

**CR 8.1: SAMPLE INSTITUTIONAL APPROACHES TO ADDRESSING KEY COMPLIANCE COMPONENTS**  
**Content Analysis of Institutional Compliance Certification Report Narratives on CR 8.1 (Spring/Fall 2018 and Spring 2019)**

Draft/Work-In Progress || Summer 2019

| Selected Key Compliance Components                                 | Sample Approaches                                   | Illustrative Excerpts <sup>1</sup> from Institutional CCR Narratives  |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Appropriateness of Selected MEASURES of Student Achievement</b> | Reference to Institutional Mission / Strategic Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "As a workforce education institution with a mission focused on in-demand technical occupations and economic development..., the College measures institutional success first and foremost by student wages and job placement, tracking graduate wages and student job placement to monitor the applicability and relevance of the college's course and program offerings."</li> <li>- "The College's Mission and Values Statement highlights the College's commitment to Collaboration and building alliances with...regional post-secondary institutions to support transfer...The inclusion of the Transfer Rate metric supports the College's ability to monitor the extent to which it is achieving its Mission to develop transfer alliances and pathways."</li> <li>- "The third goal is that at least #% of graduates will have one or more experiences in applied learning, defined as capstone projects &amp; courses, community-based leadership projects, cross-cultural experiences, internships ... &amp; practicums, student research &amp; scholarship. This is a goal...consistent with our mission to 'A student body of committed learners, actively involved in the programs of the college and in service to the greater community'."</li> <li>- "Sitting alongside the goal of academic excellence is [Institution's] commitment to engage students with Christ's message of love and salvation and to equip them for a life of service in the world...The University employs two primary assessments, ..., to measure how students are growing in their faith and its impacts on their personal habits and behaviors."</li> <li>- "The College also measures student achievement with respect to its Strategic Plan by measuring benchmarked progress in enrollment, transfer rates and number of degrees awarded."</li> <li>- "The College's institutional-level student achievement metrics were selected for the purpose of measuring the effectiveness of the Strategic Directions associated with each of the four institutional commitments in Strategic Plan 2020."</li> </ul> |
|  | Reference to Student Progression Patterns           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Over half of [Institution] students indicate plans to transfer to a 2-year specialized program or 4-year college or university to complete degree requirements. Therefore, the College monitors the transfer-out rate of students..."</li> <li>- "[IPEDS Outcomes Measure] was selected as an additional program completion measure since it includes all students, regardless of enrollment status. Over the last five years, approximately #% [more than 80%] of [Institution] students have been enrolled on a part-time basis. Thus, identifying a standardized measure of program completion that includes all students, not just full-time students, provides a more valid measure of student achievement."</li> </ul>  |
|  | Reference to Specific Student Needs / Populations   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Since a significant number of students come to community colleges with academic deficiencies, one important measure of achievement is remedial/developmental success. Completion of remedial/developmental coursework is only a true benchmark of success if it is followed or tied to success in the associated college-level course. Therefore, [Institution's achievement measure] has been established as success in college-level math and writing courses by students concurrently enrolled in remediation."</li> <li>- [Graduation rate – Low-Income Students] "[Institution] serves a diverse student population; more than half of [Institution] students are eligible for the income-based Pell Grants...The inclusion of an Official Graduation Rate metric specific to the success of low-income students ensures the College monitors outcomes and is aware of potential equity gaps for the student population."</li> </ul>   |

