Chapter 5

Criterion Four

Teaching and learning:

Evaluation and

Improvement

Criterion Four Committee

Chapter 5

Criterion Four: Teaching and Learning, Evaluation and Improvement

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.

To claim total quality in any of the college's endeavors would be misleading. Quality of any education program is dynamic and is to be sought; quality is not a destination in itself. Continuous improvement is attainable only if there are active quality assurance processes in place. The staff and faculty of Carl Albert State College (CASC) are committed to working toward an environment of quality in educational programs.

CASC is proud of its accomplishments and is responsible for the quality of its educational programs, the learning environments provided, and the support structures in place to ensure students' success. CASC also realizes that challenges will be faced concerning evaluation of effectiveness and in building a model that promotes the closure of the quality process, specifically in assessment and documentation. CASC believes these challenges are opportunities to place into practice a quality model ensuring that assessment is documented faithfully and that results are used to make continuous improvements. The assets shared through all levels of the institution and the commitment to assessment provide the foundation needed to make quality assurance an integral part of the CASC culture.

Ultimately, human resources are the most valuable assets driving the institution to strive for student success. Quality assurance of academic programs is the process of discovery that ultimately reveals challenges and pushes for innovative ways to provide quality education and success.

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

CASC staff, faculty, and administrators are dedicated to the concept of outstanding quality in their programs. Quality is maintained and assured by many checks and balances, including annual faculty evaluations by students and division chairs (4.A.1). Each program also has developed a capstone course that is part of graduation requirements, is used to gather data about course and program quality, and provides input from students so that future offerings meet stakeholders' expectations. Input from students, along with current state of practice, has led some instructors to develop hybrid courses that blend face-to-face course delivery with an online component. CASC currently evaluates online courses but realizes technology poses issues that make traditional evaluation techniques unfeasible. The college recognizes the challenges faced with quality assurance in online offerings and continues to try to meet those challenges in effective ways. CASC staff, faculty, and administrators embrace this culture of quality

and give credibility to the mission statement: *To provide affordable, accessible, and exceptional education that fosters student success.*

4.A.1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.
CASC strives to maintain excellence in its academic programs. In addition to periodic in-house program reviews, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) requires that all programs be reviewed on a 5-year rotation cycle. While evaluating review processes, college personnel have discovered the college has been assessing academic programs in several ways, and regular reviews are being used to make positive changes in the structure of degrees and in individual courses; however, the major weaknesses found have been in documentation and record keeping rather than the method of assessment.

CASC's programs are regularly reviewed using the following methods:

- program reviews in a 5-year cycle as required by OSRHE;
- student satisfaction surveys every 18 months;
- ACT/CAAP linkage reports;
- capstone courses updated to reflect current state of practice;
- licensure in registered nurse, physical therapist assistant, and radiologic technology programs; and
- annual course evaluations.

Outside program accreditation is done by various education and professional organizations, including the following:

- CASC is accredited by the HLC through the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCACS).

- The Department of Nursing Education is approved by the Oklahoma Board of Nursing. Graduates of this state program are eligible to write for the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) for registered nurse.

- The Department of Nursing Education is accredited by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC) through 2018.

- The Physical Therapist Assistant Program is accredited through 2020 by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE).

- The Radiologic Technology Program is accredited by the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT) through 2016.

- The Business Division is accredited by the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) through 2013.

Weaknesses discovered in the review processes include lost or misplaced assessment documentations, multiple locations for maintaining records, weak continuity in assessment processes, and turnover in assessment coordinator and administration (since the last HLC visit, the college went 3-plus years without an assessment coordinator and saw 3 academic vice presidents and 2 college presidents).

Solutions implemented or currently in the implementation process to address these weaknesses include the following:

- CASC purchased the WEAVEonline program and is currently beginning to input outcomes and data. This will eliminate lost or misplaced documents in multiple locations by providing a central repository for all assessment documents.

- The college currently has a functioning assessment committee challenged with the task of ensuring academic excellence with verifiability; the committee has taken over the role of assessment coordinator.

- The assessment committee has made numerous recommendations for improvement of academic assessment, including outcomes for specific programs and outcomes in the general education program.

- The President has been in office for 6 years, and the Vice President of Academic Affairs has been in office for 4 years, thus providing stability for the positions.

CASC has made great strides in assessment since the last HLC visit; however, the college recognizes there is room for improvement. With commitment from the administration and dedication of faculty, CASC will continue to improve.

4.A.2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning.

CASC's Office of Admissions and Records places all transfer credit from colleges and universities accredited by the HLC or other regional association on a CASC transcript. CASC adheres to OSRHE specifications and treats transcripts as official documents that reflect true and complete records of students' academic careers. When transfer credit has been evaluated within the standards of the OSRHE policy on Credit for Extra-institutional Learning *(*4.A.2*)*, the Office of Admissions and Records transfers that credit as transcripted by the sending college, including regularly earned credit and that earned through prior learning measurements. The source of all transfer credit is identified appropriately on the transcript.

