, to refer students to the Writing Center and other college resources. Lastly, additional courses like Foundations of American Journalism (COMM 1150) were added to the curriculum to add greater context and disciplinary knowledge to later courses such as Media Writing (COMM 2000).

Occupational Therapy: Despite accreditation by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) and consistently high national examination pass rates, the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic impacted student success in the program. In response, the program director introduced several changes in response to assessment results, such as only 70% of passing NBCOT exam takers getting questions correct on questions related to the ability to implement occupational interventions. Any student receiving a grade below 80% and all students at midterms are required to have an advising session with the program director. Students also now receive completed tests for review. In response to the challenges associated with the cohort that took anatomy and physiology in a remote learning format, the Student Success Center worked with Pearson to produce interactive, self-directed virtual resources as a refresher for that content in later courses.

The COVID-19 pandemic slowed our momentum around student learning outcomes assessment, though in some ways, the actions taken by CCRI laid the foundation for a greater engagement with data and assessment by faculty. In 2020-2021, the vice president for academic affairs created the Ad Hoc Assessment Committee (AHAC) to develop and implement an assessment plan to evaluate the impact of academic and administrative changes related to the impact of COVID-19 on teaching and learning. Subcommittees were mostly comprised of faculty members and evaluated data on retention and grades prior to COVID-19 and during the virtual learning necessitated by it; surveys of faculty and student experiences with remote learning; student focus groups on their experiences with learning

during the pandemic; student engagement research; and virtual teaching best practices and research. All this research led to 21 recommendations for data governance, student engagement and success, professional development, and enhancements to the academic culture. These recommendations were accepted by the vice president for academic affairs and formed the basis for the [Academic Master Plan](#) adopted in 2022, which incorporates assessment. Stemming from the Academic Master Plan, it is anticipated there will be greater capacity for working with faculty through the addition of an Assessment Coordinator position, greater coordination between General Education, Assessment, and the Center for Teaching Excellence through the development of an Assessment Strategic Plan, and the expansion of the use of the Blackboard Assessment tool to help departments visualize and utilize assessment findings.

In addition to providing more actionable data, engagement with these data has deepened over time. In 2018, the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (now the Office of Institutional Effectiveness) identified HELP courses for each department, and division deans and department chairs were asked to review and appraise the findings annually with their faculty and identify strategies for improving the success rate of students in the courses. With most departments participating, 14 courses were assessed in summer 2022, and we found that through these 14 courses, the average withdrawal rate was 21%, the average did not succeed (D, F) rate was 13% in AY21-22. In fall 2022, the average withdrawal rate decreased by 1% to 20% and the DF rate increased by 5% to 18%. Across sections in these 13 courses, over 2,194 students were assessed during the fall 2022 semester. This is the largest-scale assessment project that CCRI has undertaken in the last decade. Below is the disaggregated data table and the overall table of the courses assessed in fall 2022.

Table 8.8 Fall 2022 HELP Course Success Rates by Ethnicity*

Race	Withdrawal	Course Success	Did Not Succeed
White	17%	68%	15%
Black or African American	21%	56%	22%
Hispanic or Latinx/e	24%	55%	21%
Asian	18%	63%	19%
Two or More Races	21%	63%	16%
Unknown/Other	21%	56%	23%

*Note: The Other/Unknown category includes both American Indian/Alaska Native & Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students.

This departmental work led to improvements in student success. For instance, faculty changed two HELP courses in the Art, Art History, and Design Department, Introduction to Visual Arts (ARTS 1001) and Digital Photography I (ARTS 1850) and improved the success rate by 10% and 17%, respectively. In 2022, Academic Affairs sponsored a Faculty Learning Community from each department to assess one of their HELP courses, resulting in assessments including analyses of test performance, surveys of students who withdrew from the course, student meta-cognition self-assessments, and proficiency testing. Of the 14 courses included in the Faculty Learning Communities, 7 courses had improved success rates that term. One finding was that withdrawal rates are driving courses into the HELP category more than low student learning outcome achievement, so student success strategies like [Caring Campus](#), [Starfish](#), and designing courses to meet [OSCQR standards](#) that help students feel welcome and connected are methods that the college will continue to promote to address course withdrawal rates. Recognizing that success rates are a lagging indicator, we look

forward to continuing course improvement based on assessment outcomes. One strategy that we have yet to implement but came out of participation in an AAC&U Institute for General Education Assessment, is the development of a faculty assessment mentor role to support peer mentorship around assessment and to foster a culture of assessment.

