

## Summary from HLC Team Report 2023

The HLC Team of five experienced trained evaluators determined that BCC has “Met” the expectations for accreditation with the sole exception of Core Component C under Criterion Two.

### Team Conclusion

“Butler Community College is a mature institution capably serving its main/residential campus and additional locations with certificate and degree programs and support services that are designed for local community success in career employment and transfer. The college's reputation is enhanced by its many cultural contributions and community service projects. The college Vision and Mission statements are well publicized and vital to institutional operations; employees focus on providing an environment and appropriate resources to support students through to completion of educational goals. The institution enjoys stable financial and physical resources with campus energy focused on Mission fulfillment. BCC seeks community engagement with its external communities through its own Board of Trustees, Advisory Committees and business/industry partnerships.”

### Points for Praise cited by the Team

#### Criterion One - Mission

##### 1A – Mission articulated

“The college's conduct in this work [Mission & Vision statements] is a clear complement to its stated Value of Caring in that there was great intention exercised to listen to stakeholders.”

##### 1B – Commitment to Common Good

“Most recently, the successful work of the college's Foundation in fundraising to support the Culinary Institute is a testament how well regarded the college is and how positive an impact and reputation the college enjoys.”

##### 1C - Civic Engagement & Diversity

“During a session devoted to the IC (Inclusion Council), the passion and commitment of the members of the IC was impressive. IC is rightly called a grassroots initiative borne of several faculty members' inspiration while attending a conference in 2010 and returning to Butler to grow support among faculty and staff. The IC has grown to be quite influential at BCC and is guided by defined purposes articulated in its 2016 Board adopted inclusion statement that highlight’s cultural competency and inclusivity to ensure student success.”

“BCC’s Inclusion Council is a vibrant example of how BCC fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff, and administrators.”

#### Criterion Two – Ethics

##### 2A – Fair and Ethical Behavior

“The peer team applauds the institution's employment of EthicsPoint, an external vendor that confidentially manages employees’ reports of possible unethical activities to add an additional layer of assurance.”

## 2B – Public Presentation

“Faculty and staff readily shared several examples regarding program improvements made as a result of feedback from graduates and program advisory committees.”

## 2C – Governance

“The Board receives regular training opportunities starting with new member Orientation on through multiple training and retreat experiences with invited guests and representatives of both state and professional organizations.”

## 2D – Academic Freedom

“A noteworthy example mentioned in the team response to 2C was that faculty credited administration with firmly supporting academic freedom in the matter of an overstep by the Board with respect to a complaint about curriculum”

## 2E - Research

“The college has recently increased the level of sophistication of a tracking process to provide additional monitoring of academic integrity in courses.”

## Criterion Three – Teaching & Learning

### 3A – Academic Offerings

“As stated in the Assurance Argument and confirmed in conversations during onsite sessions, the program quality and learning goals for each academic course offered at Butler are consistent across all learning modalities and locations. Butler monitors the quality of the academic course offerings through department meetings, annual evaluations, and monitoring tools, so that online, face-to-face, and hybrid offerings are consistent in quality.”

### 3B – Learning Outcomes

“The team heard frequent reference to PACT from faculty and administration during the visit, which fully corroborated the evidence and narrative from the Assurance Argument that PACT is a vital and well understood piece of the Butler academic identity.”

“It is also important to credit BCC’s internship program in the area of engaging and preparing students for success in a diverse culture. The internship program connects students with employers while providing credit for learning outcomes relevant to the work place and PACT.”

### 3C -Faculty & Staff

“In conversation with the college faculty, staff, and administration it is clear that Butler makes a concentrated effort to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity that is supportive of the college Mission and the communities served by the institution.”

“The Butler Inclusion Council has positively impacted efforts on this matter. The institution is making strides as they have established training for hiring practices so the college will be well supported in its efforts to hire diverse faculty and staff.”

“Faculty and staff expressed their satisfaction with the professional development opportunities that Butler provides, from both external and internal providers. Faculty and staff are given ample opportunities for professional growth.”

“An interview with a diverse group of students confirmed that Butler faculty are very approachable and supportive of students and they were very complimentary of the availability and helpfulness of faculty.”

### 3D - Support

“Student services leadership shared examples of how support services are evolving to meet changing student needs, including the addition of a part-time mental health counselor at the Andover campus to complement the full-time counselor at the El Dorado campus.”

“During the site visit, faculty and staff repeatedly spoke of the Faculty Development Team, an organization originally created by faculty to support ongoing professional development and now supported by institutional resources, as a critical element of their ongoing growth.”

“In addition, a number of faculty and staff referred to the generous institutional support for ongoing education, including 40 hours of personal leave annually and financial support to pursue additional degrees. One employee described her employment path at Butler from a student worker position on to completion of an associate, bachelor’s, and master’s degree and a professional position at the college through the institution’s support of ongoing education.”