| Selected Key Compliance Components | Sample Approaches                                  | Illustrative Excerpts <sup>i</sup> from Institutional CCR Narratives  |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
|                                    |  | <p>- “The College also monitors the academic success of student-athletes because they comprise a significant portion of our overall student population. For Fall ****, there were # student-athletes identified as members of school sponsored teams, which represented #% [almost half] of the overall student headcount enrollment.”</p>  |
|                                    | Reference to Educational Programs                  | <p>- “Nursing is the largest program at the College and drives enrollment to a large degree. Thus, given its imprint on the College and the overall number of students enrolled, results from the Nursing Licensure exam are used as a measure of student achievement.”</p> <p>- “Licensure/Certification Pass Rates are used as a key measure of student achievement for [Institution’s] technical education students, who comprise nearly 50% of the total student population.”</p> <p>- “An additional measure of program completion is the admissions rates from pre-clinical tracks into clinical programs. Consistent with the college mission, the general studies program includes tracks that provide the opportunity to earn admission into both the nursing and radiologic technology associate degree programs. Since the purpose of these tracks is to provide a pathway into a clinical program, the program graduation rate does not provide an accurate assessment of student achievement for this program. Thus, the admission rates are tracked.”</p> <p>- “Recognizing the importance of internships to students gaining meaningful experience in their field of study and ultimately securing employment, [Institution] has tracked the number of students completing internships each year.”</p> |
|                                    | Reference to External Accountability Requirements  | <p>- “[Institution] uses key performance indicators provided by the [State] Community College System to identify trends and overall gaps in performance as compared to other [State] Community Colleges.”</p> <p>- “Student achievement [indicators] have been identified through mandates of [programmatic] accrediting bodies...”</p>   |
|                                    | Reference to Commonly-Accepted Metrics             | <p>- “Persistence rates are commonly used student progress measures for both two-year and four-year institutions.”</p> <p>- “A quick scan of the measures used for documenting achievement at [Institution] will demonstrate consistency with similar institutions across the country.”</p> <p>- “The IPEDS traditional graduation rate was chosen because it allows for comparison with institutions across the country.”</p> <p>- “The retention of the first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students is a standard metric that [Institution] tracks and reports to federal and state governing bodies each year.”</p> <p>- “Successful course completion is a key precursor to the completion of a certificate, degree, or diploma.”</p>  |
|                                    | Reference to Internal Process of Measure Selection | <p>- “The student achievement variables...were established by the Office of the Executive Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Success in consultation with student services personnel across the College ..., and approved through the Student Services Council, Instructional Affairs Council, and College Executive Council.”</p> <p>- “In 2015-16, the College established a sub-committee of the Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Task Force to review the student achievement criteria being used and to identify additional achievement criteria that [Institution] could utilize to evaluate student success. As part of their charge, the sub-committee was asked to provide [a] rationale for each criterion they recommended to gauge student achievement, ...”</p>   |

| Selected Key Compliance Components  | Sample Approaches   | Illustrative Excerpts <sup>i</sup> from Institutional CCR Narratives   |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Appropriateness of Set <i>THRESHOLDS OF ACCEPTABILITY</i> for Selected Measures of Student Achievement</b> | Reference to Own Baseline / Trend Data                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “The threshold of acceptability is set at #% which is the college's lowest rate in the past six years.”</li> <li>- “...a minimum threshold of #%, the lowest rate achieved in the past five years.”</li> <li>- “[A] minimum threshold serves to ensure that our numbers don’t drop below levels approximating those we have maintained over the last several years.”</li> <li>- “The threshold of acceptability is set at 15% based on [Institution’s] past three-year average of 14.5%.”</li> <li>- “[Institution has defined] a minimum threshold of acceptability as meeting or exceeding the prior 5-year average. [Institution] strives for continuous improvement and as such, set the threshold of minimal acceptability so that we would not be satisfied with declines in this metric.”</li> <li>- “The Threshold of Acceptability is the minimal acceptable level of achievement and equates to the College’s average performance over the last 3-5 years of historic data. Due to recent increases in student success...establishing the recent performance average as the threshold criteria serves to provide a mechanism to monitor whether the College sustains a general upward trajectory in outcomes.”</li> </ul> |
|   | Reference to Peers / Commonly-Accepted Standards                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “The College uses the average results of the IPEDS Comparison groups as the threshold of acceptability for these [indicators].”</li> <li>- “The threshold of acceptability is set at 70% by the program as there is no state/national pass rate requirement, and 70 is commonly accepted as a passing grade.”</li> </ul>  |
|   | Reference to Federal / State / System Accountability Benchmarks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “[T]he Federal Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress standard of a minimum of 67% completion of all courses attempted cumulatively...”</li> <li>- “The Carl Perkins Measures and Standards, a federal program administered by the state, sets benchmarks for all workforce education programs at an 85% placement rate within one year of graduation...”</li> <li>- “The state sets the threshold of accountability for all indicators.”</li> <li>- “Based on three years of data for each measure, baseline levels are set two standard deviations below the system mean...”</li> </ul>   |
|   | Reference to Programmatic Accreditors Standards                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “Benchmarks for accredited programs [on licensing examinations] are set by the program’s accrediting agency.”</li> <li>- “The threshold of acceptability is 75% as required by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences.”</li> <li>- “[T]he minimum (70%) [is] required by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education.”</li> </ul>  |
|   | Reference to Internal Process of Threshold Setting              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “The Retention Advisory Board has established (minutes) and the Strategic Planning Council has endorsed (minutes) the threshold of acceptability (minimum expectation) for retention of first-time, full-time (FTFT) students at 80%...The Retention Advisory Board set the threshold of acceptability...based on a review of [Institution’s] retention rates over the past decade...”</li> </ul>   |

