

CHAPTER 2 –

GIRs

CHAPTER TWO – *General Institutional Requirements*

A. MISSION

- 1) **It has a mission statement, formally adopted by the governing board and made public, declaring that it is an institution of higher education.**

St. Charles Community College is a public, comprehensive community college with a revised mission statement adopted formally in 1998 by the Board of Trustees. The mission statement, along with vision and values statements, is published in the catalog and other general publications. The mission is consistent with comparable institutions of higher education, and sets forth how the College fulfills its mission through its programs and services. SCC is an open-admission institution, and the mission statement emphasizes the College's commitment to providing accessible, high-quality, affordable post-secondary programs and community services.

- 2) **It is a degree-granting institution.**

The College grants Associate of Arts, Associate of Applied Science, and Associate of Science degrees, as well as certificates in various career-technical areas, as listed in the *2000-02 Catalog*.

B. AUTHORIZATION

- 3) **It has legal authorization to grant its degrees, and it meets all the legal requirements to operate as an institution of higher education wherever it conducts its activities.**

St. Charles Community College was established by a vote of the general public in April 1986 in accordance with the provisions of Sections 178.770-178.890 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri [RSMo]. The College has legal authorization from the State of Missouri by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education [CBHE] through the Department of Higher Education to confer degrees. It meets all the legal requirements to operate as an institution of higher education with appropriate CBHE letters of authorization for degree and certificate programs.

Section 163.191 RSMo provides the legal authority for the College to confer degrees. CBHE granted initial approval in December 1986 for the College to offer five associate degree programs along with Associate of Arts courses and Associate of Applied Science general education courses in its first two academic years. CBHE granted approval for additional associate degree and certificate programs in November 1988 based upon a comprehensive five-year academic plan from the College. CBHE has authorized the implementation of all additional degree and certificate programs through an established process that includes final approval at a regular quarterly Board meeting. The College conducts a majority of its programs and courses at the main campus in St. Charles County. Additional classes, but no degrees, are offered within the College service area in neighboring Pike, Lincoln, Montgomery, and Callaway counties.

4) It has legal documents to confirm its status: not-for-profit, for-profit, or public.

The College has legal authorization from the State of Missouri to operate as a public institution of higher education under Section 178.770 RSMo:

When a district is organized, it shall be a body corporate and a subdivision of the state of Missouri and shall be known as “The <Name> Junior College District of Missouri.”

Its legal documentation, which confirms its status as a public institution, is found in the Order for Organization of Junior College District, dated April 1986.

C. GOVERNANCE

5) It has a governing board that possesses and exercises necessary legal power to establish and review basic policies that govern the institution.

In accordance with Section 178.820 RSMo, a Board of Trustees governs the College. The Board authority to appoint employees, set tuition, and collect taxes is found in Sections 178.850, 178.860, and 178.870 RSMo. The Board conducts regularly scheduled monthly meetings open to the public. College policies are contained in the *Policy and Procedures Manual*, which is revised and approved by the Board as necessary. The Board minutes provide documentation that the Board establishes the policies to govern the College. The Board possesses and exercises the necessary legal power to establish and review policies that govern the College.

6) Its governing board includes public members and is sufficiently autonomous from the administration and ownership to assure the integrity of the institution.

The Board, which is autonomous, is composed of six members each elected at-large by district voters to a six-year term. Terms are staggered so that one-third of the membership is elected every two years, in even years. The Board members receive no salary, wage, or fee for their services. As required by Missouri statute, the conflict of interest policy is renewed annually by Board action.

7) It has an Executive Officer designated by the governing board to provide administrative leadership for the institution.

The College President is designated by the Board to provide chief executive officer and administrative leadership for the institution. Dr. Donald D. Shook was the founding president who served from 1986 to 1996, when Dr. John M. McGuire was appointed.

8) Its governing board authorizes the institution’s affiliation with the Commission.

The Board has approved and authorized the College’s affiliation with the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. See *Board Minutes* from January 15, 1987 in the Resource Room.

D. FACULTY

- 9) It employs a faculty that has earned from accredited institutions the degrees appropriate to the level of instruction offered by the institution.**

The College faculty holds appropriate degrees earned from accredited institutions for the level of instruction offered by the institution. As of fall 2001, the College employs 68 regular full-time faculty members, of whom 11 have doctorates, 56 hold the master's degree, and 1 has a baccalaureate degree. All of the full-time general education faculty have at least a master's degree from an accredited institution. All 286 adjunct faculty in fall 2001 hold degrees at the appropriate level for the programs in which they teach.

