

# Southern Arkansas University Tech

HLC ID 1736

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AQIP: Comprehensive Quality Review

Review Date: 3/9/2020

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## Context and Nature of Review

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### Review Date

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3/9/2020

#### Overview the Comprehensive Quality Review (CQR)

A Comprehensive Quality Review (CQR) is required as part of the Year 8 comprehensive evaluation during the final year of the AQIP Pathway cycle and may also occur in Year 4 based upon institutional request or HLC determination. The goals of the CQR are to:

- Provide assurance that the institution is meeting HLC's Criteria for Accreditation. (With respect to the optional Year 4 CQR, the goal is to alert the organization to areas that need attention prior to its next Reaffirmation of Accreditation. Such concerns may be signaled during the Systems Appraisal process in the third year of the cycle.)
- Provide assurance that the institution is meeting the Federal Compliance Requirements.
- Facilitate the institution's continuing quality improvement commitment, confirming that a developing or established continuous quality improvement (CQI) culture and infrastructure exist that advances organizational maturity in relation to the AQIP Pathway Categories.
- Verify any issues identified in Action Project Reviews, Systems Appraisals or HLC actions.
- Validate process-level development and deployment as described in the Systems Portfolio.
- Identify actions taken to minimize identified strategic issues and to alleviate potential accreditation issues.
- Review CQI priorities and progress, including how Action Projects are integrated into the institution's overall performance improvement strategy.
- Review distance and/or correspondence education delivery, if applicable.
- Evaluate distributed education (multiple campuses), if applicable.
- Develop an initial recommendation regarding Pathway eligibility (Year 8 only).

#### Scope of Review

- Quality Highlights Report
- On-site Visit
- Federal Compliance Review (if applicable)
- Multi-campus Visit (if applicable)
- Reaffirmation Review (Year 8 only)
  
- Federal Compliance 2019 - AQIP
- CQR Quality Highlights Report

#### Institutional Context

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Southern Arkansas University Tech underwent a Comprehensive Quality Review accreditation process in March of 2020. The accreditation processes included a comprehensive campus visit and an off-site and on-site Federal Compliance Review. The accreditation assessment processes included an analysis of the Systems Portfolio submission, the Quality Highlights report, and a tour of all campus facilities.

New SAUT initiatives that were analyzed included the institution's processes of adding two athletic sports, the process of changing the school mascot, and the processes of adopting new retention and completion initiatives.

## **Interactions with Constituencies**

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Chancellor

Board of Trustees Member

Administrative Assistant to the Chancellor

Dean of Communication and Development

Director of Information Technology

Dean of AETA and Workforce Training

Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration

Controller

Assistant Controller

Physical Plant Director

Human Resources Director

Vice Chancellor for Academics

Adult Education Director

Instructional Designer

Library Director

Institutional Effectiveness Director

Student Success Coordinator

Concurrent Credit Director

Coordinator of Allied Health and Cosmetology

Division Chair of Business and Information Technology

Division Chair Industrial Sciences and Technology

Division Chair General and Transfer Education

Vice Chancellor for Student Services

Director of Student Life

Dean of Enrollment Services

Registrar

Advisors/Counselors

Financial Aid Director

Disability Services Director

Testing Coordinator

Full-Time Faculty (25)

Part-Time Faculty - 20

Students - 25

Stakeholders - Business and Industry (18) School Districts (8)

## **Additional Documents**

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Student Handbook

Student Assessment of Instruction Survey

Completed budget request forms for the Rocket Success Center, Mechanical Maintenance, Concurrent enrollment Program, Business Administration, and Institutional Effectiveness.

SAU Tech Committee listing for 2019-2020

The Mission, Vision, and Values

Flowchart depicting the process for development of the mission, vision, and values

The minutes of the Rocket Nation Liftoff Committee January 14, 2019 through April 29, 2020

Results of the SAUT Rocket Nation Liftoff Committee survey dates 04/17/19

Feedback from employee focus groups held in developing the mission, vision, and values

Website for the Arkansas Fire Training Academy

Articulation agreement between SAUT and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission for the provision of training

Flow chart depicting the SAUT Budget Process

Results of the Graduate Exit Opinion Survey for 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019

The SAUT ADHE Program Review Schedule

The SAUT program assessment status report current for March 2020

Listing and activity status of program advisory boards for all programs

The summer and fall 2019 Achieving the Dream planning and implementation report

Assessment reports from Enrollment Services, Business Office and Human Resources, and Adult Education

March 2019 results of the Student Opinion / Satisfaction Survey

Complete listing of all internal and external stakeholders

General Education Goals and Outcomes

ADHE program review and self-study guidelines

AA General Education Program review 2017-2018

CDA program review 2017-2018

Internship Evaluation and Assessment form

ADHE Existing Academic Program review flowchart

SAUT Internal Program Review Schedule AY2020

Program Review Process

Adjunct Faculty Policy Manual 2019-2020

Community Education offerings

Federal Compliance Review March 2020

Results from Mission review poster sessions

2014, 2015, 2016, 2018, and 2019 Student Satisfaction Survey results

Draft 2020 strategic plan

Law enforcement training MOU 2017

SWOT analysis 2019

Results of survey on draft mission statement 2019

SAUT response to non-financial indicator letter from the HLC 2019

Flow chart depicting the budget process

Curriculum committee work on program rankings

January 2020 status report on program assessment processes

General Education Competencies assessment fall and spring 2017

Co-curricular assessment results

Achieving the Dream action plan

Flow chart depicting student onboarding process

Listing of all SAUT committees

SAUT assessment manual

Usage data for student support services

Flow chart depicting process for developing the mission statement

Arkansas State Board of Nursing practical nursing programs pass rates 2015-2019

Statewide Economic Security Report, including employment / placement statistics for Southern Arkansas University Tech for 2017

SAUT New Program Development Process

Southern Arkansas University Tech Curriculum Committee

Faculty Credentials Policy 2:01

Faculty Credentialing Matrix

Syllabus preparation and content guidelines

Board of Trustees position description

Board of Trustees Code of Ethics

Board of Trustees Conflict of Interest statement

Full-Time Faculty Credentials (18)

Dual Credit Faculty Credentials (8)

Course Syllabi

Budget allocation processes

Professional development initiatives

Stakeholder initiatives

MOUs with business and industry

Campus technology pan

Persistence, retention, and completion plans

Staff qualification processes

Composite Financial Index results - 2015 - 2020

# 1 - Mission

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The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

## 1.A - Core Component 1.A

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The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.
2. The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission. (This sub-component may be addressed by reference to the response to Criterion 5.C.1.)

## Rating

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Met

## Rationale

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1.A.1 After a 10-year hiatus, SAUT undertook to review its mission, vision, and values as a result of the May 2018 work of a Strategy Forum team. A broadly representative Rocket Nation Liftoff Committee was formed with representative from the Faculty Senate, the classified staff organization, and the administrative staff organization. The Board of Trustees served the Committee in a consultative role. The Committee spent 2019 gathering input via surveys, poster sessions, and focus groups. Input was solicited from all major stakeholder groups, a SWOT analysis conducted, and revised mission, vision, and values statements were widely promulgated in 2020. SAUT plans to repeat this process on a five-year cycle and not allow another decade to pass before conducting a complete introspective inquiry into the aspirations and identity of the institution.

1.A.2 Input was solicited from across campus in the process of building the 2020 strategic plan. Two surveys were levied, and a half-day, all-campus planning and working session was held. The plan was approved in March 2020, and by June 2020, all programs and units must re-work or revise their master plans to align with and support the Goals and Objectives of the strategic plan.

1.A.2 SAUT has defined its stakeholder groups both internal and external. The team was presented with a detailed listing of the thirteen national / international industrial and business partners, three large businesses in the community, all area high schools, and the professional roles and affiliations of the fifteen Foundation board members. The fact that Camden is a relatively small town of 18,000 and the location of the campus in the regional industrial park support close connections and open lines of communication between SAUT and the communities the campus serves.



1.A.2 While SAUT is not an HBCU, it has a large minority student population and a significant percentage of first-generation and/or low-income students. Support services are attuned to the needs of the student population. For example, a daycare facility will soon open on campus, and the currently well-utilized food pantry is under consideration for expansion into a clothing pantry. A few student needs remain to be met, such as reliable transportation between Camden and campus in the absence of a public transportation system and expansion of student housing.

1.A.3 The first step of the budget-building process involves a program or unit administrator filling out a budget-request template. The completed template is discussed by the requester with his or her immediate supervisor. The purpose of the meeting is to allow for the details of the budget request to be explained, placed in context, or supported by needs analyses or other data. The requests are moved through sequentially higher levels of review, modification, and approval; however, the process is flexible enough to allow for consultation, if needed, with the originator of any budget request.

1.A.3 Goal 4 Objective 1 of the strategic plan reads as follows: “Develop a sustainable and transparent financial model that is effectively coordinated, accountable and driven by the institution’s vision, mission, and academic priorities.” In discussions, the team learned that the current chancellor has been taking steps to restore transparency and open participation in decision making that campus personnel had experienced under past leadership. The budget request template now in use is filled out by department and program administrators with staff and faculty input. The template requires the rank ordering of budget requests as well as alignment with the Goals and Objectives of the strategic plan.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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None

## 1.B - Core Component 1.B

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The mission is articulated publicly.

1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.
2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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1.B.1 The Vision, Values, Mission, of SAUT are printed at the front of the employee manual, faculty manual, adjunct instructor manual, and catalog. The "goals" section will be updated shortly now that the 2020 strategic plan has been approved by the Board of Trustees.

1.B.1: The College's new mission is as follows: "Southern Arkansas University Tech is a comprehensive community college that meets the educational, training, and cultural needs of the communities it serves." It is read each week at the beginning of the College's Facebook radio show-Rocket LauncherLIVE. The statement is posted on the College's main website and included in the academic catalog, student handbook, and other College publications. Conversations with employees who live in the community as well as community members reinforced the impression that reminders of SAUT's brand and mission are prevalent in the community. The completion of the review and revision of the mission, vision, and values led directly into the recently finalized 2020 strategic plan.

1.B Goal 1 of the 2020 strategic plan is "student access." Objective 1 reads as follows: "Maximize student preparedness and access to post-secondary learning through innovative forms of information delivery in collaboration with industry leaders, higher education, K-12 partners, community partners, and various media forms." Discussions during the site visit revealed that this objective will be attained, in part, by building on SAUT two-decade-long involvement with distance education. Processes for ensuring consistent quality across distance offerings are in place. For example, all distance instructors follow a standard template in presenting course content. All instructors hold four live, synchronous sessions per semester, and all distance courses include a proctored final exam.

### Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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none

## 1.C - Core Component 1.C

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The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.
2. The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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1.C.1 As a result of feedback from employee focus groups held as part of the strategic planning process, the following objective was articulated under Goal 6, leadership and professional development: "Embrace diversity and foster a culture of trust, collaboration and mutual respect that is shared among faculty and staff." Conversations with employees during the site visit indicated that this objective of embracing diversity and engendering mutual respect was deemed to be of such importance that encoding it in the strategic plan was appropriate.

1.C.2 The multicultural student organization at SAUT is very active and has decided to hold an annual cultural fair at which students, faculty, and staff can communicate to all attendees the distinctive features and attributes of their cultural heritages. Student comments to the team were all positive regarding a campus atmosphere of conclusion and respect on campus. The signage and media publications all reflected inclusion as a campus value. Specific programming, such as the Black History Month Banquet was cited several times.

### Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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None

## 1.D - Core Component 1.D

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The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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1.D.1 SAUT is working on expanding and enhancing the Kids' College program and the number of community education courses offered. Participants in Kids' College activities are surveyed to identify additional activities or offerings that could further grow the program. Discussions with adjunct faculty who teach at area high schools supported SAUT's assertions about having very close ties with area high schools. Two sessions of vocational education for high school students are held on the SAUT campus every weekday. In numerous discussions during the site visit, team members heard comments about the importance for the institution and the community of the sports teams and intramural sport activities added in the past several years.