To provide an external perspective on those outcomes, CCRI has prioritized the growth of industry advisory boards. Over the last five years, we have had fourteen active advisory boards providing input to programs and have five additional programs that are in the process of reforming or cultivating a new advisory board.

CCRI analyzes student success metrics to guide our planning. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (IE) continuously monitors graduation rates, retention, and course completion rates with a focus since 2020's [Campus Inclusion Plan](#) on disaggregating data to understand and close equity gaps. IE has also made this data available more widely for planning using a public facing [website](#).

Projection

- Now that departmental participation in our current assessment process has expanded over the past seven years, assessment efforts will be evaluated and the format of our annual assessment reporting process will be reimagined so that it is more user-friendly for faculty, inclusive of service departments, and incorporates the Blackboard Assessment module to aid in outcome data collection.
- To recognize the importance of faculty members in building a culture of assessment, we plan to develop a Faculty Assessment Mentor role to serve as a bridge between the director of academic program review and accreditation and the academic departments.
- To address our equity goals, Academic Affairs is partnering with the Office of Organizational Development and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion to disaggregate student success data by race/ethnicity and program to provide student success dashboards available to department chairs and academic administrators.
- To achieve student success outcomes that improve incrementally on the College's performance on the following KPIs:
 - XX% fall-to-fall retention rates for first-time, full-time cohorts
 - XX% three-year graduation rates for first-time, full-time cohorts.

STANDARD NINE: INTEGRITY, TRANSPARENCY, AND PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

Strengths	Opportunities
There is a college-wide commitment to acts of responsibility, ethics, and integrity.	The website’s search engine can be further improved.
The student-facing website was redesigned and is more accessible.	Information publicly shared across the website can be improved for accessibility and consistency.
The use of software has improved policy and curriculum management processes.	There is a need for greater transparency of policies outside of PolicyStat for public viewing.

INTEGRITY

Description

The Community College of Rhode Island is committed to, supports, and expects all stakeholders to act responsibly, ethically, and with integrity. This act of integrity is reflected in [CCRI’s Guiding Principles](#), [Strategic Plan 2022-27](#), [Academic Master Plan](#), [mission statement](#), [President’s Message](#), and policies. In addition, integrity is highlighted throughout the institution’s webpages and college-wide communications. Through its policies held in [PolicyStat](#), [College Governance](#), and by staff and faculty, CCRI commits to and embodies its principles and acts of responsibility, ethics, and integrity as each relate to Standard Nine, as well as all other Commission standards.

As a state institution, CCRI is governed by and operates within the authority of the Council on Postsecondary Education, which reviews and authorizes all certificates and degrees the institution awards. More specifically, [Rhode Island’s Commissioner of Postsecondary Education](#) works closely with the presidents to determine the benefits or disadvantages of proposed new programs, departments, division, and courses of study. The authoritative members of the Board of Education and Council on Postsecondary Education are listed in the [College Catalog](#).

CCRI ensures truthfulness, clarity, and fairness with all internal and external constituencies. The institution has increased its communication efforts to internal constituents through regular email correspondence (e.g., CC Daily and CC Weekly), town hall events led by senior leadership, faculty meetings led by the vice president for academic affairs (VPAA), and governance committees, among others. This increased communication enhances CCRI’s dedication to honesty and transparency. Collegewide town hall meetings provide important updates related to enrollment, the college’s financial position, equity-minded academic strategies, and support for student success and outcomes. Additionally, both the president and the vice president for academic affairs host open office hours making for greater accessibility in communicating with college leadership. Institutional leadership serves as ex-officio members on the Faculty Senate, Department Chairs Council, Staff Assembly, and Curriculum Review Committee, among other bodies, allowing for open dialogue and idea exchange between faculty, staff, and leadership.