Transcripts received from institutions not accredited by a regional association are not placed on CASC's transcripts; however, these transcripts may be evaluated for advanced standing purposes or prior learning credit when appropriate to students' degrees. Vocational education available through Career Technology Centers in Oklahoma is an

example of an area that is not accredited by regional associations, but limited college credit opportunities may be evaluated. The college offers advanced standing credit for CS 1103 - Microcomputer Applications and BUS 2133 - Business Communications when vocational programs of business and computer science are completed with a "C" grade average at a minimum of 525 hours. The American Council on Education (ACE) evaluates military education and provides college credit-hour recommendations on the Army/ACE Registry Transcript (AARTS) and Sailor/Marine ACE Registry Transcript (SMART). The college also awards credit for other recommendations evaluated by ACE.

College credit, for what was formerly known as extra-institutional learning, may be awarded by methods outside the traditional classroom environment.   CASC awards college credit to adult learners through Prior Learning Assessments (PLA), including standardized and departmental challenge examinations, ACE credit evaluation, and limited portfolio development.

The college incorporates prior learning opportunities through standardized examinations, including the following:

- Advanced Placement (AP)

- College-Level Examination Program (CLEP)

- DSST (formerly known as DANTES Subject Standardized Tests)

- Excelsior College (ECE)

- Other assessments identified in *OSRHE Policy and Procedures Manual* Chapter 3 (4.A.3).

The Nursing Department provides exam opportunities to LPN-educated nursing students that validate prior learning. Successful examinees may receive credit for NUR 1129 - Nursing Practice: Human Needs I; NUR 1219 - Nursing Practice: Human Needs II; AHS 1203 - Basic Nutrition, and AHS 1113 - Medical Terminology. The Business Division offers a challenge exam in CS 1103 - Microcomputer Applications when students demonstrate proficiency in computer applications of MSWord, Excel Spreadsheet, PowerPoint, and Internet navigation.

4.A.3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.

OSRHE assures students that the 2-year associate education is transferrable to 4-year programs within Oklahoma state colleges and universities. It also assures students' credits from accredited colleges will be valued in full measure. *OSRHE Policy and Procedures Manual* Chapter 3 assures that transfer credit will be given full credit for colleges with HLC or regional accreditations (4.A.4). In section 3.10.4, transfer credit from within the state system is assured, i.e. 2-year programs (associate) to 4-year programs (baccalaureate) (4.A.5).

CASC also participates in developing relationships with other institutions to assure that courses taken at CASC meet requirements to transfer fully to other institutions. The

college has worked with Northeastern State University (NSU), University of Arkansas Fort Smith (UAFS), University of Oklahoma (OU), and Oklahoma State University (OSU) to ease the credit transfer process. CASC faculty attend the annual meeting of the OSRHE-mandated Course Equivalency Project; this statewide project fosters ongoing development of course matrices so that institutions have guidelines to equivalent courses at other state institutions. Matrices are available online (4.A.6). Guides for course transfer within Oklahoma also are available online (4.A.7).

4.A.4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for the 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.

Prerequisites

Once entry requirements are met, students must score at a required minimum level on the ACT or COMPASS or be required to take remedial courses to satisfy entry requirements into standard courses. These remedial courses consist of ENGL 0123 - Fundamentals of English, ENGL 0113 - Fundamentals of Reading, MATH 0113 - Developmental Math, and MATH 0123 - Intermediate Algebra. Following remediation, or upon full admission to the college, students' access to higher level courses is determined through a set standard of prerequisite requirements.

MATH 0123 - Intermediate Algebra, or equivalent, is a prerequisite for MATH 1513 - College Algebra. Intermediate Algebra and College Algebra, or their equivalents, are prerequisites for MATH 1613 - Plane Trigonometry. College Algebra also is a prerequisite to CHEM 1115 - General Chemistry I, which is a prerequisite to ZOO 2114 - Human Physiology. ZOO 1114 - General Zoology is a prerequisite for Human Physiology and ZOO 2124 - Human Anatomy.

MATH 0123 - Intermediate Algebra is a prerequisite for MATH 2213 - Math Structures I. College Algebra and Plane Trigonometry are prerequisites for MATH 2265 - Analytic Geometry and Calculus I, which is a prerequisite for MATH 2275 - Analytic Geometry and Calculus II. College Algebra is a prerequisite for Business Calculus

ENGL 1113 - Freshman Composition I is a prerequisite for ENGL 1213 - Freshman Composition II, ENGL 2433/2443 - Masterpieces of World Literature I and II, ENGL 2413 - Introduction to Literature, and ENGL 2543 - English Literature to 1800, and ENGL 2653 - English Literature from 1800. Drama 1413 - Acting I is a prerequisite for Drama 1423 - Acting II.

Students must complete SPAN 1115 - Elementary Spanish I before enrolling in SPAN 1225 - Elementary Spanish II.

Students must complete MUS 1131 - Freshman Men's Ensemble I or have instructor permission before taking MUS 1231 - Freshman Men's Ensemble II. MUS 1013 - Freshman Theory I is prerequisite for MUS 1112 - Freshman Ear Training and Sight Singing I, which is a prerequisite for MUS 1122 - Freshman Ear Training and Sight Singing II; concurrent enrollment in MUS 1023 - Freshman Theory II also is required.

ECON 2113 - Principles of Macroeconomics is a prerequisite for ECON 2213 - Principles of Microeconomics.