1.D.1 SAUT does not have a precisely defined service area or non-compete agreements with other public institutions of higher education in the state; however, SAUT and the other publics in Arkansas are members of the Arkansas Community College Association which does perform a coordinating role and acts to channel competition into collaborations to meet state needs.

1.D.2 The five members of the Board of Trustees are appointed by the governor but can maintain independence from political influence because of Amendment 3 which is stipulated in the Board of Trustees bylaws. The trustees have roles and responsibilities and code of ethics policies and must sign a conflict of interest statement. Board meetings are preceded by a 10-day public notification, and meetings are open to the public. Members of the public can ask questions during a Q&A portion of the meetings.

1.D.3: Discussions with faculty and staff during the site visit revealed a strong understanding of specific community and stakeholder needs the institution serves. Employees in multiple sessions spoke knowledgeably of the workforce training and development needs served, the role of SAUT in providing ACT preparation sessions for high school students, and how SAUT provides a necessary resource for high school students who are ready, prior to graduating, to begin earning college credits. The team noted that one of the Board of Trustees is a longtime president of a local bank, which, in a small community of under 12,182 residents, means the institution has direct lines of communication

with Camden, Arkansas.

1.D.3 To ensure SAUT capitalizes on its ability to conduct continuous environmental scanning for emerging trends or needs by virtue of its location in an industrial park, the chancellor hold an annual summit with the heads of entities in the industrial park along with representatives from all major businesses and industries in southern Arkansas. SAUT has developed special courses to meet workforce training needs for Lockheed Martin, for example. Additionally, SAUT senior personnel have affiliations with all major civic organizations in Camden, e.g., Lions Club, Kiwanis, all high schools, and the chamber of commerce. The Chancellor holds regular Facebook Live radio shows during which time is devoted to community question-and-answers. The Southern Arkansas University system, i.e., SAU, SAU Tech, and South Arkansas Community College, are in the process of conducting an economic impact study that will yield additional information about the needs—met and unmet—of the service region.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

### Rationale

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SAUT just completed a review of its mission, vision, and values. This effort was led by a broadly representative Rocket Nation Liftoff Committee spent 2019 gathering input from all major stakeholders via surveys, poster sessions, focus groups, and an all-campus planning and working session. The newly reviewed and revised Vision, Values, Mission are widely displayed and presented. Conversations with employees who live in the community as well as community members reinforced the impression that reminders of SAUT's brand and mission are prevalent in the community.

The College will not allow a decade to pass without such a process and plans to repeat this level of review on a five-year cycle. Once the plan is approved in March 2020, all programs and units must re-work or revise their master plans to align with and support the Goals and Objectives of the strategic plan. The College provided evidence of a careful analysis and consideration of its stakeholder groups, i.e., thirteen national / international industrial and business partners, three large businesses in the community, all area high schools, and the professional affiliations represented by the fifteen Foundation board members. The population of Camden and the location of the campus in the regional industrial park support close connections and open lines of communication between SAUT and the communities it serves.

The budget-building process is well defined, relatively transparent, and open to input from program or unit administrators at key decision points. The College acknowledges that work remains to be done to implement a sustainable and transparent financial model that is aligned with the institution's vision, mission, and academic priorities. Goal 6 of the strategic plan, leadership and professional development, includes an objective that specifically targets diversity and fostering a culture of trust, collaboration and mutual respect shared among faculty and staff. Conversations during the site visit affirmed the sincerity with which this objective was encoded into the strategic plan.

Student support services are well attuned to needs. Evidence was presented of ongoing work to identify and meet non-academic student needs. Information gathered during the site visit confirmed that the College is taking steps to revitalize programming and initiatives directed at serving the broader community as a public good. Specific mention was made repeatedly regarding the importance for the institution and the community of the sports teams and intramural sport activities added in the past several years. Adjunct faculty who teach at area high schools supported SAUT's assertions about having very close ties with area high schools. SAUT employees evidenced an understanding of the workforce training and development needs of the service area. SAUT and the other publics in Arkansas are members of the Arkansas Community College Association which does perform a coordinating role and acts to channel competition into collaborations to meet state needs.

The five members of the Board of Trustees are appointed by the governor and fulfill clearly defined roles and responsibilities; trustees comply with a code of ethics and must sign a conflict of interest statement. Board meetings are preceded by a 10-day public notification, and meetings are open to the public.

## **2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct**

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The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

### **2.A - Core Component 2.A**

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The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

#### **Rating**

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Met

#### **Rationale**

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2. A Southern Arkansas University Tech abides by a strict standard of integrity in all of its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions. The College establishes and abides by fair and ethical standards for its faculty, staff, administration, and its governing board, and the stipulated standards of integrity are communicated to all employees through regular dispersion of materials. The College employs a process of self-monitoring and as a part of these processes, an official audit report is presented to the SAUT Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees reviews the key data which includes budget usage and projections, composite financial index results, and direct and indirect cost rates. The compiled data is used in submitting all federal and state reports and the data is key to the consideration of future revenue bonds.

#### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 2.B - Core Component 2.B

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The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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2.B SAUT publishes information about programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships as follows:

- A list of all credit programs and respective requirements are posted on the college's web site and printed in the college catalog;
- A list of the Systems Board of Trustees, the System President, SAUT executive officers, administrators, staff, and faculty--including faculty discipline leaders is printed in the college catalog;
- Administrators, faculty and staff are listed in the college web site directory;
- A list of tuition and fees and a link to the Net Price Calculator are available on the College web site;
- A consumer information page on the college web site;
- A description of the college's governance structure is on the web site and in the college catalog; and
- Information about accreditation and a link to the college's accreditation information on the HLC website are on the SAUT web site and in the college catalog.

### Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*



## 2.C - Core Component 2.C

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The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

1. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
2. The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
3. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.
4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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2.C.1 Southern Arkansas University Tech engages the Board of Trustees, the System President, the Chancellor, the Executive Team, and key employees in the interactions with the institution's governing board. The Board of Trustees are provided an orientation processes developed by general counsel and each board member is provided budget reports, financial reports, audit reports, and key information from the Arkansas Legislature so that the board is able to prioritize their deliberations in the best interest of the institution.

2.C.2 The five-member Board of Trustees for Southern Arkansas University Tech is appointed by the Governor of Arkansas and represents a cross-section of Southern Arkansas. The five-person board meets on a quarterly basis and is provided all pertinent information that must be considered in their deliberations. As part of the official board business, the Board of Trustees reviews all materials from both internal and external stakeholders in reaching their decisions.

2.C.3 Each member of the Southern Arkansas University Tech Board of Trustees is required to complete an orientation and statutory training which is provided by the Office of the State General Counsel. Also, each board member is required to submit an oath stipulating that he/she will abide by and support the United States Constitution and the Arkansas Constitution and to faithfully perform the duties of their office. Each Board Trustee is required to confirm that she or her will not become interested, directly or indirectly, in any contract made by the board. Additionally, each board member is provided sound information on shared governance, accreditation standards, and best practices.

2.C.4 Arkansas Code 6-65-404 grants authority to the Board of Trustees and the President of Southern Arkansas University to establish rules and regulations for the operations of SAUT. Recommendations for program development and revisions or deletions are conducted through the Curriculum Committee and then forwarded to the Board of Trustees for their consideration. The SAUT Board Manual directs that the SAUT administration will implement faculty and employee

manuals that would be used to direct campus operations in keeping with Board policies.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 2.D - Core Component 2.D

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The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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2.D Southern Arkansas University Tech has committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in its teaching and learning initiatives. Support is provided for students to access relevant teaching and learning material and research disparate ideas and concepts. The College has adopted sound practices of academic freedom which allow its instructors to educate students in the best possible manner. Additionally, in the most recent Strategic Plan the College has adopted core values of academics, trust, knowledge, and excellence. Key goals in the Strategic Plan include Student Access, Student Success, and workforce development.

### Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 2.E - Core Component 2.E

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The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, students and staff.

1. The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.
2. Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.
3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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2.E.1 SAUT as a comprehensive community college, maintains its prime focus on teaching and hands-on training. Students are assigned a variety of research topics and this research requires the students to collect, organize, and present the achieved results and findings. The college offers a comprehensive system of student support services including a tutoring center in order to assist students with their research initiatives and persist in their ongoing coursework. Any research conducted by a third part entity, including employees completing degree coursework, must be submitted to the Office of Institutional Research for review and must be approved by the SAUT Chancellor. An approval letter/MOU is also required from the originating institution's Institutional Review Board.

2.E.2 Students are provided guidance in the ethical use of information resources through a variety of initiatives. The SAUT classes review academic integrity concepts as a routine part of each course and among other items, require students to accurately cite their sources of information and other plagiarism avoidance issues. Instruction on plagiarism and its penalties are provided through course syllabi, orientation, video tutorials, and the student handbook. Not all, but some of the SAUT instructors make use of Turnitin, a third-party software program, to assist students in writing papers and for checking for plagiarism prior to submitting their final assignments.

2.E.3 The college expects students to abide by the honor code contained in the handbook, to adhere to ethical standards and to exhibit academic honesty while fulfilling their academic course work. Many instructors, especially those teaching courses requiring research, reinforce the honor code policy by stating in their course syllabi the requirement for students to submit their research papers through relevant software to check for plagiarism. The syllabi also detail the consequences for plagiarism and other violations of the honor code. SAUT might be advised to develop processes of tracking incidents of student academic honesty violations in order to identify patterns and potentially increase the penalties for repeat offenders.

### Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## **2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary**

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The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

### **Rationale**

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Southern Arkansas University Tech has demonstrated its commitment to integrity in all of its financial, personnel, and auxiliary functions. The college also demonstrated that a strict policy is in place and being followed to guide the fair and ethical behavior by all campus entities. Additionally, the institution clearly represents itself openly and honestly to students and to the public with regard to its programs, faculty, staff, and in regards to its accreditation processes and status.

The SAUT Governing Board demonstrates consistent implementation of key priorities in their decision-making processes and the consideration of internal and external constituencies in their policy-making processes. The board also displays an independence from undue influences and its appropriate delegation of day-to-day management of the institution to the college administration. Also, the institution has demonstrated its commitment to a campus-wide freedom of expression and to a pursuit of truth and integrity in its academic programs and processes,

The institution has demonstrated a commitment to the establishment of oversight procedures and services to ensure the integrity of scholarly practice and students are provided sound guidance in the ethical use of information resources. The college enforces academic honesty and integrity policies, but might be encouraged to implement a tracking mechanism in order to identify patterns which might allow for better guidance to students in avoiding ethics challenges as well as to deter repeat offenders of ethics violations.

## **3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support**

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The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

### **3.A - Core Component 3.A**

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The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.
3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

### **Rating**

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Met

### **Rationale**

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3.A.1 Course outcomes are developed by full-time faculty and approved by the Curriculum Committee. Regardless of the delivery method (dual credit, online, etc.) and instructor (dual credit, adjunct, full-time), course outcomes are the same across all like courses and are listed on the syllabus for individual course sections.

3.A.1 A program review is conducted every 7 to 10 years, and every three years, a Program Viability report is submitted. The Viability Report was introduced three years ago and focuses on program metrics, such as enrollment, graduation and, where applicable, pass rates. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) provides Existing Program Review Institutional Self-Study Guidelines based on which a self-study is created. Two external reviewers are engaged—one who conducts a site visit and the other who performs a paper review of the self-study and supporting documentation. The ADHE Guidelines has sections dedicated to distance-delivered programs and requires all programs to describe “how program content parallels current thinking/trends in the field/trade.”

3.A.1 SAUT's Practical Nursing Program is accredited by the Arkansas State Board of Nursing (ASBN), which entail reporting and a site visit every four years. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certifies SAUT's Aviation Maintenance Program, which requires at least two site visits each year at both sites, i.e., in Camden and Texarkana. The Arkansas Fire Training Academy curriculum is certified by International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) and National Board of Fire Service Professional Qualifications. SAUT's Cosmetology program is certified by the Arkansas Department of Health and subject to ADH inspections without

prior notification. In 2016, SAUT lost its National Association of Concurrent Enrollment Programs (NACEP) accreditation but is in the process of reapplying for accreditation.

