Assurance Argument

Hennepin Technical College - Brooklyn Park, MN

Review date: 10-26-2026

Welcome Message for Review Team

Welcome to Hennepin Technical College, and thank you for taking the time to review our Assurance Argument. We are honored to share the story of our college, our students, and the work we do every day to transform lives through career and technical education.

Founded in 1972, Hennepin Technical College is Minnesota State's largest stand-alone technical college, serving thousands of learners each year across our Brooklyn Park and Eden Prairie campuses. As one of 33 colleges and universities within the Minnesota State system, we are proud of our mission to provide excellence in career and technical education for employment and advancement in an ever-changing global environment.

Our students come to us with remarkable diversity of experiences, backgrounds, aspirations, and challenges. Some are recent high school graduates discovering their future; others are adult learners seeking new opportunities, advancing their careers, or changing professions. They are united by a common goal: building better futures for themselves, their families, and the communities they serve. We believe every student deserves the opportunity to succeed, and our faculty and staff are deeply committed to helping them achieve that success.

As you review this Assurance Argument, you will see an institution guided by a clear mission, strengthened by integrity, committed to high-quality teaching and learning, and focused on continuous improvement. Our partnerships with business and industry, investment in innovative learning environments, dedication to equity and inclusion, and commitment to student success reflect our responsibility not only to our students but also to the employers and communities that depend upon a highly skilled workforce.

This Assurance Argument is more than a demonstration of compliance with the Higher Learning Commission's Criteria for Accreditation. It is an opportunity to reflect on who we are, celebrate what we have accomplished, and thoughtfully examine how we can become even better. We welcome your insights, questions, and recommendations as part of that process.

We look forward to welcoming you to our campuses and sharing with you the people, programs, and partnerships that make HTC a leader in career and technical education.

Joy Bodin
President, Hennepin Technical College

1 - Mission

The institution’s mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution’s operations.

1.A. Mission Alignment

The institution’s educational programs, enrollment profile and scope of operations align with its publicly articulated mission.

Argument

A Legacy of Workforce Education

As Minnesota's largest stand-alone technical college, HTC serves as a workforce engine for the Twin Cities region, connecting students to high-demand careers while helping employers address critical workforce shortages. The college’s mission, vision, values, strategic planning processes, academic programs, and operational decisions are aligned around a common purpose: providing excellence in career and technical education for employment and advancement in an ever-changing global environment.

Since its founding in 1972, HTC's mission has consistently focused on workforce education and employment preparation. As a member of Minnesota State (MinnState), the college's mission is approved and periodically reviewed through Board Policy 3.24 and remains aligned with system priorities and regional workforce needs.

MinnState is governed by a 15-member Board of Trustees (BOT), appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the MinnState, as outlined in State Statute 136F.02. The Board establishes policies governing mission and vision development, including Board Policy 3.24 and System Procedure 3.24.1, which require institutional missions to align with the broader mission and vision of MinnState. Today, MinnState consists of 33 colleges and universities operating across 54 campuses throughout the state.

Review of the Mission

Beginning in FY2018, HTC engaged in a comprehensive strategic planning process centered on its mission, vision, and values. The process included all-employee workshops, consultation meetings, and information sessions with internal and external stakeholders. HTC followed a similar inclusive process in FY2024 during development of its current strategic plan, Opening Doors: Access to Success. The college again engaged faculty, staff, students, advisory board members, and community stakeholders through workshops, surveys, and facilitated discussions to review and refine the institution’s mission, vision, and values. The President communicated progress and outcomes through multiple campus-wide communications. Feedback was gathered and reviewed by the executive team and incorporated into the final vision. Consistent with Board Policy 3.24, the mission

remained unchanged while the vision and values were updated.

Understanding HTC's Mission, Vision, Values, and Commitment to Inclusion

Mission Statement

To provide excellence in career and technical education for employment and advancement in an ever-changing global environment.

Vision Statement

To be the leader in career and technical education and assist every student in achieving their goals.

Values

- Students
- Innovation
- Success
- Community

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Hennepin Technical College is dedicated to providing an environment where students and employees can thrive. HTC recognizes that it is strongest when each person's unique life experiences, identities, and perspectives are recognized and valued.

Together, the mission, vision, values, and commitment to inclusion provide the framework for institutional planning, decision-making, and continuous improvement.

Strategic Planning and Mission Integration

The four institutional values serve as the foundation for HTC's mission and guide planning and decision-making across the college. Opening Doors: Access to Success serves as the institution's primary roadmap for advancing the mission, vision, and values.

The current five-year strategic plan (2025–2030) establishes four strategic pillars:

- Student Success
- Managed Growth
- Workplace Culture
- Organizational Effectiveness

Together, these pillars translate HTC's mission into action by focusing resources on student achievement, workforce responsiveness, employee engagement, and long-term institutional sustainability.

Educational Programs Align with the Mission

HTC's academic offerings directly support its mission of providing excellence in career and technical education for employment and advancement in an ever-changing global environment. Through more than 70 certificates, diplomas, associate degrees, and transfer

pathways, the college prepares students for high-demand careers while responding to regional workforce needs. Collectively, these programs prepare the technicians, healthcare workers, public safety professionals, tradespeople, and business leaders who support the economic vitality of Minnesota communities.