CS 1103 - Microcomputer Applications is a prerequisite for CS 1433 - Introduction to Photoshop, CS 2003 - Electronic Spreadsheets, CS 2013 - Database Management Systems, CS 2203 - Networking I, CS 2223 - Desktop Publishing, CS 1313 - Programming I, CS 1403 - Digital Media, CS 1413 - Multimedia Presentation and Design, and CS 1423 - Information Security. CS 2203 - Networking I is a prerequisite to CS 2213-Networking II.

Rigor and Expectations of Student Learning

As dictated through CASC's policies and procedures, each instructor is required to provide a syllabus for each course taught. Although faculty are given latitude to design their own syllabi, a template detailing minimum syllabus requirements is provided by the Office of Academic Affairs. As part of faculty evaluations, students indicate that such a document exists and that it has been distributed. Some faculty provide an extra measure of verification that syllabi have been distributed by documenting through signature that students possess syllabi.

In situations where there are many sections of the same course with different instructors, syllabi are developed collectively, and the college is moving toward a common syllabus format.   Some online courses have been standardized through decisions made by stakeholders. The CS1103 - Microcomputer Applications course is one example of a course taught on the Poteau and Sallisaw campuses in which the syllabus was developed through collaboration of instructors on both campuses (4.A.8).

Access to Learning Resources

CASC provides access to a variety of learning resources. The Learning Resource Center (LRC) on the Poteau campus and the Tutoring Center on the Sallisaw campus provide tutoring and testing for all students. The LRC also provides computers for research, textbooks for students to use while working in the center, math and English program study guides, handouts and notes for class lectures with the permission of instructors, and note-takers for students with disabilities. Full-time LRC employees provide a semester-by-semester tutoring schedule to give students access to a wide range of assistance for most subject areas. The Poteau campus provides students 2 computer labs in the Business Center, a computer lab in the library, and additional labs in the Nursing Department and in

the Ollie Center for Academic Excellence. The Sallisaw campus provides a computer lab in the Mayo Center, a computer lab in the Mitchell Library, 24 laptops dedicated to the science labs, and 17 desktops dedicated to the nursing lab. For students with their own technologies, both campuses are covered extensively by a wireless network. Wireless capabilities are available throughout the buildings and in specialized seating areas provided for students. These resources, along with the LRC, provide a distraction-minimized environment to students.

All learning resources follow *Americans with Disabilities Act* (ADA) guidelines. Students with disabilities, after seeking approval from the campus ADA Coordinator, also may receive resources to aid them in their studies, including readers, note-takers, and a distraction-minimized environment for testing.

Libraries on the Poteau and Sallisaw campuses support effective learning and teaching by providing a comprehensive collection of books, periodicals, databases, eBooks, and audiovisuals relevant to the college's academic programs, general information, and enrichment of information literacy knowledge. To enhance accessibility, the libraries are open 58 public service hours per week, with 24/7online availability to electronic resources. During fall and spring semesters, libraries are open 8 a.m.-8:30 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays and 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Fridays.   Summer semester hours are 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays; libraries are closed Fridays during the summer. The libraries are members of the American Library Association, the OK-Share Reciprocal Agreement, and Amigos Library Services.

The libraries provide a qualified and knowledgeable staff to assist patrons and to maintain a quality, accessible learning environment. In the spring of 2011, library staff at the Poteau campus included the Director of Libraries (master's degree in library science), a full-time library technical assistant (bachelor's degree in liberal studies), a part-time evening circulation assistant (associate degree), and a part-time circulation assistant. Library staff at the Sallisaw campus included an assistant librarian (bachelor of arts), a part-time evening circulation assistant (certificate of mastery in child development), and a part-time circulation assistant (associate degree). Several student workers also assist the library staff at both libraries. Library staff provide training and assistance to students and employees through scheduled orientations and one-on-one assistance.
The Joe E. White Library on the Poteau campus was remodeled and expanded in 2007 to provide students, staff, and faculty an inviting atmosphere that is conducive to study, including open stacks, reading/study areas, a reference area, circulation desk, study carrels, and a copy machine. Computers are available for patron use and there are 2 group study rooms as well as an audiovisual area for individuals or small groups to view DVDs. Additionally, wireless Internet access is available. The increased ease of access to materials is a benefit to all patrons. The Poteau campus also provides a piece of Oklahoma history by housing the Carl Albert Museum which features memorabilia from Carl Albert, late Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and college namesake; Charlie Ward,

administrative assistant to Speaker Carl Albert, and Larry Dickerson, the late state senator who represented the Poteau area.

The Delores O'Guin Mitchell Library at the Sallisaw campus opened in 2007 and serves as a central gathering place for students, fostering peer involvement. The Delores O'Guin Mitchell Library is primarily an electronic library, offering computers for patron use as well as reading and study areas and a copy machine. Students and faculty in Sallisaw also have access to resources in the Poteau campus library. Materials requested from the Poteau campus are placed in interoffice mail for same-day shipment to the Sallisaw campus. The library also offers wireless Internet access. A reserve room with a print book and periodical collection for the nursing program also is available.