3.A.1 SAUT's concurrent enrollment program was accredited by the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) through 2016, whereupon the accreditation was withdrawn. SAUT is in the process of re-applying for NACEP accreditation and has submitted the application and responses to questions the application generated.

3.A.2 The pass rate for Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) students taking the National Council of Licensure Examination (NCLEX)-PN exam has improved dramatically from 67.8 percent of students passing the exam in 2014 to a pass rate of 95.8 percent in 2018. The 2019 pass rate is 88.2.

3.A.2. SAUT promotes 12 fully online programs on its website and is a member of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) electronic campus. A link on the SAU Tech's Online Campus site takes students to the SREB site where all online programs in the region are published. To monitor the quality of instruction, instructional design, and the accessibility of student services in distance offerings, a Student Assessment of Instruction Survey is used that has been specifically designed for internet-delivered instruction. Discussions with students during the site visit reflected good levels of satisfaction with the quality of instruction in distance-delivered classes.

3.A.3 The MyCR (my course review) is an internally developed instructional design rubric based on the Quality Matters rubric. The MyCR is used to evaluate the instructional design of a new distance-delivered course after it has been offered once. The SAUT instructional designer performs a pre-first-offering review of the course. Twenty-five MyCR reviews occurred between 2013 and 2018. As of the writing of the Portfolio no formal Quality Matters reviews have been conducted. During the site visit, the team learned that the SAUT long term strategy is to add to the internal corps of 9 full-time faculty certified as Quality Matters peer reviewers such that distance courses can all be reviewed on a regular schedule or when the need for a review is triggered by a change of instructor, creation of a course, etc.

3.A.3. The Internet Course Curriculum Committee establishes and oversees SAUT policies related to distance instruction including course development, curricular oversight, and quality management. The Center for Online Learning Office provides technical support to staff and students. Staff include an instructional designer and technical assistant. All courses use the same design and content template and are delivered via the LMS, Brightspace.

3.A.3 As specified in the Concurrent Faculty Handbook, instructors teaching General Education courses must hold at least a master's degree and have 18 graduate hours in the subject to be taught. Career/technical faculty must meet the same requirements faculty employed by SAUT to teach career / technical courses in a given discipline or expertise area.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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none



## 3.B - Core Component 3.B

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The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.
2. The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.
4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.
5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission.

### Rating

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Met With Concerns

### Rationale

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3.B.1 SAUT's common outcomes are referred to as General Education Competencies (GECs). The five GECs are Applied Ethics, Communication, Critical Thinking, Informational Technology, and Mathematical Reasoning. These outcomes were established in 2017 and are, therefore, still relatively new in terms of assessment. The Systems Appraisal team noted that there had been a gap of 18 years between 2017 and the last time the GEC's had been reviewed and revised. The Systems Appraisal team noted an absence of focus on social sciences (including understanding diversity), the natural sciences, and the arts. SAUT responded in its Quality Highlights Report by adding a sixth GEC pertaining to historical, cultural, social, and global perspectives. This GEC will be introduced beginning with the 2021-2022 GEC assessment cycle.

3.B.2 The General Education Competencies (GECs) of SAUT were created following a review of the common learning outcomes used at many community colleges. The team asked about the philosophy or framework employed in defining the GECs and learned that the approach was highly practical in nature. The common learning outcomes were designed to ensure students gain foundational skills and knowledge. The current 5 GEC's and the 38 outcomes derived from these competencies are listed on the website. When the sixth GEC is added in 2021, there will be 6 GECs and 42 outcomes which the team found to be excessive and challenging to measure.

3.B.3 Throughout the site visit, the team observed advertising and messaging designed to communicate a climate of inclusiveness. Students were included in most meetings and were asked in

various ways about campus climate. Comments were all positive. The six students who shared lunch with the team strongly endorsed the view that the campus climate is supportive, familial, and personal. The students provided multiple example of programming designed to address diversity, including a recent Black History Month banquet and a variety of other events including Woman's History Month, and Constitution Day.

3.B.3 Outcomes included in the GECs address collecting, analyzing, and communicating information as part of mastering modes of inquiry. GEC #1 on Applied Ethics calls on students to “evaluate contemporary issues using a variety of ethical perspectives” and to “demonstrate competency in cultural, social and civic awareness.” GEC #3 on Information Technology calls for students to “utilize the library and computer resources to locate reliable and relevant information for ethical use in research projects.” Lastly, GEC # 4 on Critical Thinking requires students to “apply critical reasoning concepts in order to evaluate issues of contemporary importance.” Together, these GECs help ensure that SAUT students develop the skills needed to adapt to changing environments.

3.B.3 The six students who shared lunch with the team provided many examples of research done as part of their programs of study. A nursing student described in depth a research project on vaccination controls. Student creative and scholarly accomplishments are recognized through the Dean’s List and a bi-monthly “student spotlight” poster program in which large color posters featuring a student and detailing his or her accomplishments are posted around campus. In other meetings, the team learned about the Arkansas Community College awards program which recognized instructors and staff for teaching excellence, the attainment of advanced degrees or credentials, and/or completion of leadership programming.

## **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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Interim report Due 12/01/2021

Because Core Component 3.B.2 is closely related to Core Component 4.B, updates on how SAUT has progressed in meeting the requirements of Core Component 3.B.2 shall be addressed via interim monitoring.

Specifically, the interim report should update the Commission after the conclusion of the 2021-2022 assessment cycle on the addition of General Education Competency #6 and any refinements deemed appropriate to the array of GECs as work on them progresses. The team notes that six Competencies and 42 outcomes may or may not prove to be practical as SAUT matures its GEC assessment processes and mapping of competencies and outcomes to curricula.

## 3.C - Core Component 3.C

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The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

1. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.
2. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.
3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
4. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.
5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
6. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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3.C.2 Policy 2:01 Credential Requirements sets forth minimum credentialing and preparation for all instructional staff. A Credential Matrix is maintained that lists for each department the minimum qualifications and/or equivalent experience an instructor needs to teach a given course in the program. The Matrix designates the course type, e.g., AS/AA or technical (AAS). An examination of 18 full-time faculty and 8 dual-credit faculty was conducted and no irregularities were noted. No concurrent enrollment high school teachers deliver instruction online for SAUT.

3.C.3 and 3.C.4 Goal 6 Objective 1 of the strategic plan reads as follows: "Assess and address the professional development needs across the college so that all employees will grow professionally and personally and be exposed to innovative practices." Discussions during the site visit confirmed that retaining of institutional memory and knowledge and improving the annual evaluation process to support business continuity are issues SAUT is working on now with the assistance of an external consultant. Supervisors in all areas have completed asset or competency inventories on all direct reports. This information is being analyzed to identify employees who could be trained to fill positions opening as employees retire. The annual evaluation process now requires all employees to report on professional development activities. Faculty must report on discipline-specific professional development.

3.C.3 and 3.C.4 The annual evaluation form for instructors was recently revised to more closely track and document professional development in general and discipline-specific professional

development in particular. The evaluation process for staff and administrators has been revised to link employee year-ahead goals to the goals and objectives of the 2020 strategic plan.

3.C.3 and 3.C.4 Adjunct faculty attend an annual orientation and training session at which their syllabi are examined, and elements of the handbook are reviewed. Adjuncts are assigned a mentor whom they can contact throughout the semester. Currently professional development in the form of travel, training, or conference attendance for adjunct faculty is neither supported nor tracked. The institution has adopted sound practices of tracking the professional development initiatives of its full-time faculty and it is recommended that said funding and tracking procedures be extended to include adjunct faculty.

3.C.3 For distance education courses, an end-of-course student survey asks detailed questions that directly address key instructional design elements of the class. Students are asked about required design elements of the class, such as week-one introduction activities, information about technology requirements, clearly stated unit or module learning outcomes, features to aid navigation in the course, student-to-student interactions, use of the gradebook and discussion board, ready access to support services, etc.

3.C.3 and 3.C.4 The director of the Center for Online Learning makes recommendations to program leads regarding which instructors are skilled—or not skilled—in distance delivery. At the beginning of each semester the Center staff offer online professional development modules to convey the basics of the Brightspace LMS and to provide examples of good and bad instructional design. The faculty handbook contains a section on building an online course in Brightspace and explains the elements of the ADDIE (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation) instructional design model.

3.C.3.5 A minimum number of office hours faculty must hold is defined in the contract. The expected response time for student inquires is defined in the syllabus. The tutoring system posts the office house of all instructors, and office hours are also posted on the doors of faculty offices. Starting in fall 2020, the Vice Chancellor will spot check offices to ensure compliance. During the luncheon with students, a visually impaired student suggested that posting office hours in braille would be most helpful.

## **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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## 3.D - Core Component 3.D

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The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).
5. The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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3.D.1 Goal 2, Objective 1 of the draft strategic plan is to identify 'performance gaps' in meeting 'specific student needs.' Discussions during the site visit made clear that work on the Achieving the Dream project is aimed at achieving this objective. An initial step has been to refine the student intake form filled out upon admission to gain a clearer sense of what students need and any possible impediments they may encounter in matriculating. Process mapping was conducted, and students were asked for input. The scope of this project to clarify student needs extends to non-academic needs, such as food insecurity, transportation, housing, campus-based access to health services, and other factors that can negatively impact a student's ability to learn.

3.D.1 and 3.D.3 Distance learning students receive the same in-person advising and course registration services as traditional classroom students. Web-based advising and registration services are provided upon request. The Office of Financial Aid provides in-person and electronic advising for all students. A link to the Rocket Success Center (and its databases) is built into all online courses as part of the required course template. Online tutoring is available through the Rocket Success Center, and the Center for Online Learning provides telephone, email, and help desk services during regular college hours. After business hours, distance students have access to chat technical support through Brightspace, which hosts the LMS for SAUT.

3.D.2 Goal 2, Objective 2 of the draft strategic plan is to "support effective advising." The rationale for articulating this as an objective in the strategic plan is reportedly based on the very high level of importance of effective advising in retention and persistence. Discussions with students reflected high levels of satisfaction with existing advising services through the advising center. Currently advising is handled by two full-time staff members and two additional staff members with partial advising duties. The Achieving the Dream team is working to optimize advising with

particular attention to advising of fully online students.

3.D.3.and 3.D.4        The webpage for SAU Tech’s Online Campus has links to student services. Most links go to resources that specifically address the support needs of distance students. A couple, such as advising and counseling services, do not. Other services, such as tutoring, must be accessed via the library page, which may not be intuitive to all distance students. Overall, the information needed by students learning at a distance is effectively aggregated on one web page.

3.D.3.and 3.D.4        The Center for Online Learning ensures that the course ‘shell’ for every Brightspace delivered or supported course contains links to all essential student services, including the library and Upswing online tutoring services. As for fall semester 2019, all courses are required to employ the gradebook utility within Brightspace. SAUT is working with Brightspace to create an interface between the LMS and the Nuventive data collection tool used for assessment.

3.D.4                  Critical students services are being consolidated, and a big step forward was made with the creation of a new student center. Progress remains to be made, however, as the full array of services are distributed across three buildings, the library, the student center, and the administration building. The two main surveys employed to gather student input are the Student Satisfaction Survey and the Graduate Opinion Survey. Both are internally developed and yield low response rates. The data cannot be segmented by academic program; therefore, the results have been underutilized to date. SAUT leadership is aware of the need to revise and improve methods for collecting, analyzing, and utilizing student input data and a task force has been formed to overhaul strategies for assessing the quality of student services.