“In addition to having facilities and support resources to undergird its current offerings, the college presented its facilities master plan and shared with the team its recent efforts to remodel instructional space to provide for additional science labs at the Andover campus and a new culinary arts facility funded through a substantial private donation and Foundation support. Information Technology staff shared recent activities to upgrade the college’s technology infrastructure through a \$6 million capital improvement bond, which has resulted in students and employees having access to high-capacity, high-quality technology infrastructure.”

## Criterion Four – Teaching & Learning Improvement

### 4A – Program Review

“Based on the evidence provided in the Assurance Argument, an onsite review of faculty credentials, and a conversation with Human Resources staff, the faculty teaching within all modalities meet the HLC’s expectations for qualified faculty. Butler has the appropriate policies and procedures in place to ensure the faculty credentials for all faculty are continually and consistently reviewed for compliance. HLC requirement is met, full-time and adjunct faculty job postings include faculty credential requirements for the position.”

#### 4B – Assessment of Learning

“Assessment of learning at Butler is clearly a team effort, with evidence of substantial faculty participation found in both the Assurance filing---including notes from the Faculty Assessment Team and responses from departments to various findings---and during the site visit. In both the Open Forum for Criteria 3 & 4 and in a meeting on assessment, faculty and staff gave numerous examples of how they had been involved in learning outcomes assessment and in implementing and measuring the effectiveness of changes in their areas. The examples of the move to co-requisite remediation in English Composition and modularized developmental coursework in Mathematics in response to assessment data were cited by faculty and leadership as uniquely positive examples of responses to assessment data.”

#### 4C – Retention

“Two other major efforts informed by retention, persistence, and completion data were reported in the Assurance Argument and confirmed during the site visit. Faculty and academic leadership reported that data on low persistence and success rates for minority male students was a substantial trigger for the creation of the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) in English, which uses co-requisite remediation to help students progress through their English Composition courses; ongoing analysis of retention and persistence data has shown that this program is having a positive impact. Similarly, faculty and leadership in Mathematics reported using retention and persistence data to inform the design of the modular remedial mathematics sequence with similar boosts in student retention.”

#### Criterion Five – Planning & Resources

##### 5A – Shared Governance

“Interviews with committee members confirm that faculty and staff believe their voices are heard as they participate in planning. Examples of committee input leading to institutional change included: development of open educational resources as a key institutional objective, improvement of theater sound and lighting; investment in Adobe campus to improve digital literacy; +1 initiative leading to Aviso procurement, and acquisition of additional student services personnel when data showed that the institution wasn't utilizing all available funds in the Kansas Promise Program”

“The institution presented many examples of decisions made where data was used within its committee and shared governance model to reach informed decisions through program review, assessment, or data dashboards. Some of those examples are: modularizing math courses; implementing the Accelerated Learning Program, overhauling the fee structure for all students, completing a compensation study leading to change in college-wide compensation, and decommissioning on-campus childcare. The college offered many additional examples.”

##### 5B – Resource Planning

“A recent investment in new sound and lighting in the theater area demonstrates the institution's commitment to infrastructure upgrades. The institution's investment in a fiber upgrade for the main campus is evidence that the technology infrastructure is well supported; BCC also has a comprehensive Information Technology Master Plan in place. These referenced upgrades, combined with the investment in and development of the HiFlex model of instructional delivery are examples of the institution's commitment to support educational offerings.”

“Investments in a laptop program for students, a compensation study, expansion of open educational resources and the conduct of a corresponding overload pay provided for development, 40 classrooms outfitted with necessary technology, and implementation of virtual desktop for students all combine to provide compelling evidence of accomplishing mission and are examples that the goal statements are realistic and up to date.”

#### 5C - Improvement

“A tour of science/health sciences labs as well as the theater arts area indicated the use of state of the art technology and newly refreshed campus spaces combined with a newly renovated Student Union featuring an e-gaming center. The college's adoption of the Guided Pathways initiative---leading to 18% course section reduction and improved completion rates---is another example of allocating resources in alignment with Mission and Strategic Priorities.”

“Assessment of student learning, specifically assessing the PACT---serving as general education/institutional outcomes---is robust and drives course and program improvement institutionally.”

“Several initiatives launched over the past few years are focused on student success/completion and the results are evident in increased graduation rates (the Guided Pathways approach may account for a large part of that success), a laptop program for students, and limiting tuition increases.”

“The institution continues to use data-informed decision-making, through dashboard systems like Tableau, to improve systems and sub-systems across several areas of operations. Through review of strategic planning documents and corresponding KPIs, annual budgets, capital outlay, and 3-year strategic plan reports, it is clear that the governing board and administration systematically utilize data to drive improvement at the institution.”

