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Self- Study Proposal RESEARCH QUESTIONS

SCC Research Questions

Standard 1: Mission and Goals

The institution's mission clearly defines its purpose within the context of higher education and indicates whom the institution serves and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals, consistent with the aspirations and expectations of higher education clearly specify how the institution will fulfill its mission. The mission and goals are developed and recognized by the institution with the participation of its members and its governing body and are utilized to develop and shape its programs and practice and to evaluate its effectiveness.

- 1.1 How does the College promote workforce development and preparation of students for employment opportunities in fulfillment of the College mission?
- 1.2 How does the College determine whether it is achieving each aspect of its mission? For example how does the College ensure a "quality education" as denoted in the mission?
- 1.3 What evidence exists that the mission and goals adequately drive academic and administrative decision making and enable the College to adapt to changes in the external environment?
- 1.4 What evidence exists that the College has an inclusive process for reviewing its mission and goals and disseminating these to the internal and external stakeholders?

Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal *An institution conducts ongoing planning and resource allocation based on its mission and goals, develops objectives to achieve them, and utilizes the results of its assessment activities for institutional renewal. Implementation and subsequent evaluation of the success of the strategic plan and resource allocation support the development and change necessary to improve and to maintain institutional quality.*

- 2.1 Is resource allocation at the College reflective of the mission and goals?
- 2.2 Does the College budget involve a cycle of planning in order to determine need for and effectiveness of present expenditures?
- 2.3 What evidence exists that the planning and budget process is effectively communicated to internal and external stakeholders of the College.

Standard 3: Institutional Resources

The human, financial, technical, facilities, and other resources necessary to achieve an institution's mission and goals are available and accessible. In the context of the institution's mission, the effective and efficient uses of the institution's resources are analyzed as part of ongoing outcomes assessment.

- 3.1 Does the College have adequate resources to meet its mission and goals? How have resource trends over time changed and what are the biggest challenges facing the College both now and in the future?
- 3.2 Does the College regularly explore new opportunities for alternative revenues?
- 3.3 How effectively do the College's human resources processes ensure and maintain high professional standards for new and existing employees?
- 3.4 How does the College ensure that its facilities and technology are appropriately allocated and aligned with the mission and goals of the College?

Standard 4: Leadership and Governance

The institution's system of governance clearly defines the roles of institutional constituencies in policy development and decision-making. The governance structure includes an active governing body with sufficient autonomy to assure institutional integrity and to fulfill its responsibilities of policy and resource development, consistent with the mission of the institution.

- 4.1 Does the College maintain a process of shared governance that aligns with the mission and goals of the College? How does this governance structure define decision making roles and promote collegiality at the College?
- 4.2 How does the College ensure appropriate participation by all constituents (faculty, staff, administration, and students) in the shared governance structure at Salem Community College? What opportunities exist for student input in the shared governance structure at the College?
- 4.3 To what extent does the Board of Trustees of the College engage in an effective self-assessment process that aligns with the mission and goals of the College?

Standard 5: Administration

The institution's administrative structure and services facilitate learning and research/scholarship, foster quality improvement, and support the institution's organization and governance.

- 5.1 What evidence exists that the College effectively assesses the administrative structure to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in achieving the mission and goals of the College? How does the College utilize this information to inform decisions and determine need for change in the administrative structure?
- 5.2 How effective is the communication between the administrative leaders and the internal and external stakeholders of the College? To what extent is the administrative structure and vision clearly communicated to the College as a whole?

Standard 6: Integrity

In the conduct of its programs and activities involving the public and the constituencies it serves, the institution demonstrates adherence to ethical standard and its own state policies, providing support for academic and intellectual freedom.

- 6.1 How does the culture of the College foster respect among a diverse and changing population of students, faculty, staff and administration?
- 6.2 How does the College ensure that employee and student grievances and appeals policies are effective and fair?

Standard 8: Student Admissions & Retention

The institution seeks to admit students whose interests, goals, and abilities are congruent with its mission and seeks to retain them through the pursuit of the students' educational goals.