| Selected Key Compliance Components   | Sample Approaches  | Illustrative Excerpts <sup>i</sup> from Institutional CCR Narratives  |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Appropriateness of Established GOALS for Selected Measures of Student Achievement</b> | Reference to Own Trend Data / Baseline or Threshold Values | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “[Institution] has a goal to consistently improve its three-year graduat[ion] rate...”</li> <li>- “The general goal is to improve upon the placement rate obtained in the previous year.”</li> <li>- “The College has set a target of exceeding the previous year’s total of degrees and certificates obtained by [Institution] students.”</li> <li>- “Increase in fall-to-fall retention rates for URM [Underrepresented Minorities] of 5% for the 2020 cohort compared to the three year baseline average of the fall 2013, 2014, and 2015 cohorts.”</li> <li>- “The ‘challenge’ goal is the five-year average of the metric plus 5%. This goal speaks to [Institution’s] desire to seek continuous improvement in the educational programs and services provided to its students.”</li> <li>- “[Institution’s] achievement goal for its graduation rate is to exceed the threshold by 5% as the college strives to perform above the base standard.”</li> <li>- “In its previous strategic plan, [Institution] set a goal to increase the three-year graduation rate from 28% for the cohort that started 2010 to 32% by 2013. Having met that goal, the current goal is to increase the three-year graduation rate to 40%.”</li> </ul>   |
|  | Reference to Peers   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “The goal for graduation rates of first time, full-time students within six years is to meet or exceed the average of peer institutions (see list and process).”</li> <li>- “[T]he college seeks to score above the 3-yr. average of [system] peer median scores as calculated by the National Community College Benchmark Project.”</li> <li>- “We have also set a goal to meet or exceed the median first-time fall to fall full-time retention rate of a comparison set of institutions selected using the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) tool.”</li> <li>- “To determine the target level for this variable, the College reviewed the graduation rates of peer and aspirational institutions within the state of ***. As a ..., the College set the expected at [levels]....These targets will allow the College to remain higher than its peers and strive to close the gap with the aspirational institutions.”</li> <li>- “This target of #% was identified as it represents exceeding both the [Institutional Association 1] mean (#%) and the [Institutional Association 2] mean (#%). Further, surpassing this identified target represents achieving the top quartile of the [Institutional Association 1].”</li> </ul> |
|  | Reference to External Accountability Standards             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “In addition to acceptability thresholds, the College identifies goals/targets for each metric. Generally, institution-level targets align with the statewide/system goals and objectives.”</li> <li>- “The goal set by the [State Coordinating Board] is that #% of the graduates of each institution will be working or enrolled within one year of graduation.”</li> <li>- “The average [Institution] Career and Technical Education (CTE) technical skill attainment rate will exceed the State threshold percentage (#%).”</li> <li>- “Based on three years of data for each measure..., and excellence levels are set one standard deviation above the [S]ystem mean.”</li> <li>- “[Institution] has set a pass rate goal of # percent for the NCLEX-RN exam which is ten percentage points above the # percent required by the [State Board.]”</li> </ul>   |
|  | Reference to Student Populations                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “[G]iven the selectivity and rigor of [Institution’s Law School], the school sets a goal that the average bar passage rate for ... graduates...is #% [+15 percentage points to ABA threshold] or higher.”</li> </ul>   |