### **Suggestions for Improvement from the Team**

#### Criterion One - Mission

##### 1C – Civic Engagement & Diversity

“The team was impressed with BCC’s effort to provide opportunities for civic engagement and foster a climate of respect and inclusion. As a direct measure of impact going forward, BCC may want to consider conducting a survey to measure faculty and student perceptions in these areas.”

#### Criterion Two - Ethics

##### 2A – Fair and Ethical Behavior

“Review of the Board meeting Minutes combined with an interview of the Board confirmed that though they were not directly involved in development of Vision and Mission, they held final approval of the statements. In subsequent review of these statements, the college could engage the Board earlier in the process.”

##### 2B – Public Presentation

“Program learning outcomes are published in the college's interactive catalog and program outcomes for some (but not all) academic programs can be found on the college's website by following a link from the

program's catalog entry to a standalone document housed outside of the catalog.”

### Criterion Three – Teaching & Learning

#### 3A - Academic Offerings

“The team identified that the institution has publicized program outcome goals/statements for AA, AS, and AAS degree programs but has not done so consistently for the certificate or AGS program. The team recognizes that in recent years the institution has made significant headway in establishing appropriate learning goals for the majority of their programs but has neglected to develop discrete learning goals for a number of its certificate programs. BCC has a total of 26 certificates ranging in credit hours from 11-42. The team acknowledges that the institution considers some of the certificates offered to be a sub-set (or en route credential) of the AAS degree, and as such are able to use the same learning goals for the career courses portion of the degree. Given the disparity in credit hours-- even recognizing that the only difference between some certificates and their aligned degrees is an increment range of 15-18 hours of general education--the team believes that because certificates are present in the catalog and marketed as freestanding credentials, that the college must change its position and identify specific learning outcomes for all certificate programs apart from any relationship with a degree. Fulfillment of 3A (2) requires the institution to affirm the distinction between learning goals in certificates vs. degrees. The institution needs to resolve this discrepancy by working with their HLC liaison to complete a review/inventory of certificates and affirm the creation of learning goals for all certificates offered.”

#### 3D - Support

“While the placement process was described in the Assurance filing and during the site visit, there does not appear to be a systematic effort to study the effectiveness of the current placement strategy. Some individuals described the placement process as being very complex and difficult for students to understand and navigate, and the team recommends additional scrutiny of the process to determine if it can be clarified and simplified.”

“In a student listening session, team members heard concerns from students that advisor assignments change frequently, particularly when a student changes this/her program of study. Student Services reported that they are considering a change from a general advisor structure to an assigned advisor structure. The review team encourages this effort to meet the needs expressed by students.”

### Criterion Four – Teaching & Learning Improvement

#### 4A – Program Review

“In the Assurance Argument and during onsite conversations with faculty, staff, and administrators, the institution stated that it offers "retroactive credit", i.e., for certain eligible courses, credit is awarded for a preceding course/pre-requisite if the student establishes credit for a course a level above....These "retroactive" credits are placed on the student's transcript and documented just like any other appropriately earned course and grade. The grade on the transcript effectively identifies the credits as "earned" as opposed to "awarded". In discussions, the inherent error in this approach was recognized. Butler immediately responded to this issue and rectified its approach once brought to their attention. Three documents submitted to the team and noted in the "Additional Materials" section confirmed the change in practice/policy regarding the awarding of grades for retroactive credit effective May 15, 2023. Specifically, the team notes that the awarding of credit with a grade is inconsistent with good practice in student records transcription. Retroactive credit identified as awarded vs. earned is now effective with Summer session 2023.”

#### 4B – Assessment of Learning

“During the assessment meeting, attendees described cocurricular learning as complementing academic coursework by relating to course content and engaging students outside of class and acknowledged the need for continued work in this area. The team encourages faculty and leadership to continue refining the institutional definition of cocurricular activities and applying this definition to differentiate among them from extracurricular and (service) non-curricular activities.”

“One item that will need continued attention based on both evidence and discussions is the refinement of program-level learning outcomes as previously indicated in Criterion 3A. Faculty and staff showed evidence of a solid understanding of course-level and general education/institutional learning outcomes but they demonstrated a lower level of consensus around the purpose and nature of program-level learning outcomes. This issue appeared to be particularly challenging in the transfer oriented programs,... The team suggests focusing on the assessment of the transfer programs as a whole, i.e., the Associate in Arts program and the Associate in Science program, rather than treating clusters of transfer courses as if they were individual programs. By defining clear program outcomes for the Associate in Arts and Associate in Science programs, mapping these to the institutional learning PACT outcomes, and continuing to utilize student artifacts in milestone courses, the team believes that the assessment of transfer programs will be even more effective.”

