

ASSURANCE SECTION

REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT

TO
Jefferson College
Hillsboro, MO 63050

2 March – 4 March 2009

FOR

The Higher Learning Commission
A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

EVALUATION TEAM

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I. CONTEXT AND NATURE OF VISIT

A. Purpose of Visit

The visit from 2-4 March 2009 was conducted as a comprehensive evaluation for continued accreditation at Jefferson College, a comprehensive, public, two-year institution of higher education.

B. Organizational Context

Jefferson College is located in Hillsboro, MO, the geographical center of Jefferson County, adjacent to the southern boundary of St. Louis County. The Jefferson Junior College District was established in 1963. The Hillsboro Campus opened its doors in September 1964. Additional sites in High Ridge and Arnold, north of Hillsboro, have been established and expanded in response to the growing population in the northern part of the Jefferson County. The Arnold site was established in 1983; the High Ridge site in 2005 as Jefferson College Northwest. In 2007, the new facility at Jefferson College Arnold opened its doors. Today, the Hillsboro Campus occupies 400+ acres. One of the 12 community college districts in Missouri, Jefferson College was the first community college to be designated as an Area Vocational School. (It should be noted that the Jefferson College service area also includes small portions of St. Francois and Ste. Genevieve counties).

Jefferson County is one of the fastest growing counties in the St Louis metropolitan area. The College currently serves approximately 5165 students enrolled in credit courses and 2336 continuing education students. The institution's central role in the community supports career education, academic transfer, developmental or college preparatory study and workforce development and training as well as an ample and varied array of enrichment programs.

C. Unique Aspects of Visit

During this last year, the College has conducted a national search to replace the current President who has led the institution for four years, as Executive VP for one year and CEO for three years. Before that, he served as the institution's CFO for 14 years. A new president has been identified and the transition beginning in June 2009 will be important for Jefferson College.

D. Sites or Branch Campuses Visited

Team members visited the sites at both Jefferson College Arnold and Jefferson College Northwest (High Ridge) in addition to the main campus at Hillsboro. The team also visited the acreage acquired recently for future development in the High Ridge area.

E. Distance Education Reviewed

Jefferson College is authorized to offer online courses up to and including the AA degree. Online enrollments continue to increase (from 2,202 in 2005-06 to 3,275 in 2007-08). These courses are appreciated by the students and are a key component in alternative delivery in the MyTime initiative at Jefferson. The team reviewed materials associated with distance education programs and the technological infrastructure supporting them. In addition, the team met with college staff and faculty who are involved in distance learning and with students enrolled in online courses. The distance education delivery model is demonstrably equivalent in content, learning outcomes and support services to the traditional classroom delivery.

F. Interactions with Constituencies

The following list is indicative of the variety of conversations and meetings which took

place during the visit:

President
 Administrative Staff
 The Board of Trustees
 Members of the College Foundation Board
 Representatives from local business and industry
 Area school personnel
 Academic Affairs Committee (16)
 Faculty (62)
 Faculty Leaders/Senate Executive Committee (8)
 Students (57)
 Student Senate (8)
 Certified and Classified Staff (121)
 Self-Study Steering Committee
 Career and Tech Faculty and Acting Dean (11)

G. Principal Documents, Materials, and Web Pages Reviewed

2009 Self-Study Report (print and cd versions)
 1998 Self-Study Report
 Visiting Team Report, 2-4 March 1999
 Progress Report and other documents from HLC, including Third Party
 Comments
 Request for Institutional Change to Offer Online Degree
 Academic Affairs and Student Services Annual Reports, 2004-2006
 Academic Affairs Annual Reports, 1998-2003
 Academic Affairs Committee Minutes
 Academic Affairs Policies and Procedures Manual
 Academic Freedom Policy
 Academic Honesty Policy
 Adjunct Faculty Handbooks
 Adjunct Faculty support binder
 Administrative Cabinet Minutes
 Federal Compliance Notebook
 Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual
 Advising and Retention Center Information, ARC Annual Reports
 Advising and Retention Center Second Year Program Evaluation
 Advisory Committee Information (Membership Lists/Minutes)
 Agreement for Success
 Annual Budget Books
 Annual Reports, 1999-2008
 Annual Security and Crime Statistics Report (Clery Act)
 Arnold Site: Blue Ribbon Commission Report & Responses
 Arts and Sciences Annual Reports, 2007-2008
 Assessment Committee Minutes; Assessment Task Force Minutes; Student
 Outcomes Committee Minutes
 Assessment Guidebook
 Assessment Plan
 Assessment Review, Jefferson College 2007, Roberta C. Teahan
 Assessment Task Force Report