- 10) A sufficient number of the faculty are full-time employees of the institution.**

For the fall 2001 semester, 68 of the faculty members were full-time and 286 were part-time. For that same semester, the full-time faculty taught 42% of the total student credit hours, while part-time faculty taught 58%. (For a more complete discussion of these statistics, see Chapters 5 and 10.)

- 11) Its faculty has a significant role in developing and evaluating all of the institution's educational programs.**

The faculty is responsible for developing and evaluating all of the educational programs at the College. The faculty, often with advisory committee input, develops new courses and programs within the departments in the three instructional divisions. New courses and programs are subject to review and recommendation by the Curriculum Committee, which has a broad base of faculty representation. The committee recommendations are submitted to the Academic Affairs Office for approval as new course offerings. Proposals for new degree programs are submitted to the Board of Trustees and CBHE for review and approval. The faculty examines programs, curriculum, and assessment data as part of the regular program review and planning processes.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

- 12) It confers degrees.**

The College has been a degree-granting institution since its founding in fall 1986, awarding Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Applied Science degrees as well as certificates in career-technical programs. In the 2000-01 academic year, the College conferred 420 associate degrees and 14 certificates.

- 13) It has degree programs in operation, with students enrolled in them.**

The College currently offers the Associate of Arts transfer degree, 3 Associate of Science degrees, 13 Associate of Applied Science degrees with 24 program options, and 18 Certificates of Achievement, with courses in each of the programs and students in those courses. In the fall 2001 semester, the College enrolled 6,226 students with an average credit load of 8.7 semester hours.

- 14) Its degree programs are compatible with the institution’s mission and are based on recognized fields of study at the higher education level.**

The three types of degree programs offered by the College are described in the *2000-02 Catalog*. These programs are compatible with the institutional mission and are based on recognized fields of study in post-secondary education. The Associate of Applied Science degree programs, based on recognized career-technical fields, are approved by CBHE. The course requirements for the Associate of Arts degree meet the statewide transfer guidelines for articulation with upper-division colleges and universities.

The Associate of Arts degree transfer programs are based upon the first two years of similar programs at four-year institutions. The University of Missouri-St. Louis, the public transfer institution for many students at the College, is a frequent model.

- 15) Its degrees are appropriately named, following practices common to institutions of higher education in terms of both length and content of the programs.**

Degrees conferred by the College are congruent with the recommendations of the American Association of Community Colleges [AACC] and match the titles generally used by other Missouri community colleges. The programs are named in accord with the standards set by specialized accrediting agencies and common practice within community colleges. All program names are approved by CBHE and follow the classification of instructional program guides. All associate degrees require at least 64 semester credit hours and contain the general education requirements specified in GIR 16.

- 16) Its undergraduate degree programs include a coherent general education requirement consistent with the institution’s mission and designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and to promote intellectual inquiry.**

All associate degrees have a significant core of general education. For the Associate of Arts degree, a minimum of 40 semester credit hours of general education is required. This requirement has a course distribution that meets the statewide transfer and articulation guidelines for general education. Currently, courses that fulfill the general education requirement are distributed among the academic areas of Communications, Social Sciences, Humanities, Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Computer Literacy.

All Associate of Applied Science degrees require a minimum of 24 semester credit hours of general education. This includes selected courses in the discipline areas listed above.

The general education core is designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and the promotion of intellectual inquiry. The College philosophy of general education is set forth in the *2000-02 Catalog*.

- 17) It has admission policies and practices that are consistent with the institution’s mission and appropriate to its educational programs.**

The College operates as an open-admission institution, which is in keeping with its stated mission to provide accessible educational opportunities at an affordable cost. Admission to

the College is based on high school graduation or completion of the high school GED. Students also may be admitted under the ability-to-benefit basis.

Individuals still in high school may enroll in College classes during regular high school class hours with permission of their high school guidance counselor or principal. Individuals who attend another college or university may also enroll as students in College classes. Admission to Health Science programs is dependent upon student academic achievement. In the case of apprenticeship programs, admission depends upon the cooperation of the employers. Some students, including those who have earned high school diplomas, arrive at the College not prepared for college-level work. The Academic and Career Enhancement [ACE] Center provides courses, tutoring, and other programs and services to assist these students, who are identified through an assessment of their reading, writing, and mathematics skills, with placement into appropriate classes.