As part of the hiring process, the [Code of Ethics Policy](#) is one of many [policies](#) provided to all new employees by the Department of Institutional Equity and Human Resources. CCRI’s Code of Ethics expresses faculty, staff, and students’ “commitment of conscience” and a pledge to conduct affairs

“with honesty, frankness, and integrity.” The Code of Ethics is also found within PolicyStat (a policy and procedure management software that supports on-demand access) and the [Employee Handbook](#). The Student Affairs Division also follows the [Code of Conduct](#), which obliges staff to “manifest the highest level of integrity” in helping students achieve their educational potential. In addition, the Department of Institutional Equity and Human Resources is committed to providing leadership and guidance to the CCRI community on issues of equity to foster inclusive learning and workspaces. This guidance is showcased on the [Institutional Equity & Title XI webpage](#), which offers links to information related to [affirmative action](#), [Title XI](#), and [equal opportunity](#), among other resources.

CCRI’s [Campus Police](#) publishes an Annual Security Report per the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act. This report is linked at the bottom of every CCRI webpage and contains crime statistics and policy and security information. Additionally, the [Campus Police webpage](#) provides a listing of services and resources to educate the community on CCRI’s safe school environment. Notably, in 2021, the CCRI Police Department became the first state college police department to be accredited by the Rhode Island Police Accreditation Commission, which demonstrates CCRI’s commitment to training and policy development.

In April 2020, CCRI launched PolicyStat, which provides on demand access to policies and procedures, efficient policy automation, and a systemic review process of all CCRI policies to ensure integrity and accuracy. Each policy provides origination, approval, effective, revision, and next review dates, as well as the administrator and department by which each policy is owned. PolicyStat allows those responsible for implementing and maintaining policies to stay up to date when policies require review.

There are several layers of curriculum oversight to ensure the integrity of courses and programs. The contractual [Curriculum Review Committee \(CRC\)](#) is an advisory committee made up of cross-divisional faculty that considers all new and modified courses and programs of study and approves or rejects proposals. All courses and programs approved by the CRC are subject to approval by the vice president for academic affairs and the president. Any new or substantially modified programs must be presented to the Rhode Island Council on Postsecondary Education for review and notice prior to implementation. The integrity of accredited academic programs is ensured through the programs’ respective accrediting bodies, while the integrity of non-accredited programs is ensured through departmental advisory board meetings to guarantee programs align with current industry standards, needs and desired skills. All courses and programs must undergo systematic assessment, which is outlined in detail in Standards Four and Eight.

CCRI has maintained its communication efforts with the Rhode Island Council on Postsecondary Education and NECHE. The institution sends several annual reports to the Council related to enrollment, joint admissions agreements, faculty demographics, new academic programs, low completion programs, and projected organizational changes, among others. The Council is also notified whenever any academic programs are created, changes occur, or are suspended, as needed. In compliance with the Commission, CCRI demonstrates honesty and integrity by its communications regarding any adverse events and circumstances. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, CCRI shifted to 100% remote learning, which was communicated to and approved by NECHE. Communications of these adverse events and circumstances are relayed to NECHE by the Office of the President. Additionally, the Council on Postsecondary Education is made aware of such communications.

Managed by the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the [Intellectual Property Policy](#) defines the various types of intellectual property, the steps to follow for disclosure, the methods of determining ownership, and the procedures for obtaining legal protection to ensure policies and procedures are in effect and reviewed for matters of intellectual property rights. The [Conflict of Interest and Nepotism](#) policy, managed by the vice president for administration, defines and prohibits conflicts of interest and nepotism in the activities of all employees of the Office of Higher Education (now known as the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner), the public institutions of higher education, and all other agencies under the jurisdiction of the Board.

Policies regarding privacy rights are found in PolicyStat and periodically reviewed. These policies are the Privacy Policy; Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; Password Reset; Bathroom and Locker Room Usage; Inclusion of Transgender Persons; Responsible Use of Information Technology; and Student Email Accounts. CCRI's educational policies and procedures are equitably applied to its students.

Adequate provision is made to ensure academic honesty, as displayed and described on the VPAA's [Academic Honesty webpage](#). As written in CCRI's [Code of Ethics](#), "the principle of academic freedom shall in no way be dishonored." CCRI assures faculty the freedom to teach as written below, taken from Article III, Section A, Rights of Individuals, of the CCRI Full-Time Faculty Association Contract. This statement is also found within the Faculty Handbook and on the [Academic Freedom webpage](#) located within the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

'Academic Freedom' is essential to the College and its faculty and applies to both teaching and research. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Academic Freedom in its teaching aspects is fundamental to the protection of the rights of the teacher in teaching and to the students for freedom of learning. It carries with it duties correlative with rights. The teacher is entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing her/his subject.