Athlete, Student Success Program Handbook
Athletics—View books and Media Guides, 1999-2006
Audits (College and Foundation)
Best Practices Journal, Compass Newsletter
Biology, Institutional Effectiveness Reviews, 2001 and 2006
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes, 2007-present
Board of Trustees Policy Manual
Board of Trustees Procedures Manual
Building Services Institutional Effectiveness Reviews
Business Administration Institutional Effectiveness Review, 2008
Business and Community Development Center Training Catalogue
Business and Workforce Development Catalog, General 1999-2008
Business and Workforce Development class evaluations
Business Management, Institutional Effectiveness Review, 2007
Capital Projects List
Child Development Center Family Handbook and Accreditation Materials
Center for Teaching and Learning, Annual Reports and Portfolio
College 101 Syllabus
College-Wide Technology Plan FY 2008-2010
Commencement Programs
Community College Special Supplement to the Condition of Education 2008
Continuing Education Advisory Board Information/Minutes
Continuing Education Schedules of Courses
Course Schedules, Credit Classes, 1999-2008
Cultural Council Minutes
Cultural Events Information
Cultural Interest Form
Disability Support Services Annual Reports, 2007 & 2008
Dual-Credit Information
Early Childhood Education, Institutional Effectiveness Review, 2008
Employee Recognition: MCCA Advocate, News Releases
Employee Wellness Program Information
Environmental Scanning, 2006-2008
Event Flyers and Library Web Exhibits Related to Diversity
Examples of Career and Technical Education Ongoing Assessments (2006-2009)
Factbooks, 1999-2008
Faculty Credentials
Faculty Schedules and Office Hours, Fall 2008 and Spring 2009
Faculty Senate Executive Council Meeting Minutes and Annual Reports
Family Medical Leave Act
FERPA Compliance
Finance and Administration Division, 1999-2008, Annual Reports
Financial Statements, Fund Based
FOCUS Jefferson County Survey
Foreign Language Institutional Effectiveness Review, 2004
Friday Speaker Series
General Education Institutional Effectiveness Review, 2008
Geography, Institutional Effectiveness Review, 2008 and 2003
Global Education Committee Meeting Minutes
Graduating Student Opinion Surveys
HLC 2007-2009 Self Study Process

HLC Handbook of Accreditation
HLC Snapshot for Jefferson College, March 2-4, 2009
HLC Public Comments—News Releases
Honors Program Institutional Effectiveness Review, 2007
Institutional Data and Assessment Books (for Administrative Team Use)
Institutional Effectiveness Review Five-Year Plan
Institutional Effectiveness Reviews – Learning Resources and Student Services
Institutional Effectiveness Reviews, Arts and Science Education
Institutional Effectiveness Reviews, Career and Technical Education
Intellectual Property Rights Policy (11-021)
IPEDS, Fall 2005,2006,2007,2008)
Kansas Study of Instructional Costs and Productivity
Learning Center Annual Reports
Library Annual Reports
Library Institutional Effectiveness Review, 2007
Library Survey Results
Letters of Appreciation
Library Survey Results
Marketing and Public Relations Institutional Effectiveness Reviews
Marketing/PR—Student Achievements—News Releases 2000-2008
Mission Statement Abbreviated—examples of use in College marketing
Missouri Community College Enrollments...for Total and Minority Population
Missouri Department of Higher Education-2000/01-2007/08 Statistical Summary
of Missouri Higher Education
News Releases, 2000-2008
Northwest Site: Blue Ribbon Commission and Responses
Online Course Development Proposal Format
Online Course Evaluations, 2007
Online Courses (Distance Learning) Institutional Effectiveness Review, 2004
Online Degree Proposal, Associate of Arts, 2004
Organizational Chart, Current
Organizational Charts—older versions
PACE Report
Planning: Strategic Long Range Planning Process, FY 2009-2013
Program and Facilities Planning Meeting Minutes, 1999-2009
Program and Facilities Planning Overview for the Planning Process 2008
Project Success Information
PTK Honors Society Information
Psychology, Institutional Effectiveness Review, 2005
Public Notification of Comprehensive Evaluation Visit – (Federal Compliance Binder)
Research and Planning, Institutional Effectiveness Review
Responses from Administrative Cabinet to the Recommendations from the Planning
Committee
Salaries: Review of the Competitiveness of Jefferson College Faculty Salaries, 2007
SACE Report
Statistical Information: Factbooks, 1999-2008
Strategic Enrollment Management Year-End Review, 2004-2005
Student Activities—Examples of Programming
Student Athlete Success Program Handbook
Student Complaints Log
Student Handbook 2000-2003, 2005-2009