- 8.1 What evidence demonstrates that the current Recruitment Plan at Salem Community College is effective for future enrollment growth? What additional strategies can be added to enhance the current plan?
- 8.2 How will SCC assist first year students to transition into College life and College-level work?
- 8.3 What procedures does the College utilize to track students who withdraw, drop/stop, or transfer out prior to graduation?
- 8.4 To what extent does the current perceived image of the College impact student enrollment?

Standard 9: Student Support Services

The institution provides student support services reasonably necessary to enable each student to achieve the institution's goals for students.

- 9.1 To what degree does SCC assess student support services and utilize that information to improve those services?
- 9.2 How are students identified as being "at risk" and what services and supports are provided to assist those students in continuing their academic studies?
- 9.3 How does the College ensure that all communication regarding student support services are communicated to all constituents?

Standard 10: Faculty

The institution's instructional, research, and service programs are devised, developed, monitored, and supported by qualified professionals.

- 10.1 How have professional development opportunities, both on campus and off campus, changed over the past five years? What percentage of allocated institutional professional development funds have been utilized over the past five years? What evidence exists that the professional development is shared with colleagues and used to improve student learning outcomes?
- 10.2 What mechanisms exist for regular reviews of reappointment, tenure, promotion, grievances, discipline and dismissal? How are the requirements effectively communicated to faculty and what evidence demonstrates that these decisions are made equitably?
- 10.3 To what extent do each department and the College in general, demonstrate faculty involvement in the development and assessment of all academic programs?
- 10.4 How are adjuncts supported, evaluated and supervised in their departments?
- 10.5 How does the College address the issue of intellectual property rights in course development?

Standard 11: Educational Opportunities

The institution's educational offerings display academic content, rigor, and coherence that are appropriate to its higher education mission. The institution identifies student learning goals and objectives, including knowledge and skills, for its educational offerings.

- 11.1 What processes are in place to establish and maintain relevant, well-integrated academic programs which incorporate rigor across all delivery formats (online, hybrid, face-to-face)?
- 11.2 What evidence exists that Academic Program Review measures effectiveness, ensures articulation and initiates improvement?

Standard 12: General Education

The institution's curricula are designed so that students acquire and demonstrate College-level proficiency in general education and essential skills, including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and Technological competency.

- 12.1 To what extent do SCC graduates meet College-level competencies in General Education?
- 12.2 How has SCC used assessment data to modify and/or improve General Education courses?

- 12.3 What evidence exists that demonstrates General Education goals are linked and interconnected to academic program goals?

Standard 13: Related Educational Activities

The institution's programs or activities that are characterized by particular content, focus, location, mode of delivery, or sponsorship meet appropriate standards.

- 13.1 To what extent are non-credit programs evaluated? What evidence exists that non-credit programs have clear and published goals, objectives, expectations of student learning, and curricular sequences?
- 13.2 How effectively does SCC prepare students with disabilities in succeeding in College level courses?
- 13.3 How effective are the developmental courses with supporting students to complete their degree or certificate in a sufficient timeframe and what data is available to support this?

Standard 7: Institutional Assessment

The institution has developed and implemented an assessment plan and process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in: achieving its mission and goals; implementing planning, resource allocation, and institutional renewal processes; using institutional resources efficiently; providing leadership and governance; providing administrative structures and services; demonstrating institutional integrity; and assuring that institutional processes and resources support appropriate learning and other outcomes for its students and graduates.

- 7.1 How does SCC evaluate, measure, and manage key administrative functions and how does the College use the evidence to improve services?
- 7.2 To what extent has SCC developed processes to measure and assess student achievement and success after graduation? How is this data used for institutional planning?

Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning

Assessment of student learning demonstrates that the institution's students have the knowledge, skills and competencies consistent with institutional goals and those students at graduation have achieved appropriate higher education goals.

- 14.1 What multiple assessment tools are used to measure student learning and determine the effectiveness of each one?
- 14.2 How is SCC using data to improve student learning outcomes, curriculum development/revision, and pedagogical strategies?