| Selected Key Compliance Components   | Sample Approaches   | Illustrative Excerpts <sup>i</sup> from Institutional CCR Narratives  |
|--|---|---|
|  | Reference to Internal Process of Goal Setting   | <p>- "In recent history, [Institution] has placed an average of #% of its graduates in graduate/professional schools. While the College recognizes that high achieving schools nationwide average approximately 60% placement, [Institution's] mission of serving first-generation students with disparate levels of preparation prevents the College from achieving this level of placement at this time. Therefore, the College has set the target level at #% [historic average + 4 percentage points] graduate/professional school placement."</p> <p>- "[T]hese [enrollment] targets are contingent upon projected resources, such as space, personnel, accreditation requirements, and clinical rotation availability. See below for each school's rationale for selecting these targets..."</p> <p>- "The goal associated with this student achievement metric was set by the Office of the Executive Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Success in consultation with student services personnel across the College ..., and vetted through a series of retreats, planning workshops, and student success meetings...Sources include the following: [date] Retreat Agenda, Planning Workshops, and Student Success Meetings: [date], [date], [date], [date], and [date]."</p> <p>- "A cross-section of faculty and staff worked together to produce [Institution's] initial performance targets...[Institution's] President and Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) collected and analyzed data from several prior academic years to develop appropriate long-term targets based on historic trend data and align with [Institution's] institutional mission. The administrators took into consideration contextual issues specific to [Institution] such as implementation of admission standards and declining regional high school graduate numbers...Both the [State System] and [Governing Board] subsequently reviewed the submitted information and accepted the rationales and approved these targets based on the appropriateness to [Institution's] mission, students, and programs."</p>  |
| Evaluation of <i>OUTCOMES</i> for Selected Measures of Student Achievement | <p>Discussion of Performance in Reference to Pre-Set Reference Points/ Contexts (Thresholds and/or Goals)</p> <p>Discussion of Performance Dynamics Over Time</p> | <p>- "[I]n recent semesters the course completion in more disciplines has dropped below the target level of 67%. One of the strategies that the College is putting in place is a *** ** Program, which will conduct outreach to students at risk for failing or dropping classes."</p> <p>- "Students in ENG 101 have met the benchmark in all but one of the six semesters for which data has been analyzed. Students in ENG 102 have met the benchmark in all six semesters. Students in MTH 120 and 130 have failed to meet the benchmark approximately 50% of the time."</p> <p>- "The percentage of the College's A.A. graduates who transfer to a four-year institution (see Figure #) has declined over the past two years; in fact, the College did not meet the minimum goal in 2016. As the decline in 2016 was not large, this may represent an aberrant year and not a consistent trend. With the economy continuing to improve, it is also possible that these students chose to enter the workforce rather than continue their education. As the decline between 2015 and 2016 was not precipitous, College leadership is monitoring this metric for the time being and will take action if 2017 data indicates a continued downward trend."</p> <p>- "[Institution's] retention rate has grown from a low of #% for the fall 2012 cohort to #% in the fall 2016 cohort. This growth is good, but not yet reaching our target of #% set in the 2012-18 Strategic Plan."</p> <p>- "[Institution's] retention rate has increased since the 2007 Cohort (#%) and remained above the #% threshold of acceptability since that time. Although the University is not regularly meeting its aspirational goals, the retention rate is trending up over this period of time."</p> <p>- "As Table # demonstrates, the college-wide graduation rate has exceeded the threshold of acceptability of #% each year and has met the goal of #% graduation rates most years. However, a decline in the graduation rate has occurred over the last several years and did not meet the goal in 2018. The graduation rate for each individual program has fluctuated over the years but has always exceeded the threshold of acceptability, with the exception of the general studies program..."</p> |