Student Learning and Retention Committee Meeting Minutes
 Student Services Annual Reports, 2007-2008
 Summary of Institutional Level Student Assessment, 2008
 Survey of High School Seniors, 2001
 Survey of Learning Environments
 Syllabi, Examples, Global Studies Program
 Syllabi, Examples, Honors Studies Program
 Tech Prep Information
 The Harbinger (student newspaper)
 Transfer Performance of JC Transfer Students at UMC and UMSL
 Transfer: Statewide Articulation Agreements among MO Colleges/Universities
 Tutoring Brochure, Professional
 Veterans Information
 Veterinary Technology Institutional Effectiveness Review, 2007
 Viking Volunteer Opportunities Information
 VP's Office, 1992-2002, Annual Report
 Windjammers, 2000-2009
 WorkKeys
 Writing Center Brochure

Web Pages:

Assessment
 Assessment Committee Minutes and Newsletters
 Distance Learning pages
 Web CT Online Assessment Information (PDF)
 Self-Study Committees: minutes, self-study drafts, reports for each criterion
 Selected Online Courses

II. COMMITMENT TO PEER REVIEW

A. Comprehensiveness of the Self-Study Process

The self-study process afforded opportunities for all constituents of the College to be involved in the comprehensive institutional review that is reflected in the self-study document. Widespread participation in the process was confirmed by the team during the visit to the campus. The Self-Study reports the active involvement of over 100 individuals in the process, on the various committees, and in preparation for and carrying out of the visit. The entire institution was extraordinarily knowledgeable about and well-prepared for the visit.

B. Integrity of the Self-Study Report

The Self-Study identifies many of the strengths and challenges of the College and reflects an institution committed to the support of students and valued by the communities it serves. The Self-Study document identifies a variety of opportunities for institutional improvement.

C. Adequacy of Progress in Addressing Previously Identified Challenges

The institution is in the process of responding to all previously identified challenges.

- The College has made outstanding improvements in student support services including expanding counseling supported by staff and technology additions; initiating Project SUCCESS for at-risk students and establishing the Advising and Retention Center (ARC).
- The ARC, the CTL, the COL 101 courses together with the newly created Student Learning and Retention Committee are reflective of the College's commitment to provide comprehensive services to students, including an early alert system that supports student success.
- The College has developed a College-Wide Technology Plan FY2008-10; revised its Institutional Effectiveness Review (IER) Process; renewed its efforts in assessment; and employs a Strategic Long Range Plan and Planning Process (FY2009-13) that invites college-wide input.
- The instructional program review process has shifted to a five year institutional review cycle using a new IER Template and Five Year Plan to evaluate and revitalize programs. The need to plan for growth by substitution will require a process and leadership to sunset programs that are no longer viable and systematically introduce new programs.
- The evaluation system for faculty has been revised. The turnover of leadership at the dean level has impeded consistent and timely implementation of the evaluation system. The Center for Teaching and Learning, established in 2006, supports both full time and adjunct faculty in their efforts to enhance student success.
- The current Board of Trustees demonstrates an understanding of its responsibility for stewardship of the College and its role in selecting and supporting presidential leadership. The Board will be required to continue to grow in its role--supporting the new president and strengthening mission-driven leadership at every level of the institution.
- Although the College has taken steps to address the educational value of diversity, it continues to remain challenged by the lack of racial and ethnic diversity among its employees.