3.D.4                  Employees spoke readily during the site visit about ideas for further improving academic and non-academic student support services. The soon to be created daycare service was praised, for instance. The use of a student intake form to gather information about student needs was cited as showing promise, and there was some mention of an initiative to upgrade and equip a dedicated distance-teaching classroom. Many ideas for further support enhancements were proffered, including better signage or wayfinding for campus, the offering of bus or transportation services between campus and town, hiring a full-time mental health counselor, expanding the food pantry to include a clothing pantry, and creating a dedicated office or role for job placement. In short, SAUT employees are very aware of student support needs and keen on finding ways to address them.

3.D.4                  Discussions with instructors and students during the site visit reflected high levels of satisfaction with the physical and technological infrastructure of the campus and classrooms. Students, in particular, endorsed the view that library, tutoring, disability services, registration services, and all services in general are easy to access and staffed by responsive personnel.

3.D.5                  Interviews with groups of students confirmed that all syllabi contain sections on academic integrity and plagiarism. Most students confirmed that instructors go over integrity issues at the beginning of courses and are explicit about penalties for breeches of academic integrity. The Student Handbook provides clear definitions of cheating and plagiarism. The process for adjudication of Code of Conduct violations is clearly explained in the handbook. At present, SAUT has no process for tracking or aggregating instances of breeches of academic integrity. The team advised institutional leaders of the need to identify by name and track information on students found responsible for code of conduct violations.

## **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

**none**

## **3.E - Core Component 3.E**

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The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.
2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

### **Rating**

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Met With Concerns

### **Rationale**

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3.E.1 In 2016, SAUT began an Action Project to develop a process for designing, aligning and delivering co-curricular activities to support learning. The concept was new to the institution and progress has been slow. To date, some cocurricular activities have been linked to the GECs, communication and critical thinking. Documentation in the form of curriculum mapping or its equivalent has not yet been developed, and SAUT is still in the beginning stages of aligning all GECs with cocurricular events or activities and devising some means of assessing the extent to which the co-curriculum advances attainment of the GECs.

3.E.2 SAUT does not directly claim to make contributions to its students in its mission, other than to state it provides its service area with quality education. The College assesses learning outcomes and has information regarding licensure exam pass rates, both of which are indicators of quality.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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Interim report Due 12/01/2021

As noted in reference to Core Component 3.E.1 processes for aligning the co-curriculum with the Common Learning Competencies (GECs) was begun in 2016 and have not progressed to maturity. The report shall provide the Commission an update on progress made in aligning all GECs to the co-curriculum as planned and progress made on developing strategies for assessing the degree to which the co-curriculum supports GEC attainment.



## 3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

### Rationale

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Course outcomes are developed and reviewed by full-time faculty and are consistent, i.e., the same, regardless of delivery method (dual credit, online, etc.) and instructor (dual credit, adjunct, full-time). Program review is conducted every 7 to 10 years, and every three years, a Program Viability report is submitted. The Viability Report is new and is focused on program metrics, such as enrollment, graduation and, where applicable, pass rates. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education provides program self-study guidelines, and two external reviewers are engaged.

The College maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes and pursues specialized accreditation when it is required for graduates or when the employability of graduates makes it advisable. Programs, such as Practical Nursing, Aviation Maintenance, and Cosmetology, follow their accreditation guidelines for reviews. The Arkansas Fire Training Academy curriculum is certified by International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) and National Board of Fire Service Professional Qualifications. The college is in the process of re-acquiring National Association of Concurrent Enrollment Programs (NACEP) accreditation.

SAUT promotes 12 fully online programs on its website and is a member of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) electronic campus. The faculty handbook contains a section on building an online course in Brightspace and explains the elements of the ADDIE (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation) instructional design model. To monitor the quality of instruction, instructional design, and the accessibility of student services in distance offerings, a Student Assessment of Instruction Survey is used that has been specifically designed for internet-delivered instruction. An internally-developed instructional design rubric, MyCR (My Course Review), based on the Quality Matters rubric, is used evaluate the instructional design of a new distance-delivered course after it has been offered once. SAUT is pursuing a long-term strategy of adding to the internal corps of 9 full-time faculty certified as Quality Matters peer reviewers such that distance courses can all be reviewed on a regular schedule or when the need for a review is triggered by a change of instructor, creation of a course, etc. The Internet Course Curriculum Committee oversees policies related to distance instruction, and the Center for Online Learning Office provides technical support to staff and students. All courses use the same design and content template and are delivered via the LMS, Brightspace.

Instructors teaching General Education courses must hold at least a master's degree and have 18 graduate hours in the subject to be taught. Career/technical faculty must meet the same requirements faculty employed by SAUT to teach career/technical courses in a given discipline or expertise area.

SAUT's five common outcomes, referred to as General Education Competencies (GECs), were established in 2017 and are relatively new in terms of assessment. A sixth GEC pertaining to historical, cultural, social, and global perspectives will be introduced beginning with the 2021-2022 GEC assessment cycle. In accordance with a purely practical approach to General Education, the GECs were created following a review of the common learning outcomes used at many community

colleges and are designed to ensure students gain foundational skills and knowledge. Outcomes included in the GECs address collecting, analyzing, and communicating information as part of mastering modes of inquiry. When the sixth GEC is added in 2021, there will be 6 GECs and 42 outcomes.

Throughout the site visit, the team observed advertising and messaging designed to communicate a climate of inclusiveness. Conversations with staff and students reinforced the impression that the campus climate is supportive, familial, and personal. Evidence was provided or observed during the site visit to confirm that students conduct research in their programs of study. Student creative and scholarly accomplishments are recognized, and the Arkansas Community College awards program recognizes instructors and staff for teaching excellence, the attainment of advanced degrees or credentials, and/or completion of leadership programming. An examination of 18 full-time faculty and 8 dual-credit faculty was conducted and no irregularities were noted. No concurrent enrollment high school teachers deliver instruction online for SAUT.

Goal 6 Objective 1 of the strategic plan focuses on identifying and meeting the professional development needs of employees. Succession planning, retaining institutional memory and knowledge, and improving the annual evaluation process are being worked on currently with the assistance of an external consultant. The annual evaluation process was recently revised to require staff to report on professional development activities, and faculty evaluations now require faculty to report on discipline-specific professional development. The evaluation process for staff and administrators has been revised to link employee year-ahead goals to the goals and objectives of the 2020 Strategic Plan. Requirements for office hours are in place, and the Vice Chancellor has plans to be spot checking offices to ensure compliance beginning in fall 2020.

Goal 2, Objective 1 of the strategic plan focuses in assessing the degree to which student needs are met and to make improvements as needed. This objective is closely tied to institutional motives for working on the Achieving the Dream project. The college is currently analyzing intake/matriculation processes for effectiveness and ease of use. The Achieving the Dream project encompasses analyses of both academic and non-academic support services. Goal 2, Objective 2 of the draft strategic plan focuses on advising effectiveness. The Achieving the Dream team is working to optimizing advising, with particular attention to the advising of fully online students. A big step forward was made in the consolidation of key student services with the creation of a new student center. Progress remains to be made, however, as the full array of services remains distributed across three buildings, the library, the student center, and the administration building. The two main surveys employed to gather student input are generating an insufficient response data, and a task force has been formed to overhaul strategies for further assessing and enhancing the quality of student services. Discussions with instructors and students during the site visit reflected high levels of satisfaction with the physical and technological infrastructure of the campus and classrooms.

All syllabi contain sections on academic integrity and plagiarism, and students confirmed that most instructors go over integrity issues at the beginning of courses. The Student Handbook provides clear definitions of cheating and plagiarism, and the process for adjudication of Code of Conduct violations is clearly explained. At present, no process for tracking or aggregating instances of breeches of academic integrity is in place which provides for a possible area of improvement.

Work begun in 2016 to develop a process for designing, aligning and delivering co-curricular activities to support learning is still underway and is incomplete. Documentation in the form of curriculum mapping or its equivalent remains to be developed.

## 4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

### 4.A - Core Component 4.A

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The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

### Rating

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Met With Concerns

### Rationale

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4.A.1 A program review is required every 7-10 years by ADHE, and, since 2017, every three years, a Program Viability report is scheduled to be submitted. The College submits a schedule for reviews each year to ADHE. Introduced three years ago, the Viability Report focuses on program metrics, such as enrollment, graduation and, where applicable, pass rates. The ADHE provides Existing Program Review Institutional Self-Study Guidelines based on which a self-study is created. Two external reviewers are engaged—one who conducts a site visit and the other who performs a paper review of the self-study and supporting documentation. The ADHE Guidelines has sections dedicated to distance-delivered programs and requires all programs to describe “how program content parallels current thinking/trends in the field/trade.”

4.A.2 The College has processes in place to review/evaluate all transcribed credit as outlined in the college catalog. The College accepts Advanced Placement (AP) exams, College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams, Military Training Credit (ACE), experiential learning and work experience. Faculty, the program advisory, and the Vice Chancellor for Academics & Planning are all involved in the approval process. The College has articulation agreements and accepts credits with a C or better from those institutions for which it has articulation agreements.

4.A.3. Transfer of General Education credits are conducted under the Arkansas Course Transfer System (ACTS). Technical credits are transferred in depending on multiple criteria including the following: the sending institution's regional accreditation status; credit/content equivalencies; and degree applicability.

4.A.4. SAUT's Curriculum Committee provides leadership to faculty in the areas of curriculum development, and determines prerequisites during the processes of program and course development. Prerequisites are listed in multiple places, including the catalog, course syllabus, and program degree plans, which are provided to each student regularly during advising sessions. Course outcomes are the same regardless of the modality. Concurrent Enrollment (CEP) courses are taught either by qualified high school faculty with a SAUT mentor, or by SAUT faculty. The CEP is approved by ADHE, and SAUT is in the process of applying for reaccreditation with NACEP following the withdrawal of accreditation after 2016. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes. SAUT pursues specialized accreditation when it is required for graduates in the field or when employability of graduates is perceived to be enhanced. These programs, including the Practical Nursing, Aviation Maintenance, and Cosmetology programs, follow their accreditation guidelines for review.

4.A.5. SAUT pursues specialized accreditation when it is required for graduates in the field or when employability of graduates is perceived to be enhanced. These programs, including the Practical Nursing, Aviation Maintenance, and Cosmetology programs, follow their accreditation guidelines for review.

4.A.6. SAUT has few processes in place to evaluate the success of its graduates, stating in the Quality Highlights Report (QHR) that, "At the present time, the College does not track the employment rates of its graduates internally. SAUT does not currently have the resources or means to track other postgraduate activities of its students. However, this is a concern statewide for colleges. ADHE and college representatives are discussing methods that may resolve this lack of outcome data in the future." Business and Industry partners hosting interns are asked to complete a brief survey around the intern's performance, which is shared with program faculty. In the Criterion 4 Open Forum, the process of annual advisory committee meetings each February was described. When these Advisory Committee meetings are held, Business and Industry partners share suggestions for curricular change based on experiences with interns; these suggestions go to the Curriculum Committee in April for consideration and possible fall adoption. However, the team did not see evidence of this occurring. SAUT tracks transfer rates to four-year universities using IPEDS and Clearinghouse data, but it's unclear how this data is used to evaluate success of graduates.

## **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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The team notes that the language used by the College addressing the lack of outcomes data lacks specificity.

In the the Interim Report the institution should update the Commission on the progress made in addressing the lack of outcome data on the success of graduates. The interim report should provide evidence of continuing work with the Arkansas Department of Higher Education addressing the graduate outcomes with a timeline to completion. Additionally, evidence should be provided that the College has committed the necessary resource allocation in order to prioritize these initiatives.

## 4.B - Core Component 4.B

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The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.
2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.
3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

### Rating

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Met With Concerns

### Rationale

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4.B.1. The College has been in the process of redesigning the assessment of SAUT's General Education Competencies (GECs) to standardize the processes, and has addressed the gap identified by the previous review team of the lack of social science outcomes by planning to add a sixth GEC during the next assessment cycle which will occur in 2021-22. The assessment process has been moved into Nuventive, an assessment software, in which the intent is to link learning outcomes and assignments. As was stated in the Federal Compliance Review, this process has not been completed across all programs/courses. .