The libraries also have the capacity to place materials on reserve for students and faculty. Students access reserve materials at the circulation desks. Ongoing evaluation of library materials ensures the resources are current and relevant. The libraries have an online catalog providing detailed bibliographic records for more than 18,000 cataloged materials. The libraries subscribe to numerous electronic resources, including databases, eBooks, and streamed videos. Faculty and staff also have access to Magna Commons, an online library for presentations of various professional development resources. These resources can be accessed in the library or through any campus computer. Remote access to all electronic resources also is available around the clock.

Strengths of the library lie within its online, remote accessibility; multidisciplinary coverage, and academic resources, which have met the requirements of the Health Sciences Division individual programs' accreditations. The library recognizes that the limited number of eBooks and lack of a comprehensive virtual library tour accessible via the Internet are areas of concern.

Faculty Qualifications

When CASC hires faculty, education requirements are stated in job announcements. To ensure that faculty qualifications meet the highest possible standards, the institution, through the Human Resources Office, maintains current files on each faculty member. The files include verified transcript information from granting institutions and other employment data. Currently, out of 55 full-time faculty, 38 (69%) have a master's degree, 14 (26%) have a bachelor's degree and 3 (5%) have a doctorate. All new CASC employees are subject to a State of Oklahoma background check in addition to vetting through the interview process with divisional and cross-sectional personnel.

Dual Credit Rigor and Structure

High school students enrolling concurrently at CASC must meet the criteria for both the high school curricular requirements and the high school performance

requirements. Students meeting both the high school curricular and the high school performance requirements are eligible for admission.

There is no differentiation between courses as it applies to dual credit programs. Courses delivered that qualify for dual credit are taught by instructors in the same classrooms or online and are identical to standard courses. Dual credit courses may be delivered through Interactive Television (ITV) using the same instructional staff and in the same classroom environment as regular higher education courses.   Dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent to higher education curriculum in learning outcomes and levels of achievement because they are the same courses.

4.A.5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation as appropriate to its educational purposes.

CASC is accredited by the HLC through the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC), the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), the Joint Review Committee on Education Radiologic Technology (JRCERT), and the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP). The college also is accredited or recognized by the following higher education agencies or bodies: OSRHE, American Council on Education (ACE), Oklahoma State Accrediting Agency (OSAA), Oklahoma Association of Community Colleges (OACC), American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC), Higher Education Alumni Council of Oklahoma (HEACO), North Central Council of Junior Colleges (NCCJC), American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA), and Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT). Further information regarding specific accrediting agencies may be viewed in evidence files (4.A.9).

Additionally, CASC has entered into partnerships over the last decade with several other entities, including East Central University (ECU), Ada, OK; Franklin University, Columbus, OH; NSU, Tahlequah, OK; and Southeastern Oklahoma State University (SOSU), Durant, OK.

4.A.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.

CASC actively evaluates the success of its graduates. For terminal degrees in the allied health fields (RN, PTA, RT), programs track the student licensure pass rates to attempt to track graduates' employment rates. From 2008 to 2010, the PTA program had a 100% licensure pass rate and a 100 % employment rate (4.A.10). For the classes of 2010 and 2011, the RT program had a 100 % employment rate (4.A.11). The RN program does an

8th -month post-graduation questionnaire.   Students who were graduated and responded to the questionnaire obtained a 99%, 97%, and a 90% hospital employment for 2009, 2010, and 2011 respectively (4.A.12). The first-time NCLEX-RN candidate pass rates for 2009, 2010, and 2011 were 100%, 100%, and 94.44% respectively for the Poteau campus and 100%, 83.33%, and 66.67% respectively for the Sallisaw campus (4.A.13). Additionally, allied health faculty are in frequent contact with employers at clinical sites where any curricular issues can be addressed.

CASC international students who transferred to the University of Arkansas are averaging a cumulative 3.57 GPA (4.A.14). CASC works to ensure its graduates are ready for transfer to 4-year institutions by participating OSRHE's Course Equivalency Project (CEP), "…a postsecondary education resource service that provides course equivalency information to facilitate student transfer within the Oklahoma System of Higher Education. This database contains faculty-generated course equivalency information for hundreds of courses offered at public institutions in Oklahoma" (4.A.15). CASC also has begun using the National Student Clearing House database to assess its graduates who transfer to 4-year institutions.

Additionally, the Student Support Services (SSS) TRiO program serves college students who are considered to be at risk. The U.S. Department of Education requires SSS to track its graduates to monitor what percent transfer to pursue advanced degrees. Of the students who were served by SSS and completed degrees at CASC during 2007-2011, 49% did transfer to other institutions of higher learning (4.A.16).

4.A. Strengths:

- Course prerequisites are well established and maintained.

- Dual credit courses maintain the required level of rigor.

- Resources and library services are readily available on the Poteau campus, on the Sallisaw campus, and to online students.

- The newly-expanded and remodeled libraries and LRC on the Poteau campus provide easy, comfortable access to students.

- CASC provides a variety of databases for student and faculty use.

4.A. Concerns:

- Lost or misplaced assessment documentations are frequent.

- Multiple locations for maintaining records increase work.

- Weak continuity in assessment processes results in difficulty verifying information.