D. Notification of Evaluation Visit and Solicitation of Third-Party Comment

The team confirmed that Jefferson College invited public comment both on its website and in local newspapers in advance of the accreditation visit. Third party comments were received by the Higher Learning Commission and reviewed by the team. All comments were appreciative and supportive. The institution fulfilled the requirement that it seek such comment, evidenced by the display of invitation to comment in local newspapers in the Resource Room.

III. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

The institution documented its compliance with federal requirements in the Self-Study.. The team reviewed the required Title IV compliance areas and student complaint information. The Federal Compliance documents were assembled in a binder in the Resource Room and were reviewed by several members of the visiting team. The College needs to ensure that faculty report in a timely manner all students who fail to attend classes as this has an impact on federal financial aid eligibility and award levels.

IV. FULFILLMENT OF THE CRITERIA

CRITERION ONE: MISSION AND INTEGRITY. The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

1. Evidence that the Core Components are met

A. Since its last reaccreditation in 1999, Jefferson College has reflected on and revised its mission documents to specify its values and articulate anew its statements of mission and vision. Initiated by the President in 2003, the review of the College's mission documents involved multiple constituents, produced a series of drafts, and resulted in revisions approved by the Board of Trustees in February 2004. The mission documents are embraced and understood by internal and external constituents of the College. The mission-related statements are part of many College publications. The mission informs planning, budgeting and decision-making at Jefferson College.

B. In its governance and administrative structure, Jefferson College encourages effective leadership and collaboration in the carrying out of its mission. The current members of the Board of Trustees, elected by the citizens of Jefferson County, understand and fulfill their stewardship role as they support the President and encourage his leadership. The Trustees themselves provide leadership in connecting the College to the community and supporting the learning of students. Especially commendable is the Board's commitment to the student-focused success initiatives. It is clear that the Board, the President, and the entire college community understand the centrality of service to students and their learning needs.

C. As recently as 2007, the College introduced the use of an abbreviated statement of mission: QUALITY EDUCATION: STUDENT-CENTERED, COMPREHENSIVE, ACCESSIBLE that is used widely throughout the community. The statement captures the essence of what Jefferson Colleges promises for its students and the community it serves. Together with the extended mission statement, the abbreviated mission statement is quoted frequently and appears in many College documents.

D. The College lists the responses to the PACE survey by employees (SS, 19) to affirm that there is widespread understanding and support of the mission. The self study also lists the initiatives that are indicative of its claims to be student-centered, comprehensive, and accessible (SS, 20) as evidence that strategic decisions, planning and budgeting support the College's mission and are driven by the mission documents.

E. Jefferson College operates with fairness and integrity and provides evidence documenting its adherence to and compliance with all applicable laws and policies. Compliance requirements were compiled in a binder that was part of the Resource Room materials. The College seeks to go beyond compliance and, in the process of self-study, identified the commitment to add an integrity component to the statement of values in the mission documents.

2. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention:

A. While the self-study asserts that the mission documents "define the College's constituencies as a diverse student body and a heterogeneous community (SS, 17)," Jefferson College remains challenged to not only articulate and support a commitment to diversity in many of its manifestations, but also to embody and reflect diversity in its employee groups and its student population. Responsiveness to this challenge will continue to be important, especially as the demographics of the county become more diverse.

B. Although there is a commitment to and valuing of collaborative processes in the College, there is evidence that the number and size of committees (at this point numbering at least 21 and continuing to proliferate) do not contribute to governance that is efficient and effective as well as appropriately consultative. Both administrators and faculty concur that the committee structure needs review, reorganization, and

consolidation. The optimum size of 7-9 members will necessitate a revising of professional development and promotion for faculty who are currently required to serve on at least one committee.