The College administers financial aid resources from federal and state sources as well as institutional and private programs. These programs include grant, work-study, and scholarship components. Students who receive federal and state funding must meet eligibility requirements defined by the respective programs. Eligibility requirements for institutional and private sources of assistance are determined through College policy and procedural guidelines. Students receiving financial aid at the College either must hold a high school diploma or have completed a GED, or they must demonstrate ability-to-benefit. For financial aid purposes, ability-to-benefit is defined by the U.S. Department of Education. Reading, writing, and mathematics assessments used for initial placement; Compass and/or Asset scores are used to determine ability-to-benefit.

18) It provides its students access to those learning resources and support services requisite for its degree programs.

The College provides extensive support services for its students. The Learning Resource Center [LRC] provides access to print and electronic resources and services to meet student needs. The ACE Center provides support services – including basic skills, study skills, ESL courses, workshops, and tutoring – to students working primarily at the developmental level and, in most cases, concurrently enrolled in developmental mathematics, reading, or English courses. The College provides computer laboratories and writing laboratories to support students in their learning. Adaptive equipment, interpreters, and tutoring are available for students with special needs. The Accessibility Services Office provides accommodation services for students who can provide official/medical documentation of handicaps or conditions.

In building new facilities and classrooms, the College gives careful consideration to providing quality support to students through use of the latest technology and equipment. Laboratories and other equipment necessary for academic and technical programs are up-to-date and provide the learning environment appropriate for students in academic, business, career-technical, and health programs.

Other student support services include counseling and advising, financial aid, career counseling, and job placement. Further information is found in the Student Services section in the *2000-02 Catalog*.

F. FINANCES

- 19) It has an external financial audit by a certified public audit agency at least every two years.**

The College has an external financial audit by a certified public accounting firm at the end of each fiscal year. The Board accepts the annual audit report at a regular monthly meeting and makes it available to the public.

- 20) Its financial documents demonstrate the appropriate allocation and use of resources to support its educational programs.**

The College has a participatory goal development and budget process, coordinated through the annual planning process, that drives resource allocation for existing and new educational programs. Budgets and expenditures are measured against institutional and industry data and benchmarks. Reviews and controls assure that resource allocation in the annual budget follows the College Plan. Over the past five years, instructional and academic support expenditures have ranged between 61 and 67% of the total institutional budget.

- 21) Its financial practices, records, and reports demonstrate fiscal viability.**

The faculty and staff are active participants in developing the annual budget, which is tied closely to the annual planning process. Part of this process involves determining priorities for capital items, human resources, and other needs. The College has solid internal controls as evidenced by a series of clean audit opinions. Institutional finance is strong, with healthy reserves and fund balances. Sound accounting policies and practices, together with positive fund balances, demonstrate the fiscal viability of the College. The unrestricted unencumbered reserve at the end of FY 2001 was \$4.4 million. The College maintains appropriate operating reserves in keeping with state requirements.

G. PUBLIC INFORMATION

22) Its catalog or other official documents include its mission statement along with accurate descriptions of:

- **its educational programs and degree requirements;**
- **its learning resources;**
- **its admissions policies and practices;**
- **its academic and non-academic policies and procedures directly affecting students;**
- **its charges and refund policies; and,**
- **the academic credentials of its faculty and administrators.**

The *Catalog*, which is published bi-annually, provides detailed information about each of these items. In addition, the *Student Handbook* contains much of the same information, and the *Credit Class Schedule* includes a description of charges and refund policies. These and other publications are available to students and prospective students to provide full, accurate information about College policies, procedures, and activities.

23) It accurately discloses its standing with accrediting bodies with which it is affiliated.

The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools accredits the College as an institution.

The Associate Degree Nursing program is fully approved by the Missouri State Board of Nursing and is accredited by the National League for Nursing. The Missouri State Board of Nursing has approved the Practical Nursing certificate program. The American Health Information Management Association accredits the Health Information Technology program. The American Occupational Therapy Association accredits the Occupational Therapy Assistant program.

24) It makes available upon request information that accurately describes its financial condition.

The College makes available, upon request through the President's Office, the annual audit report that accurately describes its financial condition. Financial reports are presented to the Board of Trustees during its monthly meetings as a matter of public record. Following the review and acceptance by the Board of the annual audit of its financial records, a financial summary is published for the College's constituents in the service area.