Additionally, academic freedom is defined in Article XII, Academic Freedom, of the Part-Time Faculty Association Collective Bargaining Agreement. As stated in the article, "academic freedom is essential to the college and its faculty and applied to both teaching and research," demonstrating CCRI's commitment to faculty's freedom to teach and study. More information about the college's commitment to academic freedom can be found in Standard Six.

Furthering this commitment to academic freedom, CCRI offers a faculty-advised, student-written, and edited newspaper titled *The Unfiltered Lens* with a mission as follows:

The overall mission of The Unfiltered Lens is to inform and improve the quality of student life at the Community College of Rhode Island. We strive to accomplish this standard by reporting and writing the truth in an ethical and responsible fashion that enlightens the entire college community, while providing information in an unvarnished manner that seeks thoughtful responses, dialogue and, of course, action. We fully understand serving students is our clear objective and recognize the impact and, more importantly, the importance of this endeavor. We realize we do not make news but cover events that stimulate our community, improve college life and strengthen our Democracy.

CCRI devotes time and resources to promoting diversity and inclusion in all areas of the institution. The Department of Institutional Equity and Human Resources includes an area focused on supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion. In 2020, the [Campus Inclusion Plan](#) was published, which focuses on providing strategies to make every student, faculty, and staff member feel a sense of belonging. CCRI

allocates a variety of resources to support this such as engaging with the Institute for Evidence Based Change in the [Caring Campus](#) initiative to promote inclusivity across all areas of the institution.

CCRI has several strategies in place to foster an inclusive atmosphere that respects and supports people of diverse backgrounds. The Department of Institutional Equity and Human Resources provides hiring managers resources for search committees that includes training on implicit bias and affirmative action monitoring. Within the Department of Institutional Equity and Human Resources falls the [Office of Organizational Development and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion](#) (OD & DEI). The OD & DEI office is vetting a learning management system to provide faculty and staff with ongoing professional development.

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council (DEIC) is comprised of CCRI faculty and staff committed to creating a culture of belonging and inclusivity for all members of the CCRI community. The Council meets once every month to share information, best practices, and develop programs and training sessions for each campus, to both celebrate the diverse identities that make up the institution, as well as provide informative workshops to develop cultural competency for faculty, staff, and students.

CCRI is one of four community colleges participating in a National Science Foundation grant with Howard University, Hampton University, and Morgan State University. The project, Howard Hampton Morgan Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (HHMS-AGEP), was formed with the expressed purpose of developing and evaluating a training model to increase the number of “underrepresented minorities” entering and succeeding in the professoriate. The partnership officially launched in fall 2021. To date, the college has hosted six student teachers from this program. The students are mentored by faculty who have partaken in a training program designed to support student teachers.

With integrity and honesty, the institution manages its academic, research and service programs, administrative operations, responsibilities to students, and interactions with prospective students. This is reflected in the institution's core values and mission and prominently displayed in various printed materials and webpages such as the [Academic Honesty webpage](#), and faculty and student handbooks. Academic support areas, such as the Advising and Counseling Office, publish a full range of services for enrolled and prospective students. These include in-person and virtual advising, personal/mental health services, academic planning, tutoring, coaching, student orientation, and financial aid. CCRI publishes information regarding student responsibilities surrounding Academic Engagement as defined by the U.S. Department of Education on the Office of Enrollment Service's [Verification of Enrollment webpage](#).

CCRI is approved for participation in the [National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements](#) (NC-SARA), which helps students' access to distance education programs. Additionally, participation in NC-SARA provides higher education institutions with efficient, consistent, and effective regulation of distance education programs. Participating NC-SARA institutions are required to meet specific standards, focusing on ensuring appropriate consumer protections for students.