- Turnover in assessment coordinator and administration (since the last HLC visit, the college went 3-plus years without an assessment coordinator and saw 3 academic vice presidents and 2 college presidents) has increased weakness in this area.

- The library staff includes only one professionally degreed librarian to provide resource and information literacy instruction.

- The library lacks adequate full-time employees to cover hours of operation.

- The Sallisaw campus library is staffed by part-time employees, lacks any full-time employees, and is primarily an electronic library.

- Steps have been taken to verify and establish course equivalency through horizontal alignment discussions and syllabi comparisons; however, this needs to continue to improve.

- Information on transfer students' success is lacking.

4.A. Recommendations:

- Increase the number of full-time staff on the Sallisaw campus.

- Begin gathering transfer data on CASC graduates using the National Student Clearing House to provide to academic divisions and to stakeholders.

- Centralize documentation pertaining to graduate success.

- Increase library staff on the Poteau and Sallisaw campuses.

- Continue improvement on course equivalency both intra-institutional and extra-institutional.

4.A. Summary:

CASC demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its programs through the dedication and expertise of the college's staff and faculty. The college maintains regular reviews at the local level with faculty and student evaluations and on the state level through OSRHE. In addition, there are student satisfaction surveys and licensure evaluations. All stakeholders are provided an opportunity to be part of the quality assurance process. The Office of Admissions and Records maintains high quality through the evaluation of the credit that it transcripts from other institutions and includes guidelines for awarding

credit for other forms of prior learning. The Office of Admissions and Records also follows procedures and processes that allow CASC credit to transfer to other institutions of higher learning. CASC actively evaluates the success of its graduates. Where applicable, student licensure rates are tracked to derive employment figures and to ensure U.S. Department of Education requirements are met.   CASC seeks to provide the education graduates need to foster success in their futures. Faculty actively participate in the State Regents Course Equivalency Project, and rigor of courses is maintained through use of professional faculty and the evaluation process. There is no differentiation between courses as it applies to dual credit programs. All courses maintain the same rigor regardless of the audience. Students have access to many learning resources through the LRC and state-of-the-art library facilities on the Sallisaw and Poteau campuses. In addition, computer labs are located conveniently on both campuses. The Human Resources Department ensures that faculty meet the highest possible standards and maintain documentation on qualifications and legal requirements. Although CASC recognizes its many strengths as they apply to quality of programs, the college also realizes there is a much work still remaining and that ultimately human resources will be the key to putting recommendations into practice.

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

CASC uses a variety of assessment tools to validate educational achievement throughout its programs. These include in-class testing, CAAP, course projects, and capstone projects. Students also provide input through satisfaction surveys that are part of some capstone classes (4.B.1). Program and course outcomes also are studied and evaluated regularly. Most recently, CASC has implemented the WEAVEonline Assessment Management System to further streamline and manage the evaluation of educational practices on campus.

4.B.1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for the assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.

The college has clearly stated general education, course, and program outcomes. These were developed and are annually reviewed by faculty in each discipline. The assessment of student learning is hierarchical in nature, beginning at the course level with course objectives and goals being provided to students in syllabi. Once assessment is complete at the course level, assessment then moves to the department, division, and college levels to ensure the goals of student learning for general education outcomes have been met. General education outcomes are provided to each faculty member through WEAVEonline. These outcomes are tied to the college's mission as it pertains to a particular course or program. Faculty use WEAVEonline to track assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals by establishing a mission and purpose for each course. Courses are then assigned goals with learning outcomes and objectives. The learning outcomes and objectives are assigned measurable targets, and action plans are developed based upon the results of the measured findings. This process of assessment of student learning allows faculty to monitor goals for student learning for each course throughout each semester. In addition to access for continuous review of

learning outcomes, each division reviews course and program outcomes annually in the fall semester (4.B.2). As a result of systematic review, changes can be made to outcomes if they need to be updated or replaced. The Assessment Committee is charged with reviewing the general education outcomes. If the criteria for success are not met, recommendations for improvement are communicated to faculty who then develop and implement an action plan (4.B.3).

4.B.2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.
CASC is moving forward with the recommendation to use software to keep track of many facets of the institution that had been kept manually and in many locations. Information is now being moved to a more centralized real-time model, WEAVEonline, a higher education management tool that provides the technology to help align multiple processes. The college needed guidance on a real-time snapshot model of how assessment, planning, accreditation, budgeting, and other items critical to quality assurance interact with each other. WEAVEonline meetd these needs and also maps program outcomes and objectives, giving all members of the college ownership in the assessment process. This tool also documents how each function is critical to the college mission. WEAVEonline organizes and simplifies the gathering of pertinent data, which will provide a real-time view of the college at any point. Outcomes measured each semester are currently being added to the WEAVEonline Assessment Management System.

All 2- and 4-year public colleges and universities in Oklahoma must collect and provide a common set of data concerning student enrollment, student graduation, and course enrollment to OSRHE in a series of reports called the Unitized Data System (UDS). On behalf of the college, OSRHE in turn submits a similar data set to the federal government's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Both entities compile these data and publish retention rates and graduation rates. Retention rates are reported based on one fall term to the next fall term; graduation rates are reported on the basis of 3 years for 2-year colleges (150% of normal 2-year degree completion).