3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up:

A. The turnover in administrative leadership since the last accreditation visit, together with the number of direct reports to the president, is of great concern at this time in the College's history. The current president has led the College very effectively, serving for three years as CEO. His long tenure at the College as executive vice president and as CFO spans 18 years. He has provided extraordinary and exemplary leadership and service not only to the College but also to Jefferson County. The Board needs to ensure that the new President has strong administrative leadership, at the senior leadership level, for internal operations so that he can carry out the executive responsibilities of the CEO.

B. Board policies and procedures manuals need comprehensive review and revision. Many of the policies have not been reviewed or revised for ten or more years. The Board Policy Manual contains much terminology and language that still reflects the Junior College (K-14) structure. The revisions should clarify the policy making role of the Board and affirm and reflect the administrative authority and responsibility of the President. Once the policies undergo review and revision, a regular cycle of review (e.g. 5 years) should be implemented.

4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.):

None.

Recommendation of the Team: Criterion is met. Commission follow up recommended.

CRITERION TWO: PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE. The organization's allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met.

A. Jefferson College has a number of processes and mechanisms at multiple levels for purposes of planning. These include processes and plans for facilities, technology, and annual operations--all reflected in corresponding planning documents. Annual Environmental Scanning and the resulting reports provide evidence that data are produced and available. The planning documents, including the annual institutional plans, information technology plans, a facilities master plan that provides for both new construction and remodeling of existing structures, and a variety of different reports, are rich sources of information.

B. The College has maintained its fiscal health as reflected in both operating and capital budgets. The community has supported an increase in the operating levy and bond issues, evidencing confidence and support rare in these economic times. A careful review of budgets, audits, grants and contracts testifies to the solid financial position of the College. The work of the Foundation engages the College and the

community in support of student scholarships.

C. The allocation of resources at Jefferson College is focused on supporting the success of students. The College strives for cost-effective strategies for facilities, overhead, faculty and staff hires, and up-to-date equipment for classrooms and laboratories. The team's onsite inspection of facilities, equipment and documents including annual budgets as well as their conversations with students, staff, faculty, and administrators reveal a widespread shared commitment to target college resources to support student success. Budgeting is firmly anchored in the student-centered heart of the College's mission.

D. Through its more than forty years of growth and service, the College has always been responsive to the development and changes in the community, evidenced by the development and growth of the Arnold and Northwest sites and the acquisition of prime acreage for expansion where growth in the county has already begun. Both the Arnold and Northwest sites involved a Blue Ribbon Commission and Report, effectively engaging the citizens of the county and securing their commitment to expansion for service.

2. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention:

A. As Jefferson College engages in review and revision of its plans for the next five to ten years, it will be essential to incorporate thinking and visioning beyond operational process for planning, budgeting, and reporting on an annual basis. reflection and conversation that will enable the College to imagine and create its desired future are essential as the scope and rate of change continue to increase. The College must focus on what needs to change in order to grow, now and in the near-term future, not by addition but rather by reallocation of resources in order to be faithful to areas that are truly mission-critical. In the planning, budgeting and decision making for the future, the emphasis on "maintaining" and "being responsive" to needs should be accompanied by anticipating demands and changing by design.

B. To equip itself to change by design, the College needs to ensure systematic use of the important data assembled and reported by the Office of Institutional Research to inform strategies for continuous improvement. Many of the initiatives resulting from the Long Range and Strategic Planning process currently in place are important and meaningful, but not evidently strategic.

C. While all members of the college community have the opportunity to participate in the planning process and to offer budget proposals through a wide variety of committees and constituent groups, the resulting decisions are often not data-driven or strategic. The College has made a wise and significant investment in the Office of Institutional Research and it should mine the wealth of data and the reports produced by the very competent staff in that Office to shape and support planning and decision-making.

3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow up: None.

4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require

Commission follow-up (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted): None.

Recommendation of the Team: Criterion met. No Commission follow up recommended.