CCRI is responsible for all activities that are sponsored by the institution or carry its name. CCRI has established and publicizes policies ensuring institutional integrity within its personnel contracts and handbooks. All faculty, staff, and students are held to the standards and policies written in their respective handbook and/or contract. The faculty and staff handbooks and contracts can be collectively found on the [Human Resources Handbooks, Labor Contracts, and Salary Pay Scales](#) webpage. The Student Handbook can be found on the Advising and Counseling [Student Handbook webpage](#). Policies

and procedures related to the fair resolution of grievances brought by faculty, staff, or students are outlined in their respective handbook and/or contract. Additionally, policies and procedures can be found within the college's online policy portal, PolicyStat, and, when applicable, within the College Catalog.

For use of CCRI personnel, facilities, services, or equipment for any non-college related activities, permission must be granted for faculty and staff by the vice president for academic affairs and vice president for finance and strategy, respectively. The stipulations for use of such personnel and facilities are outlined in the [Facilities Use by Faculty and Staff for Non-College Related Activities](#) policy found within the Employee Handbook and within PolicyStat.

Appraisal

With the implementation of PolicyStat software in April 2020, CCRI looked to improve the organization and functionality of its policy management. PolicyStat allows CCRI employees the ability to search for policies by searching for keywords or by title, owner, or department, which can all be filtered by revision, effective, and approval dates. The implementation of PolicyStat furthered CCRI's commitment to institutional integrity, providing for a more streamlined approach to implementing and maintaining policies to ensure accuracy and honesty of policies and procedures. Nine new policies have been submitted through the PolicyStat workflow across the academic, finance, administration, and student affairs divisions. These policies include Academic Program Review, Contingency/Reinvestment Fund Policy, General Education, Learning Management System Course Shell, Public Health Expectations, Purchase Card Policy, Release of Transcripts, Remote Work Policy, and a Travel Policy. This commitment to transparency can be further enhanced by defining a transparent chain of command as it relates to college policies. Those in certain roles close to policy owners understand the chains of command of policy review; however, others at a distance express a lack of clarity of the process. A process and timeline for policy review related to their development and maintenance schedules should be established to ensure all policies are up to date and reviewed in a consistent manner.

TRANSPARENCY

Description

The Community College of Rhode Island's [website](#) includes accessible and sufficient information that allows current and prospective students to make informed decisions about their education. It is the main portal for the public to access information about the college. Completely redesigned and relaunched in August 2019, the new student-facing website offers a sufficient number of accessible resources and data to help meet the needs of prospective students, current students, and members of the public. The website is enhanced by Google Translate allowing the public to select a preferred language to view content. This option is available at the bottom of every webpage.

Displayed in several, easily accessible areas of the website is the [College Catalog](#), notably accessible via three of the five dropdown menus on the homepage and linked at the bottom of every webpage for greater accessibility. The [College Catalog](#) serves as the official source of information. It contains academic information including [Academic and Career Paths](#), [Admissions](#) requirements, [Financial Aid](#), [Academic Policies](#), [Programs of Study](#), [Course Descriptions](#), and other information relevant to a student's academic experience.

For more general inquiries, CCRI offers a [Contact Us link](#) (in English and Spanish) on its homepage, which provides general contact information for Student Affairs and other student facing departments (e.g., Admissions, Advising, Financial Aid, Bursar, Disability Services for Students, Book Store, IT Help Desk) along with a General Inquiry (or “cannot find what you are looking for”) box that allows individuals to ask for specific information. Those general inquiries are sent to the director of marketing and communications’ email to triage and forward to the most appropriate individual/department for assistance.

All forms of print and digital communications are consistent with the College Catalog and accurately provide the public with access to conditions and opportunities available at CCRI. To increase ease of access, CCRI published its first online College Catalog in 2018-2019. Following the transition to online, CCRI implemented CourseLeaf’s Catalog (CAT) software for the online catalog in Academic Year 2020-2021. The CAT software integrates directly with Banner, making for a more accurate and effective display of academic information in the catalog. It simplifies how CCRI’s catalog liaisons develop, edit, and publish the catalog in a more organized, accurate, and timely fashion. A feature of CAT, linked on the [College Catalog’s homepage](#) is the [Catalog Archive](#), which provides students access to CCRI’s catalog editions from 2016 to present. Catalog editions prior to 2016 and dating back to 1964 can be found in the college’s Library on the Knight Campus.