4.B.3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.

On Sept. 23, 2011, Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin proclaimed that the state will join 28 others in the Complete College America Initiative (CCA) (4.B.4). In this alliance, state leaders have committed to setting goals, measuring progress, publicizing results, and reinventing higher education to smooth the path toward degree completion. To increase the number of graduates, OSRHE initiated the Reach Higher Degree Completion Program to encourage students to "complete what they started" and to reduce barriers to degree completion.

In keeping with this philosophy of maximizing student success, CASC offers assistance to students experiencing academic difficulties. Assistance includes academic and career counseling and free tutoring. Along with counseling, academic advisors are available to meet with students having academic issues, and the Viking Alert system is used to make those initial contacts. The Viking Alert system currently is somewhat of a manual

process, but it is being upgraded with software that is more intuitive, is designed to facilitate student persistence, and will give faculty more flexibility when using this system.

Retention efforts are coordinated in the Office of Student Affairs. Retention begins at enrollment when students are directed to academic advisors who will have an interest in students' areas of study as well as students' individual needs that might affect their success in college. Instructors notify the Office of Student Affairs when students have excessive absences or academic difficulties, and students may be referred to counselors and others who can help resolve problems which might otherwise result in withdrawal from college.

4.B.4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other institutional staff members.

CASC uses several processes to assess student learning. First among assessment practices is use of national and instructor-prepared assessments in most areas and courses. Course syllabi also clearly state the desired outcomes and measurements of each course. Capstone courses also are required to reflect student learning.

Additionally, CASC has an active Assessment Committee and has implemented WEAVEonline to better compile, organize, and use assessment information across campus. The Academic Affairs Committee and Online Education Committee also play significant roles in assessing the practices within the college and student learning.

4.B. Strengths:

- The institution is committed to educational achievement and improvement.

- CASC actively assesses programs and courses.

4.B. Concerns:

- Documentary evidence is sometimes misplaced or missing.

- The assessment being done is not documented**.**

4.B. Recommendations:

- Give the assessment committee more authority in implementing assessment procedures.

- Get staff and faculty actively involved in the WEAVEonline process.

4.B. Summary:

The college is committed to educational achievement and improvement, and CASC continues to use assessment tools to validate educational achievement. The college has identified an institutional shortcoming in the formalized effort to document evidence and in use of evidence to improve programs when documentation is available. Assessment, however, is taking place. Concerns are centered on the documentation and archiving process. CASC has an established Assessment Committee, and these stakeholders are focused on streamlining the assessment process. WEAVEonline is allowing staff the opportunity to establish processes to correct these particular issues. The institution assesses learning outcomes and reports data concerning student enrollment, graduation, and course enrollment to OSRHE using the Unitized Data System. To improve student learning, this information is used to help make decisions on directions for improvement as it applies to offering students experiencing academic difficulties the assistance they need to become successful. Retention efforts not only have been mandated by the governor but also are an integral part of the college's operating processes. Student retention is coordinated by the Office of Student Affairs. The institution's goal is a quality process that has built-in feedback loops and a dedication to documentation of CASC's assessment efforts.

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

CASC is committed to its stakeholders and demonstrates this through attention to the success that students see in the completion of their degrees and certificate programs. The college dedicates time and effort to retention, persistence, and completion by engaging students during the educational process before the threshold of failure is reached. In addition to counseling students on a one-on-one basis, instructors use the Viking Alert system. Although this is currently a manual process, future plans call for a more automated procedure. Students are contacted personally, and reaching out is most instructors' first official step in retaining students. The college is fortunate to have the commitment of staff and faculty, and their dedication to student success creates an environment in which personal attention to the issues of students are addressed before those issues get to the Viking Alert stage. CASC also has created an enrollment/guidance center to not only provide students enrollment information and guidance but also to demonstrate commitment to students' success.

4.C.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.

Collaboration among the state's public colleges and universities improves student retention rates and increases graduation rates. CASC begins retention efforts with first-time entering freshmen through required freshman orientation courses. Other efforts include placing students into appropriate remedial coursework to gain competency in English and math. Course scheduling is flexible and includes traditional on-campus and web-based courses, distance learning, accelerated and full-term completion schedules,

and course subjects offered at expected semester scheduling. The current percentage of Oklahoma's young adults with college degrees is 30%. Based on this completion shortfall, the state has been mandated to improve completion rates through CCA. This nationwide effort to improve completion rates will become a platform to help improve CASC student retention and completion. Although CCA is an ambitious initiative, the college is determined to meet the challenge and to provide whatever means feasible to make students successful (4.C.1).

The Reach Higher Degree Completion Program was implemented recently to encourage inactive students to return to college. Peer tutoring is offered to students who need additional course support. Faculty use the Viking Alert system to contact students who have excessive absences or poor academic performance in a course and to encourage students to discuss potential or existing problems with instructors.

A variety of federal and state financial aid resources also encourage students to remain in college. Degree planning is available to students in published documents and on a walk-in basis at the Office of Admissions and Records. Students also may visit advisors during regular office hours or by appointment.

4.C.2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completions of its programs.

