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November 27, 2023

Dr. C. Kegler
President
Fort Scott Community College
2108 S. Horton
Fort Scott, KS 66701

Dear President Kegler:

Fort Scott Community College's interim report has been reviewed. The staff analysis of the report is attached.

On behalf of the Higher Learning Commission, staff received the report on the completion of a holistic assessment plan; program level learning outcomes for each degree program; evidence of collection and use of assessment data to assure improvements are not limited to individual course sections; evidence of reporting across all programs; and the creation of measurable and meaningful learning outcomes for co-curricular programs, examples of data use to improve these programs.

No further reports are required.

The institution's next reaffirmation of accreditation is scheduled for 2025-26.

For more information on the interim report process, contact HLC at interimreports@hlcommission.org. Your HLC staff liaison is Anthea Sweeney.

Thank you,
Higher Learning Commission

cc: Sonia Gugnani, Accreditation Liaison Officer
Anthea Sweeney, HLC Staff Liaison

STAFF ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONAL REPORT**DATE:** November 16, 2023**STAFF LIAISON:** Anthea Sweeney**REVIEWED BY:** Lee Bash**INSTITUTION:** Fort Scott Community College, Fort Scott, KS**EXECUTIVE OFFICER:** C. Kegler, President**PREVIOUS HLC ACTION AND SOURCES:**

A report on completion of a holistic assessment plan; program level learning outcomes for each degree program; evidence of collection and use of assessment data to assure improvements are not limited to individual course sections; evidence of reporting across all programs; and the creation of measurable and meaningful learning outcomes for co-curricular programs, examples of data use to improve these programs.

REPORT PRESENTATION AND QUALITY: The Fort Scott Community College interim report is written in response to a team report for a mid-cycle review in 2020, that was further modified by the Institution Action Committee (IAC), who specified an interim report rather than the focus visit that was first envisioned by the team. The expectations articulated by the IAC are included in the above section. The interim report is well organized with a seven-page narrative that is supported by 13 appendix entries contained in a total of 48 pages, which support and provide evidence for the narrative. There are five stipulations cited in the above expectations and the narrative has five sections, so the report is well-organized, thorough, and comprehensive.

REPORT SUMMARY: The Fort Scott Community College interim report begins with an introduction by enumerating the following headings: 1) Action with Interim Monitoring, 2) Interim Report, 3) Core Component 4.B., and 4) Areas of Focus, to fully present the information leading to the expectations articulated by IAC in the above section.

The next section begins with an Assessment Timeline that begins in 2016 and continues into 2025. This timeline helps understand the progress and development within the institution regarding assessment.

The first narrative section is titled, “Holistic Assessment Plan,” (the first expectation that is articulated in the above section of this document). This section begins with an overview of how the institution approached this challenge, laying out who was involved (particularly the assessment committee), details about how they worked and what they created, leading up to the three components that comprise a holistic assessment plan, as supported by an Appendix citation that supports the narrative and provides further evidence: 1) Course and Program Level Assessment, 2) Institutional Level Assessment, and 3) Co-curricular Level Assessment. Each of these components is described in detail. Course and program level assessment offers a nine-step cycle that covers four

traditional semesters. The description also notes that Blackboard developed better tools and was able to generate course-level and program-level reports, which are distributed to departments each semester. Institutional level assessment relates to the institutional subcommittee, created in fall of 2021 as a subcommittee to the assessment committee. They identified two learning outcomes relevant to all students, regardless of degree tract and that support the institutional mission: 1) academic success and 2) social responsibility. While this process is still in its early stages, the information is supported by an Appendix citation. Co-curricular level assessment is part of the holistic model, but pertinent information is presented in the narrative later in this Report Summary.