On the college’s web homepage, the Admissions and Aid dropdown menu features quick links to apply to the college, to register for classes, and to determine cost of attendance, as well as links to access [enrollment services](#) departments such as [Admissions](#), [Financial Aid](#), and the [Records Office](#). Additionally, the [Student Life](#) homepage menu features various quick links for [student services](#) and resources, as well as [clubs](#), [athletics](#), and events among others. The [Admissions webpage](#) is a resource portal for potential and new students, which includes [registration](#) and [How to Apply](#) instructions.

The [Advising and Counseling website](#) publishes accessible information to service current and prospective students. Advising and Counseling has a dedicated [webpage](#) for new students specifically, which provides clear guidelines for necessary steps including a [New Student Admissions Checklist](#), [New Student Orientation](#), and New Student Resources. New Student Resources include the [Student Handbook](#), [Disability Services for Students](#), [Tutoring and Academic Coaching](#) and other relevant information for new students.

Current and prospective students interested in transferring to Rhode Island College (RIC) and the University of Rhode Island (URI), may find more information to help in their decision making on the [Joint Admissions Agreement webpage](#). Students interested in transferring to any four-year institution may find more information on the [Transfer Articulations with Four-Year Institutions webpage](#). Detailed program-to-program descriptions with course information can be found on [Transferology](#). Students interested in study abroad opportunities can learn more by visiting the [Study Abroad Program webpage](#).

The [Academic and Career Path webpages](#) provide labor market data for available careers in each of the seven paths. Some academic departments, such as [Computer Studies and Information Processing](#), also showcase labor market data on their individual webpages. This information is significant to students in exploring and choosing a career path.

The [Student Handbook](#) outlines the responsibilities of a CCRI student, as well as the college’s responsibility to provide students with an environment conducive to learning and development. Such

information in the Student Handbook includes the mission statement and [Definition of an Education Person](#); the [Student Conduct Code](#) outlining definitions of language, student rights, authority, proscribed conduct, disciplinary policies, off-campus incidents, compliance with Federal Law and Interpretation and Revision; [Academic Policies](#) including [Academic Integrity](#) and [grieving a grade or academic decision](#); and general policies such as those related to [complaints](#), [crime reporting](#), and [public health expectations](#).

CCRI displays a link to its [Public Records Request Guidelines](#) in the footer on its website, which is displayed on every single webpage across the website (e.g., [CCRI Homepage](#) and [College Catalog](#)). CCRI must comply with the state's Access to Public Records Act (APRA). Under the Act, there are prescriptions for violations, including monetary fines. The footer links to the [Public Records Request document](#) that outlines the policy to file a formal request for public records and provides a form for individuals to complete and submit. CCRI's Legal Counsel manages APRA requests. In accordance with state law, identified individuals at CCRI are required to attend APRA training annually and to certify the completion of the training. The training is conducted by the Rhode Island Office of Attorney General. Those who are certified and trained on APRA include the interim president, the general counsel, and the director of marketing & communications.

The college's audited financials are presented to the Council on Postsecondary Education. All Council meetings are open to the public in accordance with Rhode Island's Open Meetings Act and the agenda must be made public (within 48 hours of the public meeting) and must include items to be accepted or voted on, including audited financials. Once accepted by the Council, CCRI publishes audited financials on the [Budget Office webpage](#). In addition, the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner posts the audited financials to the Rhode Island Department of Education's eZ-Audit portal. The State of Rhode Island consolidates CCRI's audited financials with all other state agency financials to the National Register for Federal Grants.

The [Office of Institutional Effectiveness](#) (IE) is responsible for the collection, analysis, interpretation, distribution, and reporting of information useful in planning, decision making, and policy formulation. Aligned with its mission, CCRI is dedicated to the success outcomes of its students; as part of its reporting, IE provides enrollment and outcome data of students. This data includes enrollment and student demographics; retention and graduation rates; transfer data; and graduate and employment data. Such enrollment and outcome data can be found on IE's [CCRI Enrollment & Outcomes webpage](#), as well as by clicking on the Success Measures link within the About dropdown menu on the college's web homepage. All enrollment and outcomes data are updated regularly throughout the year, which is outlined on the [Data Update Schedule webpage](#). Additionally, student success-related data can be found through the [National Center for Education Statistics](#).