4.B.2. Co-curricular learning assessment is in an early stage, with the intent to also move the assessment into Nuventive. In the initial meeting with college leadership, it was also stated that the extracurricular programs needed further alignment.

4.B.3. Full-time faculty are, since fall 2019, responsible for setting individual success rate goals with the Vice-Chancellor for Assessment and Planning. A review of the document indicates that instructors set their own success rates ranging from 60% to 100%. Disciplines were not included in the document, so reviewers were unable to interpret the document in a meaningful way. During spring 2020 performance reviews with the vice-chancellor of assessment and planning, progress towards goals will be discussed along with any action taken by faculty and put into place for spring 2020. It was not described how adjunct faculty (about 50% of current faculty) are assessing student learning or what their goals are. Data collection in Nuventive and the evaluation of assessment results to determine if student learning is being improved are still new processes. How the College will proceed with determining the effectiveness of the new processes was unclear.

4.B.4. The college has updated its information around program assessment, and currently 17 of 21 (81%) of programs are in the process of conducting assessments, which is up from 11 which were completed in 2018. While it appears that deficits in their processes have been identified and are being addressed, the College needs to demonstrate ongoing commitment to populating Nuventive with data,

understanding and assigning ongoing responsibilities for aggregate reporting out of Nuventive, disseminating of reports to faculty and College Leadership, and demonstrating the use of data to make improvements in student learning.

## **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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Interim report Due 06/01/2022

The interim report should include the progress SAUT has made in:

- Aligning assignments to learning outcomes in Nuventive (4.B.1);
- Aligning curricular and co-curricular learning goals. (4.B.2);
- The results of and improvements made by faculty to student learning in setting their own success goals and the processes for adjunct faculty to follow. (4.B.3.);
- Ongoing commitment to assessment, including aggregate reporting and demonstrated use of data to improve student learning. (4.B.4.)

## 4.C - Core Component 4.C

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The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

### Rating

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Met With Concerns

### Rationale

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4.C.1. As stated in the QHR, SAUT will establish targets around retention, persistence, and completion as part of its strategic planning process. At the time of the visit, the Strategic Plan has been completed and has been approved by the SAUT Board of Trustees. However, the metrics and the targets have yet to be finalized related to persistence, retention and completion.

4.C.2. The CQR states, "SAUT is in the process of finalizing its newest five-year plan which will be followed by revisions to department plans. Therefore, this information is not available at the writing of this report".

4.C.3. SAUT addressed processes for using retention and persistence data by including results of the Program Viability Review (a new process first occurring in 2017) in the QHR report. This evidence did not respond to the prompt, which was to prove the institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data; the Program Viability Review results did not include information about the programs themselves.

4.C.4. In reviewing the evidence around retention, persistence and completion of programs and in meetings with the Institutional Research staff, while SAUT's definition of retention, persistence and completion are defined. The table provided when additional information was requested nonetheless provided little insight into how SAUT collects and uses this data. No part-time student data is collected, so the data is based on only 30% of the student population, and no data pertaining to different student populations beyond first-time, full-time students is collected.



## **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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Interim report Due 06/01/2022

The interim report should include the progress SAUT has made in:

- Defining goals for persistence, retention, and completion as part of its Strategic Plan (4.C.1.)
- Collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs (4.C.2.)
- Using information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements (4.C.3.)
- Collecting and analyzing data on retention, persistence and completion of students at more frequent intervals (150% of time for full-time students) and addressing the progression of part-time students and other special populations. (4.C.4.)

## 4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

### Rationale

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In the most recent Systems Portfolio Review, Strategic Challenges included, “Data collection and analysis for ensuring procedures and processes are properly evaluated” and, “Interpretation of data providing analysis and improvements based upon the data provided”. The College shared in a meeting that a Data Task Force was created by the Chancellor to address issues of data integrity that emerged with performance-based funding reporting requirements. There was, initially, an extremely high error rate between the productivity numbers being reported by the College and the State. This has been addressed by the Task Force, and should, with continued monitoring, need less attention. The College is to be commended for the interdisciplinary work that was done to improve the quality of the data being entered across the College. Improvements decreased the number of errors that needed to be addressed subsequently when submitting the data set to ADHE.

There is currently one Institutional Research (IR) analyst who is responsible for all compliance reporting to state and federal agencies, NCAA reporting on athletes, workforce (non-credit) data, and all ad-hoc data requests from faculty and staff. When asked, neither the current nor former IR director knew how the 2018 and 2020 CCSSE administrations were missed. IR has a continuing role, shared with the Vice-Chancellor of Assessment and Planning, in managing Nuventive, the software tool that houses assessment processes including course and program-level learning outcomes, and co-curricular assessment. A focused meeting around Nuventive suggested that, while the software has aggregate reporting capabilities which could inform 4.B., these capabilities have not been leveraged. In discussion with IR, it emerged that many of the ad-hoc requests filled by the IR office are actually operational in nature (enrollment reports, class lists, etc.), which speaks to the need for increased data (also pointed out in the Strategic Challenges). Creating a schedule of operational reports produced either by IR or by expanding the number of staff who can access the data warehouse and run reports could decrease the number of ad-hoc requests and allow IR more time to address other data collection, analysis, and reporting needs. SAUT may wish to more closely examine the current capacity issues in relation to the strategic challenges noted.

## 5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

### 5.A - Core Component 5.A

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The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The institution's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.
3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.
4. The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.
5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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5.A.1 Southern Arkansas University Tech has implemented intentional and systematic processes to ensure that the College has the necessary fiscal and human resources to support campus operations. The College has implemented dedicated student fees, a Facilities Use Fee, and a Student Activity Fee to support campus operations and technological infrastructure. Additionally, the College employs sound data in determining the needs for additional faculty and/or staff. The institution has initiated sound practices such as an analysis of vacant position, a review of health care benefits, and an attainment of possible grant funding to enhance its financial position. The College has fared very well with the conducted analyses and is encouraged to continue its analysis in order to prepare for further budgetary issues.,

5.A.1 The physical infrastructure of the College is addressed adequately through participation in a variety of programs which include the Arkansas State Vehicle Safety Program, capital improvement programs, work order processes, preventive maintenance, energy initiatives, and grounds maintenance. The College has initiated the use of a capital improvement form in order to track requests and streamline coordination between departments and personnel. The College has

demonstrated a strong commitment to maintaining quality technology on a campus-wide basis.

5.A.2 SAUT has implemented an enhanced budgeting procedure which requires faculty to be more involved in the budgeting processes. The College has indicated that about 35 to 40 percent of the budget is dedicated to instruction and academic support. Additionally, the Institution provided evidence of its formal procedure of budget allocation which required submissions and resulting feedback to and from all campus departments.

5.A.3 SAUT bases departmental goals and outcomes on the College's overall goals as stipulated in its strategic plan. College departments report the achieved results on an annual basis and plan/revise goals and objectives for the upcoming year. The Vice Chancellor for Academics and Planning oversees the goal evaluation procedures.

5.A.4 SAUT requires all of its employees to complete mandatory professional development and a self-evaluation component has been added to the annual evaluation processes. Additional training needs are developed through consultation between employee and supervisors and all faculty are required to complete discipline-specific professional development activities. SAUT has adopted sound credential guidelines for all faculty and staff positions in order to provide guidance to their hiring processes.

5.A.5 SAUT maintains a process whereby all budget managers receive a summary of monthly budget activity. The managers are charged with a review of said budgets to ensure accuracy and an explanation of negative balances. Secondly, comprehensive revenue and expense reports are submitted monthly to the Chief Financial Officer and the Chancellor for review. A year-end report of all budget activities is submitted to the Board of Trustees for their scrutiny and approval.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 5.B - Core Component 5.B

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The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight of the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution's governance.
3. Administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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5.B.1 The state of Arkansas grants authority to the Board of Trustees and the President of Southern Arkansas University Tech to establish rules and regulations for the operation of SAUT. The Southern Arkansas University Tech Board manual delineates the processes required in establishing rules and regulations for the College and its relationship with the Board of Trustees, The SAUT Chancellor has a standing place on the agenda in order to update the Board at quarterly meetings. However, the College might be better served to more formally describe the processes employed to ensure that the Board is knowledgeable as to College operations.

5.B.2 SAUT employs sound practices of shared governance. The Executive Cabinet meets regularly to discuss the business of the College and the Rocket Nation Council which includes all department chairs and related personnel, presents concerns and suggestions to the Executive Cabinet. In addition, SAUT maintains a Classified Staff Organization, an Administrative Staff Organization, a Faculty Senate, and a Student Leadership Program to ensure that multiple entities are included in the College's governing procedures.

5.B.3 SAUT employs the use of the Curriculum Committee and the Assessment Committee with the processes of setting academic requirements for the College. These committees meet regularly and are comprised of administrators, faculty, staff, and students. SAUT would be better served to more adequately describe the process of stipulating how these committees are populated and the length of tenure on each committee.

### Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 5.C - Core Component 5.C

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The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.
5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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5.C.1 SAUT allocates all financial resources through its operating budget process which is conducted in the spring of each fiscal year. The College's operating budget is allocated across the major classifications of instruction, academic affairs, institutional support, student services, physical plant, debt service, and auxiliary. State funding is determined through a biennial appropriations process. Additionally, SAUT has adopted processes as to how each funding entity expresses their budgetary needs and the ensuing processes of determining the allocations.

5.C.2 SAUT maintains its strategic plan initiatives and employs the use of its Assessment Committee to link its processes for the assessment of student learning and evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting. The College employs an institutional quality process and an institutional planning process to provide the linkage among the entities. However, the College has just recently adopted its latest strategic plan and the institution should be prepared to present a more formal description of the applied procedures of linking its assessment of student learning initiatives, operations, planning, and budgeting to the next visiting team.

5.C.3 SAUT's planning processes are led by the College's Planning Committee which leads a review/revision of the College's mission, vision, and values statements every five years. The College's strategic plan has just recently been completed and the assessment initiatives of the accomplished goals and objectives has not begun. It is recommended that SAUT addresses the accomplished results in an interim report and in its next Systems Portfolio. Additionally, the College maintains a comprehensive set of advisory committees and employee input is solicited. The College adopted sound practices of substantially incorporating the perspectives of internal and external stakeholders in its planning initiatives.

5.C.4 SAUT has realized a reduction in state funding and a gradual reduction in enrollment which

triggered a HLC Financial Review in 2016 and 2017. The College has initiated efforts to reduce daily operating expenses and to increase enrollment. The implemented strategies resulted in a \$918,000 decrease in the College's operating budget. Additionally, the College initiated processes such as an analyses of vacant positions, a review of health care benefits, and the attainment of possible grant funding. SAUT would be encouraged to continue an in-depth assessment of its financial status in order to adequately prepare for any further budgetary issues.

5.C.5 SAUT conducts a SWOT analysis on a regular (every five years) basis. The conducted analysis assists the College in anticipating emerging factors such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization. The SWOT analysis is comprised through input from internal and external constituencies. The achieved results are used to develop the institution's strategic goals. The College would be encouraged to provide a copy of a completed SWOT analysis in its documentation of results.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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## 5.D - Core Component 5.D

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The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.
2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

### Rating

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Met

### Rationale

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5.D.1 Southern Arkansas University Tech has implemented a series of reports to provide input as to its continuous quality improvement activities. In response to its increasing loan default rate, the Institution initiated a contract with a consulting firm which worked directly with the financial aid office and resulted in the formation of an oversight committee and an accomplished decrease in the default rate. SAUT relies heavily on its assessment of student learning processes to assess and improve its student learning initiatives and retention, persistence, and completion rates.

5.D.2 Southern Arkansas University Tech has implemented several initiatives to demonstrate the Institution's learning from its operational experiences and the application of that learning. An AQIP action project centered upon needed improvements in the class scheduling processes and the College requires advisory committees for each academic program of study. SAUT has created a common internship class for all students in technical programs of study in order to achieve consistency in its standards of completion in these programs. Additionally, SAUT has implemented a collaborative agreement to participate in the Math Pathways Initiative which is aimed at achieving a higher degree of success as students move from the developmental math sequence to the gateway courses in mathematics.

### Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

### Rationale

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Southern Arkansas University Tech has displayed a great deal of progress in its addressing of compliance in regards to Criterion Five - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness. The College has taken substantial steps, and many new initiatives have been initiated. SAUT has demonstrated that it has the fiscal and human resources and the required infrastructure sufficient to support all of its programs and the employed resource allocation processes protect the institution from outside entities. The institution has implemented sound mission statements which are reviewed and updated on a regular basis. The SAUT staff is appropriately qualified and trained and the institution has implemented a well-developed process of budgeting and for monitoring expenses.

The SAUT Board of Trustees demonstrates their required knowledge of the institution and their appropriate oversight of financial and academic policies. The institution has adopted sound practices of engaging all campus entities in governance initiatives and the College involves administration, faculty, staff, and students in setting academic requirements and policies.

Core Component 5.C related to the institution's systematic and integrated planning processes appeared to be the component that required a little more attention. The College does allocate its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities. and has developed a strong strategic plan but this plan is in its infancy with no details available as to the assessment of the stipulated goals and objectives. SAUT needs to develop a more formal presentation as to its assessment processes linked to student learning, evaluation of operations, and planning. The detailed planning evidence should provide input as to how the planning processes encompass the institution as a whole. SAUT does demonstrate in its strategic plan that the institution does prepare for fluctuations in revenue and for emerging factors such as technology advancements and demographic changes.

SAUT has provided evidence that performance results are documented and that the institution learns from its operational experiences and applies said learning to the improvement of all campus operations. SAUT has made substantial improvements in its AQIP initiatives and has fully met all Criterion Five components.

## 6 - Commitment to Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)

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### 6.A - Question 6.A

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#### Levels of Organizational Maturity in Relation to the AQIP Pathway Categories

Please provide a brief paragraph or two that captures the team's perception of the institution's overall level of maturity (and the relevant challenges and strengths) and how the institution might further advance its agenda.

#### Rationale

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Being aware that the AQIP pathway is in the process of sunseting, and that SAUT will be moving to another pathway following this visit, this analysis will focus on what strategies SAUT might consider employing in their transition from AQIP.

SAUT has many strengths as an institution, including: SAUT has a highly-engaged team of leaders who are taking on multiple roles in the organization, and this was evidenced in multiple meetings. Leadership demonstrated resilience and dedication after SAUT experienced financial difficulty that began with the campus being damaged by a tornado. The college determined that it was necessary to build a new College Center to improve student support. This decision unfortunately coincided with several years of decreasing enrollment, that in conjunction with the construction of the new College Center, negatively impacted the CFI. Through multiple strategies to address cost containment and enrollment issues, the college provided evidence that it is capable of sustaining the financial recovery. The college also has the ongoing support of SAU as a contingency. SAUT has restructured its budgeting process to make it more participatory and transparent. Faculty are now involved in budgeting at an inclusive level they did not previously experience.

The support of the college by local business/industry was apparent in meetings the team participated in with them. There are internship opportunities for students, and customized training workforce development (not for credit) is involved in incubating new programming opportunities. When such programs have migrated to the for-credit side, the college offers CPL opportunities to those who participated in non-credit workforce training.

Students who had lunch with the team were highly supportive of the college. While a very homogenous group, their comments were largely supported by the student opinion survey.

SAUT also has challenges including: In the review of the most recent System Portfolio Review and the Quality Highlights report, as well as during the visit, SAUT was in the midst of multiple initiatives, many of them had been very recently adopted. SAUT experienced a recent leadership change, which led to many new initiatives, but the team also identified that a segment of the new initiatives that appeared to be in response to the visit. As a result, many informal processes were described in meetings, but few formal, repeatable processes producing data are currently in use for decision-making and continuous improvement. SAUT staff in the meeting about Commitment to AQIP Pathway, however, were able described successful Action Projects which had led to improvements, including the establishment of Math Pathways, student evaluation of teaching, and an

internet fee for online/web-enhanced courses.

Processes and results are therefore at lower levels of maturity as a result of the relatively recent nature of many of the initiatives described in the portfolio and the QHR. Additionally, many of the questions asked by the team received a response that they were underway, but with limited evidence to confirm the statements. The collection and analysis of data to support initiatives may be hampered by capacity issues which limit how much can be done to evaluate progress. The new strategic plan also lacks sufficient measures, metrics and/or benchmarks at this time.

SAUT will be providing interim reporting in two years' time to the Commission in a number of areas. This interim reporting is an opportunity to identify processes and formalize many of the recently adopted ones by making them explicit and repeatable, with goals, measures and metrics. This reporting will also inform the four-year assurance report.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 6.B - Question 6.B

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### **Evidence of Principles of High-Performance Organizations**

Please provide a brief paragraph or two that indicates how and where the institution demonstrates its systematic approach to continuous quality improvement through aspirational values found in the Principles of High-Performance Organizations.

### **Rationale**

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#### LEADERSHIP

In multiple discussions with faculty and staff, appreciation was expressed for the steps the chancellor has taken to restore transparency and open participation in decision making. SAUT is benefitting from having leaders who communicate well and who are driving visioning and planning processes that have been overdue. The chancellor has acted decisively to meet with business and industry leaders in order to gain a renewed and in depth understanding of constituent needs. He has implemented innovative channels for communication, such as hosting a weekly Facebook radio show-Rocket LauncherLIVE, at the beginning of which he reiterates the college mission. Under current institutional leaders, a practical and actionable strategic plan has been created. The chancellor is currently pressing for the adoption of a new, more transparent budget model that provides for more input from budget managers. From all the team heard and observed during the site visit, SAUT has the leaders at the top needed to carry out the strategic plan and to thrive at a time of big challenges and decreased enrollment.

#### COLLABORATION

SAUT has carefully investigated and defined its external stakeholder groups. The team was presented with a detailed listing of the thirteen national / international industrial and business partners, three large businesses in the community, all area high schools, and the professional roles and affiliations of the fifteen Foundation board members. The chancellor is capitalizing on the fact that the campus is located in the regional industrial park by holding an annual summit with the heads of entities in the industrial park along with representatives from all major businesses and industries in southern Arkansas. SAUT's emphasis on being very tuned into business and industry needs means that curricula can prepare students to make them current and competitive for jobs in their fields. The Southern Arkansas University system, i.e., SAU, SAU Tech, and South Arkansas Community College, are in the process of conducting an economic impact study that will yield additional information about the needs—met and unmet—of the service region.

SAUT senior personnel have affiliations with all major civic organizations in Camden, e.g., Lions Club, Kiwanis, all high schools, and the chamber of commerce. Other forms of collaboration, such as youth education and outreach and community instruction, have trended downward over the past 5-10 years, but the College is intent upon turning that around and revitalizing these forms of collaboration. One highly successful and well received recent action has been to offer NJCAA athletics. Students spoke very highly of the positive impact that athletics has on their sense of school pride and connection with the community.

#### FORESIGHT

After a 10-year hiatus, SAUT undertook a thorough and inclusive review of its mission, vision, and values as a precursor to a year-long strategic planning process. The broad input received in the mission review was incorporated into the strategic planning work. A SWOT analysis was performed, and the documentation of the SWOT analysis aligned very well with what the team read, saw, and learned as a result of the CQR. This is to say that the SWOT evidenced a college that sees itself clearly and candidly. To ensure program and unit alignment with the strategic plan, all programs and units will re-work or revise their master plans to align with and support the strategic plan Goals and Objectives.

Under current leadership, college administrators are very focused on understanding and adapting to changes in the value proposition of the College for its constituents. For example, a study of student services resulted in the creation of a student center in which most essential student services are located. Goal 2, Objective 1 of the draft strategic plan is to identify ‘performance gaps’ in meeting ‘specific student needs.’ Discussions during the site visit made clear that work on the Achieving the Dream project is directed towards achieving this objective. Student intake processes have been scrutinized to gain a clearer sense of what students need and any possible impediments they may encounter in matriculating. The Achieving the Dream initiative encompasses non-academic needs, such as food insecurity, childcare, transportation, housing, campus-based access to health services, and other factors that can negatively impact a student’s ability to learn.

An additional initiative illustrating foresight as an institutional attribute is ongoing at present. SAUT has engaged a consultant to guide and assist with succession planning. All unit and program supervisors have conducted ‘asset inventories’ of their direct reports as a first step in what may involve cross-training and targeted professional development to ready employees to fill critical positions quickly and efficiently when turnovers occur.

## INTEGRITY

As a result of listening to and analyzing the input from employees gathered during the mission, review process, the following objective was articulated under Goal 6 of the strategic plan, leadership and professional development: “Embrace diversity and foster a culture of trust, collaboration and mutual respect that is shared among faculty and staff.” Information gathered during the site visit from employees as well as students confirmed that the objective of embracing diversity and engendering mutual respect was not mere lip service but was being taken seriously and worked on earnestly. Students conveyed the view that mutual respect and integrity are already campus attributes.

## **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 7 - Commitment to the AQIP Pathway

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### 7.A - Question 7.A

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#### **Actions That Capitalize on Systems Appraisal Feedback**

Provide brief bullet points that demonstrate success or progress.

#### **Rationale**

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Southern Arkansas University Tech has initiated a series of successful initiatives based upon feedback received from its systems appraisal reports. These successes include:

- Completion of an updated strategic plan
- Clearly articulating procedures and processes to relevant results
- Data collection for non-academic program assessment processes enhanced
- Detailed descriptions of hiring practices
- Enhanced descriptions of data collection and analysis procedures
- Initiation of retention, persistence, and completion processes

#### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 7.B - Question 7.B

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### **Actions That Capitalize on Strategy Forum Participation**

Provide brief bullet points that demonstrate success or progress.

### **Rationale**

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- A strategic plan has been created. At the time of the visit, the plan was not yet finalized and distributed.
- The college has adopted sound practices of substantially incorporating the perspectives of internal and external stakeholders in its planning initiatives.
- The college conducted a SWOT analysis as part of the most recent planning process. The conducted analysis assisted the college in anticipating emerging factors such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.
- The SWOT analysis was comprised through input from internal and external constituencies. The achieved results will be used to develop the institution's strategic goals.
- The college maintains a comprehensive set of advisory committees and employee input is consistently solicited.
- Measures/metrics have not yet been created for the strategic plan. During the visit, there was no opportunity to gauge the assessment and measures as prescribed in its strategic plan.
- The college has just recently adopted its latest strategic plan and a more formal description of the applied procedures of linking its assessment of student learning initiatives, operations, planning, and budgeting would be beneficial.

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*



## 7.C - Question 7.C

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### **Actions That Capitalize on Action Projects**

Provide brief bullet points that demonstrate success or progress.

### **Rationale**

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- In the Quality Highlights Report, SAUT cited 14 total action projects
- Math Pathways were established to address retention issues
- Student Evaluation of Teaching surveys were implemented
- Course fee was instituted for online/web-enhanced classes to support technology
- Course scheduling was addressed, leading to the schedule being published on-time
- High Student Loan Default Rates were addressed, lowering the default rate college-wide

### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## 7.D - Question 7.D

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### **Commitment to Active Engagement in the AQIP Pathway**

Provide brief bullet points that demonstrate success or progress.