“Lastly, evidence presented in both the Assurance filing and during the visit indicated that there is tremendous variety in the number and level of specificity of program learning outcomes across programs at the college---some programs have as few as three outcomes while others have dozens--- with some groups simply aggregating the course learning outcomes of their program pathway or professional licensing requirements and other groups establishing program outcomes that are more overarching in nature. Faculty and staff recognized the need for continued work in defining and mapping program learning outcomes and the team notes that this work is a necessary next step in maturing in assessment practice. Finally, the team notes that some additional work on the assessment rubrics might be helpful to implement less subjective language and make assessment norming more practical.”

#### 4C - Retention

“The team notes that additional work to disaggregate data by gender, race, ethnicity, age group, etc. would allow the college to pursue more targeted actions.”

#### Criterion Five – Planning & Resources

##### 5A – Shared Governance

“During on campus interviews with committee members, some individuals expressed the notion that one has to "own" an idea since there wasn't always clarity on which committee would be responsible to assist with an idea or innovation. The team believes that the institution could benefit from a review of its committee structure and specifically with the intent to define scope, roles and responsibilities possibly through a formal charter.”

## Concerns that Butler is required to address for HLC by January 2024

### Criterion Two - Ethics

#### 2C - Governance

“In January 2022 and January 2023, the Board could not come to full agreement on accepting ACCT's document on Affirmation of Service and Standards of Good Practice, resulting in only 4 of 7 Board members agreeing to sign/abide by these statements. The Board self-evaluation instruments for 2021 and 2022 also document a Board that does not see its functions in the same way and perhaps, more importantly, is unwilling to work to find effective ways of interacting in public meetings.

Review of recorded Board meetings, meeting minutes, and an interview with the Board confirmed that there is significant dialog and debate on institutional issues. Board members are briefed adequately on college issues and Board members discuss the information and make decisions. Although the vote is often split, the Board decisions do reflect institutional interests and priorities. The team believes that there is a fundamental split regarding Board perspective on the direction and vision of the institution that they will have to reconcile---possibly through budget action, again potentially with a split vote. In addition, the conduct/behavior of some members and their public interactions with colleagues is of significant concern as that behavior can effect institutional operations, climate and progress.

Board actions---by majority vote---confirm that the Board is able to conduct their required business often with a 4:3 vote. The votes themselves would simply be an unfortunate reality if not coupled with behaviors that thwart civil conduct and collegial respect. The team recognizes that it is a minority of the Board that is engaged in behaviors that frustrate both college personnel and fellow Board members. The frequency of 4:3 votes is unfortunate and is illustrative of Board discord and inability to find common ground.

The team is left with the impression that the Board members have perspectives that cannot/or have not been mitigated by time, discussion, training or willingness to cooperate as a matter of good boardsmanship. To the team, it is clear that there is a fundamental difference of opinion as to the direction of the college and the role that Board members should play as lead custodians of the college Mission. Consultants have been engaged to help reconcile differences and unite the Board around a common vision of their duties and role; this work has been unsuccessful. This circumstance begs the question embedded in 2C---whether the Board is functioning in a way that can continue to preserve and enhance the institution. It may be beneficial to reconvene a visioning session so that administration can be provided a consensus picture of Board expectations for the direction of the college.

It is possible for BCC to function with the undesirable circumstance of a Board that does not share a common vision of their own role and true institutional interests. However, when the Board's negativity/behavior spills over to institutional operations it seems that the Board is not considering the best interests of the institution. This more than unfortunate split view of role and responsibilities and votes on institutional matters may likely continue until terms expire and/or members choose not to run/serve. However, if the behavior at the Board level is affecting operations and institutional climate, then that detrimental effect compromises the effective use of time and energy to conduct college business.”

“Though the Board on the whole does indeed delegate day-to-day management of the institution to the administration, a minority of the Board membership has taken on roles and tasks that exceed their Board role/responsibilities and both interfere in institutional operations and on occasion add burdensome



requests to staff time. An additional instance of Board interference was documented in the December 2022 video recorded Board meeting where members debated their role in influencing curriculum---brought on by a complaint that did not move through the stated complaint process. In the interview with the Board, a minority of Board members stated their belief that they should be able to influence curriculum choices and decisions, effectively putting the tenets of academic freedom at risk. The team believes that actions by individual member(s) in overstepping their prescribed role -- specifically in attempting to influence curriculum or abridge academic freedom---- undermine both due process and curricular control by faculty. A minority of the Board engages in actions that undermine the authority and role of the college's faculty and administration.

#### Interim Monitoring

The team recommends a report from the college by February 23, 2024 with evidence of a Board vote affirming acceptance/commitment to the tenets of 2C. This report should affirm that Board members understand the limits of their roles and the appropriate role for the president and administration. The college may choose to submit any edited or updated documents including a code of conduct, statement of ethics and/or Board by-laws insofar as they affirm the Board's understanding of the duties and limits of their roles”