CRITERION THREE: STUDENT LEARNING AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING. The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met:

A. The College goals for student learning outcomes are in place for individual courses and programs at Jefferson College. Faculty have agreed to a standard syllabus that identifies common course objectives. There is evidence of awareness that assessment needs to move more deliberately beyond the course level.

B. The self study reports and the team confirmed that the College empowers faculty to improve the learning environment. Among a variety of evidence for such empowerment is the creation of the Center for Teaching and Learning; the enhancement of the Library as a critical learning resource; and the installation of 131 smart classrooms for which faculty receive both training and support from an outstanding instructional team.

C. The College supports and encourages good teaching and the students continue to recognize the effectiveness of faculty teaching. All student surveys consistently reflect their valuing of the quality of the teaching and their acknowledgement and appreciation for the faculty. These surveys were summarized in the self study (SS, 69) and were available to the team in the Resource Room.

D. The College uses a number of assessment measures including nationally normed placement and exit tests. The performance data on CAAP, CBASE, and WorkKeys as well as the transfer figures arrayed in the self study report (SS, 105-113) provide evidence of student learning. The institutional research office has conducted a number of studies related to student performance and learning achievements through their course of study at Jefferson College. For example, the *Assessment Update* newsletter (November 2008, 6) reports the findings of a longitudinal study done by the Office of Research on the correlation between CBASE exit test scores and students' cumulative GPA in relation to "increased knowledge or the 'value-added' by the general education curriculum" that the students experienced at the College.

E. The Advising and Retention Center is a model for the support of student success through advising and timely intervention. The College has demonstrated exemplary commitment to initiatives to ensure student success. The commitment of staff to supporting students is evident in multiple manifestations including the disability services office, PROJECT SUCCESS (the TRIO program), and the special advisory and tutorial assistance available to specific groups of students (Nursing, Athletes, CTE).

3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention:

A. The College has remained engaged with assessment activities that document student learning and effective teaching. Revisions to the assessment plan in 1997, 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2008 document this work. The College is ready to focus on the last step of the improvement cycle: using data to enhance student success. There is some evidence that this type of work is already happening at the course level. Much more work remains to be done to use assessment as an instrument to enhance learning at the department/program level. The work to engage the faculty in the effective use of assessment should build on present strength and ensure that there is support for anyone who has not been active to date.

B. There is not a systematic approach to engaging adjunct faculty in assessment conversations and activities focused clearly on student learning outcomes, especially in multi-section, gateway, and sequential courses is essential, especially given the necessary reliance on adjunct faculty for many general education courses. The Assessment newsletters have reflected more a focus on the inputs of teaching rather than the outcomes of learning. Both academic and student affairs will be well served by using the data and reports produced by the Office of Institutional Research as they work to develop, implement, and learn from effective department/program level assessment of student learning outcomes.

C. Every effort should be made to distinguish the difference between assessment and testing and to dissociate assessment from performance review and evaluation. The use of signage (Assessment Center) to designate the testing center is one such example where the terms seem to be used interchangeably. The Self Study reports that as part of program level assessment, “[g]oals are monitored by the appropriate dean during annual performance reviews or during the development of annual reports” (61).

3. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up:** None.
4. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up:** None.
5. **Recommendation of the Team:** Criterion met. No Commission follow up recommended.

CRITERION FOUR: ACQUISITION, DISCOVERY, AND APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE.

The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met:

A. The JEFFERSON COLLEGE AGREEMENT FOR SUCCESS, included in the General Catalog (2008-2009, 26) and in the Student Handbook (2008-2009, 53) affirms and exemplifies the College’s expectation and encouragement for learning for

employees as well as students. The consistent allocation of resources to create a learning environment that supports student success and enables employee professional development evidences the College commitment to learning for all consistent with its mission. The Self Study summarizes the benefits related to professional development for employees and funding available over the last eight years (SS, 100).

B. The College regularly recognizes the achievement of students who excel in learning. Students are named to the Dean's List, inducted into the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, awarded Honors Program Scholarships, and recognized with designated levels of distinction earned upon completion of certificate and degree programs. There is abundant evidence that the College celebrates both the achievement of its students and the accomplishments of its employees in their efforts to acquire, discover, and apply knowledge.