### **Rationale**

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Southern Arkansas University Tech has engaged in a number of significant activities as part of its engagement in the AQIP Pathway These quality initiatives which were a part of the institution's strategy forum participation and its action plans included:

- >Retention initiatives
- >Enhanced course scheduling processes
- >Enhanced tutoring center offerings
- >Enhanced program review processes
- >Student evaluation of teaching
- >Achieving the Dream initiative
- >Revision of mission, vision, and values statements

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### **Interim Monitoring (if applicable)**

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*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

## Review Dashboard

| Number | Title  | Rating            |
|--------|--|-------------------|
| 1      | Mission  |                   |
| 1.A    | Core Component 1.A                                     | Met               |
| 1.B    | Core Component 1.B                                     | Met               |
| 1.C    | Core Component 1.C                                     | Met               |
| 1.D    | Core Component 1.D                                     | Met               |
| 1.S    | Criterion 1 - Summary                                  |                   |
| 2      | Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct             |                   |
| 2.A    | Core Component 2.A                                     | Met               |
| 2.B    | Core Component 2.B                                     | Met               |
| 2.C    | Core Component 2.C                                     | Met               |
| 2.D    | Core Component 2.D                                     | Met               |
| 2.E    | Core Component 2.E                                     | Met               |
| 2.S    | Criterion 2 - Summary                                  |                   |
| 3      | Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support |                   |
| 3.A    | Core Component 3.A                                     | Met               |
| 3.B    | Core Component 3.B                                     | Met With Concerns |
| 3.C    | Core Component 3.C                                     | Met               |
| 3.D    | Core Component 3.D                                     | Met               |
| 3.E    | Core Component 3.E                                     | Met With Concerns |
| 3.S    | Criterion 3 - Summary                                  |                   |
| 4      | Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement      |                   |
| 4.A    | Core Component 4.A                                     | Met With Concerns |
| 4.B    | Core Component 4.B                                     | Met With Concerns |
| 4.C    | Core Component 4.C                                     | Met With Concerns |
| 4.S    | Criterion 4 - Summary                                  |                   |
| 5      | Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness   |                   |
| 5.A    | Core Component 5.A                                     | Met               |
| 5.B    | Core Component 5.B                                     | Met               |
| 5.C    | Core Component 5.C                                     | Met               |
| 5.D    | Core Component 5.D                                     | Met               |
| 5.S    | Criterion 5 - Summary                                  |                   |
| 6      | Commitment to Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)     |                   |
| 6.A    | Question 6.A   |                   |
| 6.B    | Question 6.B   |                   |

|     |                                |  |
|-----|--------------------------------|--|
| 7   | Commitment to the AQIP Pathway |  |
| 7.A | Question 7.A                   |  |
| 7.B | Question 7.B                   |  |
| 7.C | Question 7.C                   |  |
| 7.D | Question 7.D                   |  |

## Review Summary

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### Interim Report(s) Required

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#### Due Date

12/1/2021

#### Report Focus

3.B Because Core Component 3.B.2 is closely related to Core Component 4.B, updates on how SAUT has progressed in meeting the requirements of Core Component 3.B.2 shall be addressed via interim monitoring.

Specifically, the interim report should update the Commission after the conclusion of the 2021-2022 assessment cycle on the addition of General Education Competency #6 and any refinements deemed appropriate to the array of GECs as work on them progresses. The team notes that six Competencies and 42 outcomes may or may not prove to be practical as SAUT matures its GEC assessment processes and mapping of competencies and outcomes to curricula.

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#### Due Date

12/1/2021

#### Report Focus

3. E As noted in reference to Core Component 3.E.1 processes for aligning the co-curriculum with the Common Learning Competencies (GECs) was begun in 2016 and have not progressed to maturity. The report shall provide the Commission an update on progress made in aligning all GECs to the co-curriculum as planned and progress made on developing strategies for assessing the degree to which the co-curriculum supports GEC attainment

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#### Due Date

6/1/2022

#### Report Focus

4.A The team notes that the language used by the College addressing the lack of outcomes data lacks specificity.

In the the Interim Report the institution should update the Commission on the progress made in addressing the lack of outcome data on the success of graduates. The interim report should provide evidence of continuing work with the Arkansas Department of Higher Education addressing the graduate outcomes with a timeline to completion. Additionally, evidence should be provided that the College has committed the necessary resource allocations in order to prioritize these initiatives.

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### **Due Date**

6/1/2022

### **Report Focus**

4.B The interim report should include the progress SAUT has made in:

- Aligning assignments to learning outcomes in Nuventive (4.B.1);
  - Aligning curricular and co-curricular learning goals. (4.B.2);
  - The results of and improvements made by faculty to student learning in setting their own success goals and the processes for adjunct faculty to follow. (4.B.3.);
  - Ongoing commitment to assessment, including aggregate reporting and demonstrated use of data to improve student learning. (4.B.4.)
- 

### **Due Date**

6/1/2022

### **Report Focus**

4.C The interim report should include the progress SAUT has made in:

- Defining goals for persistence, retention, and completion as part of its Strategic Plan (4.C.1.)
  - Collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs (4.C.2.)
  - Using information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements (4.C.3.)
  - Collecting and analyzing data on retention, persistence and completion of students at more frequent intervals (150% of time for full-time students) and addressing the progression of part-time students and other special populations. (4.C.4.)
- 

## **Conclusion**

Southern Arkansas University Tech has made substantial progress on its quality initiatives but the institution has not had enough time to accurately assess the impact of its initiatives and to plan for the future based upon the achieved results. It is the opinion of the visiting team that Southern Arkansas University Tech would be best served to adopt the Standard Pathway mode of accreditation.

## **Overall Recommendations**

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### **Criteria For Accreditation**

Met With Concerns

**Sanctions Recommendation**

No Sanction

**Pathways Recommendation**

Limited to Standard



## Federal Compliance Worksheet for Evaluation Teams

*For AQIP Pathway Comprehensive Evaluations*

### *Evaluation of Federal Compliance Components*

This worksheet is to be completed preliminarily by a Federal Compliance reviewer and then, subsequent to the on-site evaluation, finalized by the peer review team that conducts the visit. When a Federal Compliance reviewer is not assigned, the worksheet is completed by the team. The team that conducts the visit is ultimately responsible for the contents of this worksheet in its entirety. When a Federal Compliance reviewer completes the form, the reviewer will evaluate the materials submitted in advance of the visit and refer any issues to the team no later than one week prior to the visit for further exploration and confirmation on-site. The team chair ensures that the team has reviewed the Federal Compliance reviewer's preliminary findings, makes any necessary adjustments to the preliminary evidentiary statements and findings in the worksheet subsequent to the on-site visit, and submits the finalized worksheet as an integral part of the team's final report.

The Federal Compliance reviewer and/or the team should separately review each item identified in the *Federal Compliance Filing by Institutions* (FCFI) and document their findings in the appropriate spaces below. Peer reviewers are expected to supply a rationale for each section of the Federal Compliance Evaluation. Refer to the [Federal Compliance Overview](#) for information about applicable HLC policies and explanations of each requirement, as well as expectations for communication between the Federal Compliance Reviewer and the team.

Generally, if the team finds in the course of the review that there are substantive issues related to the institution's ability to fulfill the Criteria for Accreditation, such issues should be raised within the appropriate parts of the comprehensive evaluation team report. If the team recommends monitoring on a Federal Compliance Requirement in the form of a report or focused visit, the recommendation should be included in the Federal Compliance monitoring sections below, added to the appropriate section(s) of the team report, as well as in the Summary Section of the Team Report indicating any expectations for improvement.

### *Submission Instructions*

**Federal Compliance reviewer:** Email this worksheet in an editable format to the team chair. The team chair's email address is provided in the Assurance System.

**Team chair:** Send the draft of this worksheet to the HLC staff liaison for review and then to the institution for corrections of errors of fact. Submit the final worksheet at [hlcommission.org/upload](https://hlcommission.org/upload). Select "Final



Reports” from the list of submission options to ensure the worksheet is sent to the correct HLC staff member.

Institution under review: Southern Arkansas University Tech

Name of Federal Compliance reviewer: Moreen Carvan  
*Leave blank if a Federal Compliance reviewer was not assigned.*

**TEAM CHAIR ONLY:**

Name: John Gratton

I confirm that the evaluation team reviewed the institution’s compliance with the federal requirements in this worksheet and that the worksheet reflects the team’s ultimate findings and related rationales.

**1. Assignment of Credits, Program Length and Tuition**

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- A. After gaining access to the institution’s Federal Compliance materials in the Assurance System, contact the institution’s Accreditation Liaison Officer to request a sample of course and program materials. Review the sample and other documentation submitted by the institution and make a reasonable determination as to whether the institution’s assignment of credit hours conforms to commonly accepted practice in higher education:
- The institution’s policy (or set of policies) and procedures for assignment of Credit Hour for all **types** of courses, disciplines, programs, credential levels, formats, regardless of modality
  - The institution’s course or program credit assignment **procedures** and its representative sample approval documentation
  - The process the institution utilizes to verify length of academic period and compliance with credit hour requirements through course scheduling
- B. Check the response that reflects the team’s conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
- The institution meets HLC’s requirements.
  - The institution meets HLC’s requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
  - The institution does not meet HLC’s requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
  - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution’s compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. *Related HLC Requirements: Core Component 3.A. and Assumed Practice B.1.*

Rationale:

Southern Arkansas University Technical (SAUT) has established a clear policy for the assignment of credit to courses offered in all modalities used at the university. Syllabi in most departments and programs demonstrate that the policy is applied. However, some syllabi reviewed for courses in the Nursing program, the Fire Safety program and all syllabi reviewed for the BA program did not fully articulate the distribution of assignment types or provide a schedule. The visiting team addressed the credit hour issues through an examination of course syllabi and intense discussion with academic personnel from nursing, fire safety, and business administration. The team was able to determine from the syllabi and the interactions that SAUT was providing accurate calculations regarding the assignments providing the expected number of hours of direct faculty instruction or engaged student learning either in or out of class, particularly in online courses.

Additional monitoring, if any:

## 2. Institutional Records of Student Complaints

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- A. Verify that the institution has a policy and procedure(s) for addressing student complaints.
- B. Check the response that reflects the team's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
- The institution meets HLC's requirements.
  - The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
  - The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
  - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. *Related HLC Requirements: Core Component 2.A and Assumed Practice A.3, A.4.*

Rationale:

The student complaint policy is clearly articulated in the Student Handbook, and procedures for filing both academic and non-academic complaints are provided. The online portal for filing non-academic complaints, including potential Title IX complaints, is present. Forms are accessible, and the institution provides feedback to students on the outcomes of complaints, in accordance with the stated policy. The link to the student handbook under the Consumer Information tab was remedied in order to provide the needed functionality in the Firefox browser, the Chrome browser, and the Edge browser. The handbook is accessible via the academic bulletin.

Additional monitoring, if any:

None.

## 3. Publication of Transfer Policies

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- A. Verify that the institution has demonstrated it is appropriately disclosing its transfer policies to students and to the public.
- Review the institution’s transfer policies.
  - Review the list of articulation agreements the institution has in place, including articulation agreements at the institution level and for specific programs and how the institution publicly discloses information about those articulation agreements.
  - The information the institution provides should explain any program-specific articulation agreements in place. Also, the information the institution provides should include whether the articulation agreement anticipates that the institution:
    - Accepts credits for courses offered by the other institution(s) in the articulation agreement.
    - Offers courses for which credits are accepted by the other institution(s) in the articulation agreements.
    - Both offers courses and accepts credits with the other institution(s) in the articulation agreement.
    - What specific credits articulate through the agreement (e.g., general education only; pre-professional nursing courses only; etc.).
- B. Check the response that reflects the team’s conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:

- The institution meets HLC’s requirements.
- The institution meets HLC’s requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
- The institution does not meet HLC’s requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
- The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution’s compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. *Related HLC Requirements: Core Component 2.A and Assumed Practice A.5.D.*

Rationale:

The institution’s transfer policies are clearly articulated, and the information provided includes articulation agreements, acceptance of SAUT credit by other institutions, and specific detail by program. This information is generally available in the course catalog and on the institution’s website.

Additional monitoring, if any:

None.

#### 4. Practices for Verification of Student Identity

- A. If the institution **does not** have students enrolled in distance or correspondence courses, indicate this in the responses below.