| Selected Key Compliance Components   | Sample Approaches                                      | Illustrative Excerpts <sup>i</sup> from Institutional CCR Narratives   |
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|  | Reference to Peer Performance                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-“The University’s FTFT retention rate has exceeded the average of universities that comprise the [State System] for each of the years displayed.”</li> <li>- “[T]his rate exceeded the average rate for the [State University System] (#%), the [State Institutional Peer Group] (#%), and is on par with the overall average for public institutions in [State].”</li> <li>- “Peer group comparison validates the College’s effectiveness. #% of graduates were working or enrolled within a year of graduation, which is more than 5 percentage points above the peer group average.”</li> </ul>   |
|  |  |  |
| <p><b>PUBLICATION</b> of Goals and Outcomes for Selected Measures of Student Achievement</p> | Dedicated Page / Location on the Institutional Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “The College publishes the goals and outcomes for student achievement on a Success webpage, per SACSCOC’s Institutional Obligations for Public Disclosure policy statement.”</li> <li>- “Full-time retention data are published on the Student Achievement Disclosure Information page of the [Institution] website.”</li> <li>- “Student Achievement data is publicly available on the [Institution] website. Student Achievement data is appropriately published by being three ‘clicks’ away from the [Institution] main page, appears in the search bar when you search for ‘Student Achievement,’ and follows the SACSCOC Policy for Institutional Obligations for Public Disclosure.”</li> </ul>  |
|  | Institutional Fact Book / Other Institutional Media    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “The outcomes associated with the core student achievement variables are published in the online factbook for institutional and public use.”</li> <li>- “Course success and completion rates are published each year in the Strategic Plan Progress Report...”</li> <li>- “The Student Success Report Card is presented to the [Institution] Board of Trustees (BOT) annually. The BOT acknowledges the report, which then is reflected in the meeting minutes, making the Report Card a public record. Additionally, a summary of the report card is posted on the institution’s website.”</li> </ul>  |
|  | Link to External Websites                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “Each college [in the state technical college system], including *** Technical College, has a ‘scorecard’ for the academic year that identifies the college goals and outcomes on major benchmarks...These are available publicly in the Annual Reports published on the *** Technical College website.”</li> <li>- “Retention rates of URM [Underrepresented Minorities] students are published on the [State System] Performance Measures Dashboard.”</li> <li>- “[Institution’s] Annual Student Achievement Report is [also] available to our students, campus community, and the public on ... the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Membership Directory under additional information for [Institution].”</li> </ul> |
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| Selected Key Compliance Components      | Sample Approaches   | Illustrative Excerpts <sup>i</sup> from Institutional CCR Narratives  |
|---|---|---|
| Key Student Completion Indicator (KSCI) | Identification of the Selected KSCI and Discussion of Institutional Performance on the KSCI Over Time | - “The external measures include the key student completion metric selected by the College in response to SACSCOC’s efforts to monitor and support student completion: IPEDS graduation rate. The College’s 2017 institutional resume provides institution and peer group averages for graduation rates of first-time, full-time, credential-seeking students after three, four, and six years. The College shows graduation rate gains since 2010 for all cohorts at three, four, and six years. While the most recent four and six-year cohort graduation rates sit slightly below, the most recent three-year cohort graduation rate equals the peer group average of #%.” |

<sup>i</sup> The “*excerpts*” are provided to assist the reader in identifying typical (and often interrelated) approaches to support an institution’s assertion of compliance with components embedded in CR 8.1. Extracted from Compliance Certification Report narratives, these excerpts are components of some institution’s articulation of its overall compliance with CR 8.1.

### APPENDIX: A *Sample* Structure for Discussing a Measure of Student Achievement

... The third student achievement **measure** selected by the institution is Job Placement Rate. The institution defines Job Placement Rate as... This measure was selected because...[justification of appropriateness].

In 2016, the institution set 65% as a **threshold of acceptability** value for this measure based on ... [justification of appropriateness]. Further, the institution established the strategic/aspirational **goal** of 85% for the Job Placement Rate. This goal was established based on...[evaluation of goal | justification of appropriateness].

[identification of outcomes] Most recent data collection on this measure occurred in spring 2019 when the institution administered Alumni Survey (63% response rate) that included a set of questions related to job placement. The institution reported the following **outcomes** – 82% of respondents were successfully employed within six months after graduation; with 74% of respondents holding positions closely related to their majors.

[evaluation of outcomes] Although the goal of 85% has not been yet met, the institution well surpassed the threshold of acceptability level established for the Job Placement Rate measure. Further, the institution made progress compared to 2018 outcomes (79% /70% in 2018 to 82%/74% in 2019).

[improvement efforts – best practice rather than expectation in this case] The institution is committed to continue working to improve employability of graduates. For example, recent efforts include collaboration between Academic Affairs and Career Services to ...

[publication of goals and outcomes] Job Placement goals and outcomes are published on the institutional Student Success webpage. The webpage is maintained (and updated annually) by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment, has a direct link from the institutional home page, and is accessible to internal and external constituencies.