The [Marketing and Communications department](#) maintains the most front-facing webpages of CCRI's website including pages associated with the Office of the President and Marketing and Communications. In collaboration with Web Services, the Marketing and Communications department provides guidance, when requested, on the design, layout, and presentation of content on other webpages. Marketing and Communications consistently reviews the pages for which it owns to ensure information is up to date and accurate. All other webpages are monitored by their respective departments and their trained web content managers, as well as Web Services. Web content managers must undergo training in CCRI's webpage platform Omni CMS, which is provided by Web Services. CCRI webpage owners make updates to webpages on an ad hoc basis, as necessary.

Appraisal

Although necessary information and resources are accessible in multiple places on CCRI's public website, it was found such information is not always in a centralized location with some content that may not be easily accessed by the public. For instance, student enrollment and outcome data are deep in the Institutional Effectiveness site, when it should be accessible on the institution's homepage. To improve this, the Marketing and Communications department, in partnership with Web Services, worked to reconfigure the accessibility of this information. Now the student enrollment and outcome data are accessible via the About dropdown menu on the homepage.

Additionally, the transparency and availability of CCRI's policies that are held in PolicyStat needs improvement. These policies are only available to those with CCRI usernames and passwords; therefore, the public is unable to view this information unless published elsewhere on the website.

One of the greatest areas of improvement with CCRI's public-facing website is its search engine. CCRI employees can navigate relatively well through its public webpages and search engine; however, it may present challenges for students, prospective students, and their family members who are unfamiliar with the site. Although the website does feature what current and prospective students need to make informed decisions, the transparency and accessibility is a gap for those who do not know how to navigate the website. CCRI has taken steps to improve the search engine, which is now enhanced by Google; however, there is still room for improvement in terms of the relevant information the search outputs.

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

Description

The Community College of Rhode Island's online College Catalog describes the mission statement of the institution consistent with all other communications and public-facing sources. The catalog is aligned with CCRI's mission to provide students with the education necessary for transfer and career success, specifically on its [Academic and Career Paths page](#). The catalog also offers students information specifically related to transfer on the [Transfer Information page](#), as well as each transferable program of study pages' Transfer tab (e.g., [Associate in General Business transfer information](#)). Additionally, the catalog provides workforce- and career-related information on its [Division for Workforce Partnerships page](#) and several programs of study description pages (e.g., [Graphic Design Certificate](#)).

In addition to the catalog, CCRI publishes its mission statement on the [About CCRI](#) webpage, which provides a brief overview of the institution's history and structure. Both the catalog and overview of CCRI are accessible from the homepage's About dropdown menu. The obligations and responsibilities of students and of CCRI are provided through various policies listed within the College Catalog and Student Handbook.

Linked on the [About CCRI](#) webpage is the description of each main and satellite campus location, with directions and floor plans, at which students can enroll for a certificate or degree. This information is also made available in the College Catalog. Details of each of the four main campus locations are accessible within [Our History](#) of the college. Most degrees and certificates are available for completion across all campuses; however, some programs – depending on the discipline – are only available for

completion at one campus due to equipment and technology restraints. Locations for these specific programs are explicitly stated in the College Catalog [Programs of Study](#) pages.

All courses and programs are listed in the online College Catalog and explicitly described on the [course description](#) and [programs of study](#) pages, respectively. The [college scheduler](#) provides locations and modalities of instruction for each course offered at the college. Program locations are listed in the College Catalog programs of study under each applicable program. Any course that has not been taught for two consecutive years is unavailable for registration within the [college scheduler](#) and is removed from the next published catalog following the two years, based on the academic oversight and collaboration between the respective department chair and academic dean. Any program that is suspended and not accepting new students provides a statement on its program page within the College Catalog to inform students.

CCRI annually publishes the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Notification of Student Rights as required under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Included in this disclosure is the definition of directory information and an explanation of the Solomon Amendment, which requires CCRI to release directory information to military recruiters.

In addition to its educational outcomes, CCRI sets forth a [Student Conduct Code](#), which is outlined in the [Student Handbook](#). Also accessible in the [Student Handbook](#) are procedures associated with appeals and complaints. Other items related to student appeal options, attendance, and withdrawal from CCRI are published on the [Dean of Student Development and Assessment's webpage](#).