The college collects information on student persistence and completion of programs from a variety of resources, including degrees conferred by the institution, enrollment in courses requiring completion of prerequisites, job placement surveys, and transfer information as reported by the National Student Clearinghouse. CASC libraries report every 2 years to the national Center for Education Statistics through IPEDS, providing data and analyzing trends of the institution. The CASC Office of Admissions and Records gathers student data from which information is uploaded to the OSRHE UDS and then in turn to IPEDS each term. From these data, statistics are published on enrollment, retention, graduation, and other college information and are easily accessible on UDS and IPEDS websites (4.C.2 and 4.C.3).

Retention statistics measure the percent of fall first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students who continue to the next fall term. This is a positive measure for CASC. The most recent OSRHE data shows that in each of the 5 years listed below, students return to CASC at a higher rate than at other 2-year colleges in the Oklahoma system (4.C.4).

First-Year Persistence Rates First-time Full-Time Freshman Within the Institution
2-Year Oklahoma Colleges under OSRHE

Institution	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
CSC	53.1%	59.0%	50.9%	47.6%	55.0%
EOSC	57.9%	58.5%	57.1%	48.8%	57.3%
MSC	*46.3%*	*56.5%*	*47.2%*	*51.8%*	*50.4%*
NEOAMC	59.7%	56.5%	50.9%	59.6%	48.5%
NOC	61.2%	58.2%	50.8%	52.1%	49.0%
TCC	57.6%	62.1%	61.7%	59.0%	61.1%
OSU-OKC	49.8%	56.8%	47.3%	47.8%	50.0%
OSUTB-OKM	61.3%	64.6%	62.9%	64.7%	63.4%
WOSC	52.7%	62.3%	53.0%	57.1%	48.4%
RCC	57.7%	50.2%	51.4%	45.1%	50.7%
CASC	**64.3%**	**68.0%**	**58.3%**	**64.9%**	**60.4%**
SSC	54.1%	51.6%	50.9%	48.5%	54.5%
RSC	50.1%	53.5%	47.3%	46.8%	47.2%
OCCC	53.7%	57.0%	48.1%	55.3%	51.7%
Community	**55.3%**	**59.0%**	**52.7%**	**54.3%**	**53.8%**

CASC rates among the top in graduation rates. As seen in the table below, a 17.2% average graduation rate was calculated for the 13 community colleges in Oklahoma state system in 2009-2010 academic year. In each of the 5 years indicated, CASC exceeded the state average for 2-year colleges and recorded either the highest or second highest percentage of graduates. According to OSRHE's First-Time Full-Time Freshmen Within the Institution Report, graduation rates at CASC are at the top for 2-year colleges and are higher than some of the state's regional universities (4.C.5).

The graduation rate is calculated as the total number of graduates divided by the total number of fall first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students.

5-Year Graduation Rate
2-Year Oklahoma Colleges under OSRHE

Institution	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
CSC	32.8%	19.4%	18.9%	14.9%	19.0%
EOSC	29.7%	27.4%	29.7%	25.0%	25.8%
MSC	17.8%	20.9%	15.2%	16.6%	23.2%
NEOAMC	24.6%	17.9%	19.7%	27.8%	22.9%
NOC	26.9%	16.8%	17.8%	18.2%	21.3%
TCC	16.5%	13.8%	15.1%	14.0%	13.6%
OSU-OKC	6.0%	5.3%	7.6%	8.5%	6.7%
OSUIT-OKM	31.5%	32.4%	33.4%	35.8%	35.0%
WOSC	20.1%	20.3%	19.3%	22.2%	17.6%
RCC	19.6%	22.6%	19.9%	17.9%	21.8%
CASC	**42.2%**	**39.1%**	**33.1%**	**31.9%**	**27.1%**
SSC	27.2%	20.4%	19.8%	20.2%	23.8%
RSC	8.3%	9.5%	9.9%	8.1%	8.7%
OCCC	8.2%	8.8%	7.4%	8.3%	8.0%
Community	19.8%	18.3%	17.0%	17.2%	17.2%

4.C.3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements warranted by the data.

Among its peers, CASC retains a higher percentage of students from one fall term to the next and graduates a larger percentage of students. These are positive measures of student success that have been recognized through the OSRHE Brain Gain initiative to increase the number of Oklahomans with a college degree (4.C.6).

CASC, however, is committed to analyzing the data and making improvements. One way the college is working on improvements to its graduation rate with the OSRHE-sponsored efforts is with the Reach Higher Degree Completion Program. Through this venture, Oklahoma colleges work cooperatively to help adults complete their degrees. CASC is installing a new Degree Audit software program that will be available late in the fall 2012 term. Students and faculty will be able to quickly view what courses have been completed and which courses remain for graduation. Manual degree checks are conducted in the Office of Admissions and Records, and students are contacted by e-mail or telephone about results. The college removed the $15 graduation fee beginning in the fall 2012 term to reinforce the college's message to finish the degree.

Data on enrollment, majors, graduation, FTE, first-time students, and other variables are provided to administration. Based on this information, the Vice President of Academic Affairs modifies dates for pre-enrollment and reassigns academic advisors to heavier-demand majors. The academic vice president works with division chairs to offer hybrid or more web-delivered classes and to modify degree plans to meet changing student demands.