C. The College is intentional in its creation and support of both curricular and co-curricular activities that encourage creativity and foster social responsibility. Service learning involves students and faculty in projects and activities that foster learning related to a particular discipline as well as engagement with the community. Xi Zeta, Jefferson College's Phi Theta Kappa Chapter, is active on campus and in the larger community. Global Studies and the Model United Nations engage students through curricular programs; a number of student organizations provide opportunities for students to assist and serve in the college and in the county.

D. In its outreach efforts and on the campus, Jefferson provides learning and professional development opportunities for small businesses, government entities and other groups. The team's meeting with community leaders affirmed the extent to which the College is responsive to the learning needs of a wide range of constituencies in its service area. Notable is the staffing of the Fine Arts Facility and the Field House with coordinators who ensure access and availability of these important spaces on the Hillsboro campus. The largest science and art fair in the nation, The Mastodon Science Fair, is held annually in the Field House—the largest facility in the county. It is evident that the College is indeed the center of learning in and for its communities.

E. The College has numerous advisory committees through which it seeks input on curricular currency. The transformation of the Criminal Justice Program is an outstanding example of the value and results of the advisory committee process. The College has also constituted and commissioned Blue Ribbon panels which issued reports and recommendations on the expansion of facilities at Arnold and at High Ridge. The College and its stakeholders clearly plan and work together to enhance the learning opportunities for the county the College serves.

F. The College collaborates with and provides space for transfer institutions to facilitate the completion of baccalaureate degrees on campus. Both students and employees are thus afforded opportunities to continue on their chosen educational pathways. The dual credit program with the high schools and the presence of the Area Technical School on the campus also evidence the College's intentional promotion of and provision for a life of learning.

2. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention:

A. In relation to students' acquisition of knowledge and the importance of academic integrity, there is evidence that students are advised by faculty in the syllabi for classes and called upon in the Agreement for Success "to be honest and maintain the highest level of integrity." (Catalog 2008-09, 26 and Handbook 2008-09, 53). The academic honesty statement has been included in all new and revised syllabi as the result of the recommendations of the Academic Affairs Committee in 2003. The COL 101 course

“addresses the seriousness of academic honesty with all new first year students.” Violations of academic integrity are addressed under the general Student Conduct Code and the Rules of Procedure under Student Disciplinary Matters (Handbook 2008-09, 26-28; 31-41) Currently there are no formal processes to track academic dishonesty cases. With its resolve to add an integrity element to its values statement, the College has an opportunity to clarify and make consistent a process to be applied to all violations of academic integrity, including a uniform hearing process, clear guidelines for consequences of first and subsequent infractions, and a database that allows the College to identify repeat offenders.

B. The College should establish and consistently implement a clear standard for the content of employee personnel files, including faculty credentials and certifications for both full time and adjunct faculty. Having the Human Resources Office serve as the repository for all employment files signals the College’s awareness that there needs to be greater consistency and completeness in the assembling and maintaining of personnel records, including performance evaluations.

3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up. None.

4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. None.

Recommendation of the Team. Criterion met. No Commission follow-up recommended.

CRITERION FIVE: ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE. As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met:

A. Jefferson College is connected to and engaged with the communities it serves in countless ways. Regular environmental scanning is a part of the annual planning process. Interactions with business, industry, community organizations, educational institutions, and individuals are an integral part of the College’s operation. The connectedness of the College to the community is reported in the Self Study, documented in the Resource Room, and verified by the members of the visiting team during their time on campus. Emblematic of the value of the College to the county it serves so well is the Jeffersonian Award recognizing the outstanding service of the College in 2007 and the President of the College in 2008. The Jefferson Award is a recognition given by the Jefferson County Growth and Development Association “to honor those who display civic involvement, integrity, and exemplary service to the community and who make an impact on the lives of Jefferson County residents and businesses.”