Consistent with the mission, CCRI strives for student transfer ease and success to RIC and URI, among other four-year institutions. Specifically for RIC and URI, CCRI offers information on its Joint Admissions Agreement (JAA) program on its [JAA webpage](#), as well as in printed and digital marketing pieces. Other transfer articulations and opportunities are available on the Transfer Center's [Transfer Articulation with Four-Year Institutions webpage](#).

CCRI offers many academic and non-academic support services, co-curricular and non-academic opportunities, as well as library and other information resources to students. The public may access the library and information resources with a Rhode Island Resident Special Borrower's Card. All service and resource descriptions and other information are reachable by students on the [Administration, Faculty and Staff Directory](#), [Programs and courses](#), as well as student life information are featured in the top navigation bar of the homepage. Both provide easily accessible links to academic and non-academic services and resources for students.

CCRI's enrollment and student demographic data is published on the [Institutional Effectiveness webpage](#). It also can be found by selecting the Success Measures link located in the About dropdown menu on the [CCRI homepage](#). The description of the size and characteristics of the student population is also found through the [National Center for Education Statistics](#), which is linked on the Institutional Effectiveness webpage.

In addition to enrollment and student demographics, the [Institutional Effectiveness webpage](#) offers retention and graduation rates, as well as transfer, graduate, and employment data to its viewers. Consistent with the institution's mission of student success, this page provides enrollment and outcome data of CCRI students. These data are updated on a [regular schedule](#) throughout the year.

Both tuition and fees and financial aid are accessible to students in the Admissions and Aid feature in the top navigation bar of the [homepage](#). The total cost of education for each semester of the academic year is outlined on the Bursar's Office [Tuition and Fees webpage](#). The Bursar's Office also provides an [Explanation of Fees](#), helping students and their families understand specifically what tuition and fee costs cover. The Financial Aid office provides detailed information and resources such as the types of available aid, who is eligible for aid, how to apply for aid, and loan repayment on the department's [webpage](#). The Financial Aid office also offers a [Net Price Calculator](#) for students to generate estimated pricing information for their time at CCRI. Students can access textbook cost information by entering their schedule at the [Campus Store webpage](#).

Published in the online catalog is a comprehensive list of [faculty](#) and [staff](#), with corresponding department or program affiliation and degrees held. This information is pulled from the Banner Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. Accessible on the [Administration, Faculty and Staff Directory webpage](#) are links to all individual academic and administrative departments directories. Each individual directory lists all employees within the corresponding department. The [CCRI Leadership Team](#) can be found on the interim president's public [site](#). The Rhode Island Board of Education, Council on Postsecondary Education, and Council on Elementary and Secondary Education members have a dedicated page within the [College Catalog](#). Furthermore, the CCRI Foundation Officers, as well as Foundation Trustees are listed on the [Office Institutional Advancement page](#) of the website.

CCRI's accreditation status is explicitly written on the [NECHE Accreditation webpage](#). Each externally accredited program lists its accreditation affiliation and status on their respective academic department webpages.

Appraisal

While CCRI's redesigned, student-facing website includes accessible and sufficient information, there remains inconsistencies with content presentation. The college would benefit from an updated website policy and content management system to ensure accurate, up-to-date, and relevant information while at the same time creating consistency in design/content across all pages. The college needs to develop a periodic review process of webpages. For example, program learning outcomes are published on academic department webpages; however, the presentation is inconsistent across departments. Consistency of program learning outcome presentation would aid in CCRI's commitment to transparency to its students, faculty, and staff. A potential plan could be to closely vet and monitor webpages with one department overseeing the process, including regular examinations of review and correction. In addition, the college could implement data standards for web content managers to follow to ensure all pages adhere to approved guidelines and are in one voice.

Projection

- Improvement of the website has begun. Improvement will continue through the creation of a new college policy for a periodic review of webpages by their department owners to ensure students and prospective students are consistently directed to accurate pages. This includes improvement of the consistency across faculty and staff directories by including photos and directory information.
- Improve transparency, accuracy, and availability of CCRI's policies by refining and improving both the policy review process and the management of policies that need to be publicly posted outside of PolicyStat.
- Institutional Effectiveness will assess the transparency and availability of student success outcomes data on the public facing website.

DRAFT