The second section is titled “Program Learning Outcomes for Degree Programs.” There are two subsections that are presented here: 1) General Education Learning Outcomes and 2) Career and Technical Education Programs. The first subsection identifies four general education outcomes, regardless of degree program: 1) Mathematical Skills, 2) Critical Thinking Skills, 3) Technology Skills, and 4) Communication Skills. The narrative then notes that the assessment committee is responsible for providing guidance for collecting, reviewing, and implementing changes to achieve improvement in the outcomes. To address this, the committee created the Assessment Report Template and provided the following support: 1) Creating and piloting Gen. Ed. rubrics, 2) Providing training for assessing rubrics, 3) Establishing inter-rater reliability, 4) Collecting data on general education outcomes, 5) Reviewing results, and 6) Providing feedback. This section also notes that the Associate of Applied Science degree includes care and technical education programs learning outcomes based on industry-recognized and accrediting agency standards in their fields.

The third section is titled “Evidence of Collection and Use of Assessment Data.” It provides details that specify how the title of this section relates to the process and system used by the institution. The process involves a four-semester assessment cycle to gather data on all program learning outcomes before the faculty complete a summative assessment to evaluate the impact of their implemented changes on student learning.

Furthermore, the VPAA and Director of Library Services created assessment sites for each department, while the Assessment Committee created formative mid-cycle reporting templates to supplement end-of-cycle summative reporting templates. As noted at the conclusion of the section, “These advanced in the (institution’s) assessment process empower faculty to make data-informed decisions for program improvement.” This section is extensively supported by Appendix citations that provide evidence and more complete information.

Section four is titled, “Evidence of Reporting Across All Programs.” A central and important aspect of the institution’s progress states, “Today, 90% of the departments/programs have been collecting data on all their learning outcomes and reporting on at least one outcome.... Each program utilizes the formative assessment or summative assessment reporting template depending on where they are in the cycle.” The section continues by itemizing nine improvements in reporting attributable to new practices and initiatives.

Section five is the final section, titled, “Creation of Measurable and Meaningful Outcomes Co-Curricular Programs.” In the fall of 2021, the institution formed a co-curricular subcommittee to focus on co-curricular assessment. First, the committee defined “co-curricular” and identified co-curricular programs, followed by creating “measurable and meaningful” outcomes for each

program. A plan was created in the fall of 2022 with the objective of achieving first-phase co-curricular objectives to institutional learning outcomes and supporting co-curricular programs in collecting data and reporting results by summer 2024, by starting with three programs. These three programs have successfully gathered data and created actions plans for one or more learning outcomes, as supported by an Appendix citation.

REPORT ANALYSIS: The Fort Scott Community College interim report first demonstrates that the institution is fully mindful of expectations associated with this report, based on the opening section that contains all the details about IAC's expectations. The use of the Assessment Timeline reflects that the institution is thinking longitudinally and sequentially, as it builds into the future (2025). The five sections align with the IAC expectations in a manner that ensures all aspects are covered so that the report is thorough, comprehensive, and the report reveals that the institution has provided detailed, extensive, and unambiguous evidence. Ultimately, the interim provides extensive information that should serve as a blue print model for the institution as it engages in planning and further developing its assessment program.

ANALYSIS CONCLUDING STATEMENT: The Fort Scott Community College interim report should provide a strong foundation for the institution in its preparation for the upcoming reaffirmation visit in 2025-2026. Assuming the institution will continue in its efforts described in this report, the team should encounter a strong institution with established and highly functional assessment practices. Those areas identified in this report that are still somewhat formative should be well-developed and the institution should make a strong impression on the visiting team.

STAFF FINDING:

Note the relevant Criterion, Core Component(s) or Assumed Practice(s) 4.B.

Statements of Analysis (check one below)

- ☒ Evidence demonstrates adequate progress in the area of focus.
- ☐ Evidence demonstrates that further organizational attention is required in the area of focus.
- ☐ Evidence demonstrates that further organizational attention and HLC follow-up are required.
- ☐ Evidence is insufficient and a HLC focused visit is warranted.

STAFF ACTION: Receive the report on the completion of a holistic assessment plan; program level learning outcomes for each degree program; evidence of collection and use of assessment data to assure improvements are not limited to individual course sections; evidence of reporting across all programs; and the creation of measurable and meaningful learning outcomes for co-curricular programs, examples of data use to improve these programs.

No further reports are required.

The institution's next reaffirmation of accreditation is scheduled for 2025-26.