B. The first ever operating levy increase voted in 2002 by the citizens of Jefferson County is clear evidence of the support of the county for the College that is so frequently characterized as “the jewel of Jefferson County.” The financial support of the community recognizes the College’s valuable role in providing education for a lifetime

and acknowledges the responsible stewardship of its resources by the Board and the administration.

C. The relationship of the College to the community reflected in the Northwest and Arnold development and expansion is clearly indicative of deep and lasting collaboration that enriches the county and the College. Both sites share common ground with the libraries and the Arnold site is also co-located with the Arnold Recreation Center, the only three-way cooperative public partnership of its kind in the state of Missouri.

D. The Foundation Board of Directors is a group of 24 volunteers who are community leaders and decision makers in business and industry, civic, and non-profit organizations. They are committed to the advancement of the College and give generously of their time, talents, and treasure to support scholarships for students.

E. The partnerships documented by the institution and observed by the members of the visiting team provide clear evidence that the College serves the county in ways that are mutually valued. Examples of collaborative relationships reported in the Self Study (133-34) suggest the scope and nature of the engagement that enriches both the College and the communities. One of the most significant of these partnerships is the relationship with the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department. The College serves as a host site for the department and the department maintains an extraordinarily helpful presence reported by the College and experienced by the team.

F. The College's engagement with the community is reflected in the many and varied ways in which the community is invited to use the College facilities, especially the Field House and the Fine Arts Theatre spaces as well as the outside track and athletic fields. The College also encourages and supports the participation of its employees in civic and community service organizations. Emblematic and symbolic of the valued and valuable engagement of college and community are the gardens on the Hillsboro campus. Cultivated and tended by community volunteers, the gardens are everywhere visible indications of nurture, growth and mutuality.

2. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention: None.

3. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up: None.

4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up: None.

Recommendation of the Team: Criterion met. No Commission follow up recommended.

V. STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS

A. Affiliation Status: Accredited

B. Nature of Organization

1. **Legal status:** Public
Team Recommendation: No change
2. **Degrees awarded:** A
Team Recommendation: No change

C. Conditions of Affiliation

1. **Stipulation on affiliation status:** None
Team Recommendation: No change
2. **Approval of degree sites:** No Commission approval is required to offer existing degree programs at new sites within the service area provided prior approval is granted by the Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education.

Team Recommendation: Prior Commission approval required. *(This wording change is made in order to be in compliance with the Commission's recent Streamlined approval process and requirements.)*
3. **Approval of distance education degree:** No prior Commission approval required to offer the Associate of Arts degree online.

Team Recommendation: No change.
4. **Reports required:** The College must submit a monitoring report in 2013-14. The report should provide evidence that the College
 - A. has achieved stable and effective leadership at the executive and senior level;
 - B. has completed a review and revision of Board Policies and Procedures that are appropriate to a comprehensive community college;
 - C. is governed by a Board that continues to evolve in understanding its role, i.e. to engage in governance at the policy level while empowering the president with the authority as well as responsibility to lead the institution supported with an effective administrative organizational structure.
Should the College not provide evidence that is satisfactory, the Commission will schedule a visit focused on any or all of these areas.
5. **Other visits required:** None at this time.
6. **Organization change request:** None.

D. Commission Sanction or Adverse Action: None.

E. Summary of Commission Review**1. Timing for next comprehensive visit: 2018-2019****2. Rationale for recommendation:**

The Self Study Report prepared by Jefferson College accurately and fairly represents an institution which clearly meets the Criteria for Accreditation established by the Higher Learning Commission. The visiting team confirmed the findings of the College and is convinced that it has the human, physical and financial resources to move through the challenges that will confront all of higher education in the years ahead. Striving to be learning-centered, future-focused, connected, and distinctive, Jefferson College is rooted in its mission driven commitment to student success.

Based on the strength of the institution and the evidence presented under each of the five criteria indicating that core components are substantially met, the Team is recommending that the next comprehensive visit be scheduled for 2018-2019.

VI. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND EXPLANATIONS

The team recognizes and commends the College for the extensive and widespread involvement of the every sector of the College in preparing for the visit and for the extraordinary hospitality extended to the team during the visit.