The college believes retention efforts must be improved and strengthened. CASC offers a tuition rate that is one of the lowest in the state and in the region. Out-of-state tuition is waived for all students; in-state tuition is available to all students taking classes with CASC. At its September 2012 meeting, the CASC Board of Regents approved a new Enrollment Manager to help link admissions, advisement, financial, and business functions; improve student services, and strengthen retention, persistence, and graduation efforts.

4.C.4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice.

CASC breaks this process into data collection, data analysis, data distribution, and data availability to the general public.

Data Collection

> Data collection begins when students apply for admission. Students submit an Application for Admission on which a set amount of data is requested, including demographic data, educational background, degree and major, academic history, and transcript information. Documentation is provided to support admission to the college and to verify validity of information provided. Documentation includes an official high school transcript; official transcripts from all colleges previously attended; test scores from ACT, SAT, or COMPASS; GED exam results; Social Security card, and driver license. Data may be entered by college personnel or by applying students themselves through online access to admissions applications.

Data Analysis

> Students then enroll in courses, and their completions are compiled per term. Semester reporting on student and enrollment data is sent to OSRHE for the statewide UDS collections. OSRHE, in turn, publishes retention rates and graduation rates for all public colleges and universities in Oklahoma. Each term, the federal government receives data from OSRHE through IPEDS. These 2 collections provide primary sources of data from which state and national enrollment, graduation rates, cost of attendance, staff, and faculty may be examined. Data which provides placement information also is gathered from ACT/SAT. In addition, GPA and ACT/SAT numbers provide scholarship eligibility information.

> Additional reporting may be conducted by qualified personnel who have access to the Jenzabar PX software database. The management information systems director and information technology personnel provide reports, tables, graphs, charts, and other data analyzed for research or to better institutional efforts concerning enrollment, graduation, degree offerings, and other concerns.

<u>Data Availability</u>

It is common to have the press, researchers, other colleges, military recruiters, and the general public request information from the college; however, the college is in compliance with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations and does not disclose education records without prior consent from students unless data are considered directory information or fall under one of the exceptions provided under the law. Typically, information reported in aggregate statistics such as number of graduates per semester may be readily disclosed without students' consent. These requests are made to the Office of Admissions and Records where staff process eligible requests and consider them on a case-by-case basis. Information requests from the press, however, are sent to the Director of Public Relations.

4.C. Strengths:
- The college has a strong track record of high graduation and retention rates as compared to other Oklahoma 2-year institutions.

- Data has been used to implement changes in enrollment and advisement processes.

4.C. Concerns:
- Information on retention and graduation has not been widely used at the division or program levels.

4.C. Recommendations:
- Automate the Viking Alert system.

- Disseminate graduation and retention data annually to faculty and division chairs.

- Collect not only campus-wide graduation and retention data but also program-specific data for dissemination.

- Begin using the National Student Clearinghouse to track persistence of CASC's graduates who pursue advanced degrees.

4.C. Summary:

CASC is committed to educational improvement. A quality model based on the gathering of data provides only a partial plan for success. This is why CASC closely monitors retention, persistence, and degree completion. The college collaborates with other state institutions to make the transition from CASC to a university as easy as possible. In addition, Complete College America along with the Reach Higher Degree Completion Program encourages students who are inactive to return to college to complete their studies. Persistence data from OSRHE show that students return to CASC

at a higher rate than at other 2-year colleges in the Oklahoma system and that CASC rates among the top in graduation rates. Even with these successes, CASC will continue to collect and to analyze data and to make improvements based on the findings. The methodologies for information gathering reflect good practice, and CASC is committed to gathering useful artifacts which support quality assurance of its programs.

Criterion Four -- List of Evidence/ Supporting Documents

4.A.1 - Faculty Evaluation Samples

4.A.2 - *OSRHE Policy and Procedures Manual* Chapter 3, Section 3.15, p. 145

4.A.3 - *OSRHE Policy and Procedures Manual* Chapter 3, Section 3.15, p. 145

4.A.4 - *OSRHE Policy and Procedures Manual* Chapter 3, Section 3.10.3, p. 116

4.A.5 - *OSRHE Policy and Procedures Manual* Chapter 3, Section 3.10.4, p. 118

4.A.6 - Course Transfer

4.A.7 - Transfer Guide

4.A.8 - Microcomputer Applications syllabus

4.A.9 - Accrediting Agencies Information

4.A.10 - 2008- 2010 PTA licensure and employment percentages

4.A.11 - Radiologic Technology program percentages

4.A.12 - RN program graduate questionnaire

4.A.13 – NCLEX-RN Pass Rate

4.A.14 - International student GPA at the University of Arkansas

4.A.15 - Course Equivalency Project

4.A.16 - SSS Annual Performance Report for 2010-2011

4.B.1 - Business Capstone Survey

4.B.2 - Degree Program Outcome Review Schedule

4.B.3 - CASC Assessment Plan_2012

4.B.4 - *Complete College America*

4.C.1 - *Complete College America*

4.C.2 - OSRHE reports

4.C.3 - IPEDS reports

4.C.4 - Retention Outcomes

4.C.5 - Graduation Outcomes

4.C.6 - Brain Gain