- B. If the institution **does** have students enrolled in distance or correspondence courses, confirm that the institution verifies the identity of students. Confirm that it appropriately discloses additional fees related to verification to students, and that the method of verification makes reasonable efforts to protect students' privacy.
- Determine how the institution verifies that the student who enrolls in a course is the same student who submits assignments, takes exams and earns a final grade. The team should ensure that the institution's approach respects student privacy.
  - Check that any costs related to verification (e.g., fees associated with test proctoring) and charged directly to students are explained to the students prior to enrollment in distance or correspondence courses.
- C. Check the response that reflects the team's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
- The institution does not have students enrolled in distance or correspondence courses.
  - The institution meets HLC's requirements.
  - The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
  - The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
  - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. *Related HLC Requirement: Core Component 2.A.*

Rationale:

The institution has multiple methods for verifying the identity of persons submitting work or taking examinations in online courses. One of these methods (Xproctor) does have a cost and that cost is incurred by students in the form of a per-exam fee. This information is disclosed on the institution's website, which also provides information about all proctored testing sites and associated fees.

Additional monitoring, if any:

None.

## 5. Title IV Program Responsibilities

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- A. This requirement has several components the institution must address. The team should verify that the following requirements are met:
- **General Program Requirements.** The institution has provided HLC with information about the fulfillment of its Title IV program responsibilities, particularly findings from any review activities by the U.S. Department of Education. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department has raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities. (See Appendices A and B.)

- **Financial Responsibility Requirements.** The institution has provided HLC with information about the Department’s review of composite ratios and financial audits. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department has raised regarding the institution’s fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area. *Related HLC Requirements: Core Components 5.A, 2.B; Assumed Practice D.* (See Appendix C.)
- **Campus Crime Information, Athletic Participation and Financial Aid, and Related Disclosures.** The institution has provided HLC with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated, the institution’s compliance with these regulations.
- **Student Right to Know/Equity in Athletics.** The institution has provided HLC with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated the compliance with these regulations. *Related HLC Requirement: Assumed Practice A.6.*
- **Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy.** The institution has provided HLC with information about its compliance with this regulation. *Related HLC Requirements: Criterion 3.A; Assumed Practice A.5.*

B. Check the response that reflects the team’s conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:

- The institution meets HLC’s requirements.
- The institution meets HLC’s requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
- The institution does not meet HLC’s requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
- The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution’s compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. (See related HLC Requirements with each section of the Title IV Responsibilities above.)

Rationale:

The institution has provided HLC with the required information on a timely basis. Consumer information is provided in the academic bulletin. This information is also provided to students and the public on the institution’s website. Information relevant to Financial Responsibility Requirements was found in the “Evidence” file of the Assurance Argument. There was evidence that the institution has recently corrected or addressed a weakness in financial ratios, and this correction occurred in the 2016-17 time period.

Additional monitoring, if any:

None.

## 6. Publication of Student Outcome Data

- A. Verify that the institution makes student outcome data available and easily accessible to the public. Data may be provided at the institutional or departmental level or both, but the institution must disclose student outcome data that address the broad variety of its programs.

B. Check the response that reflects the team’s conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:

- The institution meets HLC’s requirements.
- The institution meets HLC’s requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
- The institution does not meet HLC’s requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
- The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution’s compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. *Related HLC Requirement: Assumed Practice A.6.*

Rationale:

The institution presents student outcomes data to the public via its website. The information is accurate and thorough; however, it is not easy to find using common navigation techniques. The information is linked to the institution’s home page but is included in the “Consumer Information”, which is at the bottom of the page. Opening Consumer Information leads to an alphabetized list of information, and the “Student Outcomes Survey” title is a technical term associated with IPEDS. This could be more clearly labeled as “Student Outcomes Data”.

The website’s search engine was difficult to find. It was a triangular tab with a small “+” sign, which is not the universal symbol (spyglass) for search. SAUT addressed the situation and they will adopt the universal symbol of the spyglass for search functions. The search results for “Student Outcomes” have been updated to provide sound results and the search results for “Consumer Information” have likewise been updated to provide additional search results.

Additional monitoring, if any:

## 7. Standing With State and Other Accrediting Agencies

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A. Verify that the institution discloses accurately to the public and HLC its relationship with any other specialized, professional or institutional accreditors and with all governing or coordinating bodies in states in which the institution may have a presence.

**Note:** If the team is recommending initial or continued accreditation status, and the institution is now or has been in the past five years under sanction or show-cause with, or has received an adverse action (i.e., withdrawal, suspension, denial or termination) from, any other federally recognized specialized or institutional accreditor or a state entity, then the team must explain the sanction or adverse action of the other agency in the body of the assurance section of the team report and provide its rationale for recommending HLC status despite this action.

B. Check the response that reflects the team’s conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:

- The institution meets HLC’s requirements.
- The institution meets HLC’s requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.

- The institution does not meet HLC’s requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
- The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution’s compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. *Related HLC Requirements: Core Component 2.B; Assumed Practices A.7, C.4.*

Rationale:

All accreditations and approvals are listed on the “Accreditation” website. No supporting documents were provided with the Federal Compliance filing. The HLC Mark of Affiliation is present and working. Links to accrediting or approving bodies did not direct me to the specific entries that demonstrated institutional status. Supporting documentation was found in the Assurance Argument, under Criterion 4.A.5. The “Specialized Accreditation Requirements” accurately reflected the information on the website and assisted in directing me to specific offices within agencies. I was able to verify continuing accreditation in all cases.

Additional monitoring, if any:

None.

### **Institutional Materials Related to Federal Compliance Reviewed by the Team**

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Provide a list of materials reviewed here:

Spring class schedule

Syllabi (see next page)

US DOE Approval of Recertification OPE ID 00773800 (with ECAR)

Southern Arkansas University Tech Specialized Accreditation Requirements ([Table](#))

Southern Arkansas University Technical website:




























- Home page.
- Consumer Information.
- All Title IV public disclosure sites indicated in the Federal Compliance Filing.
- All first, second and third level navigation tabs.
- Student Outcomes Survey Data

Arkansas Department of Health: Cosmetology: [Education](#)

Arkansas Board State Board of Nursing: [PN Approved Programs](#)

Federal Aviation Agency: [Maintenance Schools](#)

International Fire Service Accreditation Congress: [Accredited Certifying Agencies](#)

-  TC F2F On Campus Nursing Non-Clinical - Pharmacology III.pdf
-  TC F2F Nursing Clinical - Clinical Practicum 3.pdf
-  Syllabus Request.docx
-  CP F2F Off Campus (Texarkana) - Fund of Math Phys.pdf
-  CP F2F Off Campus (Texarkana) - Aircraft Science.pdf
-  AS Online - Legal Aspects of Fire Service.pdf
-  AS Online - Intro to Education.pdf
-  AS Online - History of Arkansas.pdf
-  AS Online - Fire Service Tactics.pdf
-  AS F2F On Campus - Child Growth & Development.pdf
-  AS BA Online - Prin of Acct I.pdf
-  AS BA F2F On Campus - Prin of Microecon.pdf
-  AS BA F2F On Campus - Prin of Acct II.pdf
-  AS BA F2F On Campus - Ameri Enterprise Sys.pdf
-  AS BA F2F On Campus - Leg Env of Business.pdf
-  AAS Online Science (Non-Laboratory) - Anat & Physio II.pdf
-  AAS Online Science (Laboratory) - Anat & Physio II Lab.pdf
-  AAS On Campus F2F Technical - Robotic Applications.pdf
-  AAS F2F On Campus Technical - Millwright Level I.pdf
-  AAS F2F On Campus Technical - Basic Blueprint Reading.pdf
-  AAS F2F Off Campus Technical (Magnolia) - Pipe Welding II.pdf
-  AA Online - World Literature I.pdf
-  AA Online - General Psychology.pdf
-  AA F2F On Campus - U.S. History II.pdf
-  AA F2F On Campus - Composition I.pdf
-  AA F2F On Campus - College Algebra.pdf
-  31142730\_spring\_2020\_class\_schedule.pdf





## Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

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|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>INSTITUTION and STATE:</b> | Southern Arkansas University Tech, AR                             |
| <b>TYPE OF REVIEW:</b>        | AQIP Comprehensive Evaluation                                     |
| <b>DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW:</b> | Visit to include a Federal Compliance Reviewer: Dr. Moreen Carvan |
| <b>DATES OF REVIEW:</b>       | 3/9/2020 - 3/10/2020  |

No Change in Institutional Status and Requirements

### Accreditation Status

Nature of Institution

Control: Public

**Recommended Change:** No change.

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Degrees Awarded: Associates

**Recommended Change:** No change.

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Reaffirmation of Accreditation:

Year of Last Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2012 - 2013

Year of Next Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2019 - 2020

**Recommended Change: 2029-30**

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### Accreditation Stipulations

General:

The institution is approved at the following program level(s): Associate's

The institution is not approved at the following program level(s): Bachelor's, Master's, Specialist, Doctoral

**Recommended Change:** No change.

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## Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

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### Additional Location:

Prior HLC approval required.

**Recommended Change:** No change.

---

### Distance and Correspondence Courses and Programs:

Approved for distance education courses and programs. The institution has not been approved for correspondence education.

**Recommended Change:** No change.

---

### Accreditation Events

Accreditation Pathway

AQIP Pathway

**Recommended Change:** Standard Pathway

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### Upcoming Events

#### Monitoring

#### Upcoming Events

None

#### Recommended Change:

Interim report due by 12/2021 on general education learning outcomes and alignment of the co-curriculum outcomes to the general education.

Interim report due by 6/2022 on outcome data on the success of graduates, on assessment of student learning, and on retention, persistence and completion of students.

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### Institutional Data

#### Educational Programs

##### Undergraduate

|                       |    |       |
|-----------------------|----|-------|
| Certificate           | 54 | _____ |
| Associate Degrees     | 17 | _____ |
| Baccalaureate Degrees | 0  | _____ |

##### Graduate

|                    |   |       |
|--------------------|---|-------|
| Master's Degrees   | 0 | _____ |
| Specialist Degrees | 0 | _____ |
| Doctoral Degrees   | 0 | _____ |

#### Recommended Change:



## Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

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### Extended Operations

#### Branch Campuses

None

**Recommended Change:** No change.

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#### Additional Locations

Camden Municipal Airport, 165 Wiggins Marden Road, Camden, AR, 71701 - Active

Magnolia, 103 Business Park Dr., Magnolia, AR, 71753 - Active

Texarkana, 60 Globe Ave, Texarkana, AR, 71854 - Active

**Recommended Change:** No change.

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#### Correspondence Education

None

**Recommended Change:** No change.

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#### Distance Delivery

13.1206 - Teacher Education, Multiple Levels, Associate, AAT Teaching

15.0507 - Environmental Engineering Technology/Environmental Technology, Associate, AAS  
Environmental Science

19.07 - Human Development, Family Studies, and Related Services, Associate, AAS  
Paraprofessional Educator

24.0101 - Liberal Arts and Sciences/Liberal Studies, Certificate, CGS General Studies

24.0102 - General Studies, Associate, AA General Education

43.0202 - Fire Services Administration, Associate, AS Fire Science Management

47.0399 - Heavy/Industrial Equipment Maintenance Technologies, Other, Associate, AAS  
General Technology

51.0000 - Health Services/Allied Health/Health Sciences, General, Certificate, TC Health  
Sciences

51.0708 - Medical Transcription/Transcriptionist, Certificate, CP Medical Transcription

52.0201 - Business Administration and Management, General, Associate, AS Business  
Administration

52.0204 - Office Management and Supervision, Associate, AAS Office Management

52.0407 - Business/Office Automation/Technology/Data Entry, Certificate, TC Office Software  
Specialist

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#### Contractual Arrangements

## Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

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30.0000 Multi-/Interdisciplinary Studies, General - Associate - Associate of Professional Studies, Law Enforcement Emphasis - Arkansas Law Enforcement Training Academy

None

**Recommended Change:** No change.

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### **Consortial Arrangements**

None

**Recommended Change:** No change.

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