Programs are organized across a broad range of career fields, including

- Architecture;
- HVAC and construction;
- Business and finance;
- Culinary arts and hospitality;
- Education;
- Emergency, public, and social services;
- Healthcare;
- Horticulture and landscaping;
- Information technology and cyber defense;
- Manufacturing and engineering;
- Media and communications; and
- Transportation

In addition to career and technical programs, HTC offers general education coursework and the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC), providing students with opportunities to transfer courses to four-year institutions and continue their educational journeys.

Student success is supported through comprehensive services that promote access, persistence, and completion. These services include financial aid, academic advising, career counseling, accessibility services, food pantries, resource rooms, and other support resources designed to remove barriers to student achievement.

Recognizing that today's students balance education with employment, family responsibilities, and other commitments, HTC offers flexible course delivery options that expand access to technical education. Programs are offered in daytime, evening, weekend, hybrid, online, and flexible delivery formats. For example, students enrolled in Architectural Technology and Engineering CAD courses may attend classes in person, participate synchronously online, or access recorded instruction asynchronously. These flexible learning models allow students to engage in coursework in ways that best support their individual circumstances while maintaining high academic standards.

The college's educational programs are regularly reviewed and updated through industry partnerships, advisory committees, and workforce analysis to ensure alignment with emerging labor market needs. By combining accessible pathways, flexible delivery models, and career-focused curriculum, HTC advances its mission while preparing graduates for employment, advancement, and continued learning.

Enrollment Profile Aligns with the Mission

Many HTC students balance employment, family responsibilities, and financial pressures while pursuing their education. These realities influence institutional priorities related to scheduling flexibility, student support services, and basic needs assistance. As the largest stand-alone technical college in Minnesota, serving one of the state's most diverse metropolitan regions, HTC attracts learners from a wide range of racial, ethnic, educational,

and workforce backgrounds. Enrollment data demonstrate the college's commitment to access and opportunity for both traditional and nontraditional students.

Table 1. Enrollment Growth Demonstrates Community Demand	
Fiscal Year	**Total Headcount**
FY2021	6,598
FY2022	6,635
FY2023	6,242
FY2024	6,153
FY2025	7,176
FY2026	7,620

As shown in Table 1, enrollment increased by approximately 24% from FY2024 to FY2026, demonstrating growing demand for HTC's workforce-focused programs.

Table 2. Pell Eligible Students 2021-2026												
Pell Eligible	**2021**		**2022**		**2023**		**2024**		**2025**		**2026**	
No	4871	72%	5548	62%	5102	72%	4815	70%	5378	68%	5847	67%
Yes	**1872**	**28%**	**2097**	**38%**	**1988**	**28%**	**2065**	**30%**	**2581**	**32%**	**2905**	**33%**

As shown in Table 2, HTC’s enrollment profile also reflects its commitment to serving students for whom higher education can be transformative. Approximately one-third of HTC students are Pell-eligible each year, indicating substantial financial need. For many of these students, career and technical education provides a direct pathway to family-sustaining employment, economic mobility, and advancement—outcomes that are central to HTC’s mission.

Table 3. Student Age Profile (FY2026)		
Age Group	**Students**	**Percent**
18 or Less	1,896	25.3%
19–20	1,289	17.2%

21–24	1,503	20.0%
25–34	1,671	22.3%
35–44	731	9.7%
45–54	274	3.7%
55+	124	1.7%

As shown in Table 3, the age distribution of HTC students reflects the college's role in serving learners at every stage of life. While many students enroll directly from high school, more than one-third are age 25 or older and often return to education to gain new skills, advance their careers, or transition into high-demand occupations. This blend of traditional and nontraditional students aligns closely with HTC's mission of providing career and technical education for employment and advancement in an ever-changing global environment.

Table 4. Student Race/Ethnicity Profile (FY2026)			
Race/Ethnicity	**Students**	**Percent**	
White	3,311	44.1%	
African American	1,832	24.4%	
Hispanic	868	11.6%	
Asian	715	9.5%	55.9% Total Students of Color
Two or More Races	386	5.1%	
Unknown	288	3.8%	
Other Categories	101	1.5%	
Total	7,620	100%	

As seen in Table 4, a majority (55.9%) of students identify as students of color, multiracial, international, American Indian, Pacific Islander, or unknown ethnicity, reflecting the diversity of HTC's service area. This alignment is particularly evident at the Brooklyn Park campus, located in one of Minnesota's most diverse communities . More than 60% of Brooklyn Park residents identify as persons of color, approximately one-quarter were born outside the United States, and nearly one-third speak a language other than English at home. This enrollment profile aligns closely with HTC's mission and reinforces the importance of preparing students to work effectively in diverse communities and workplaces.

Enrollment characteristics illustrate how HTC's mission, vision, and values are realized

through broad access, workforce responsiveness, and service to the diverse communities of the Twin Cities metropolitan region. Collectively, HTC's enrollment profile demonstrates that the college attracts and serves the populations most closely aligned with its mission, vision, and commitment to student success.

Access and Affordability Align with the Mission

Affordability further supports mission alignment. As a MinnState institution, HTC offers tuition and fees among the top ten. most affordable public postsecondary options in Minnesota. The college participates in state and system initiatives designed to reduce financial barriers and expand educational access, including financial aid programs, state grants, and tuition-free pathways for eligible students, as described later in 3.D. These efforts support HTC's commitment to workforce development, economic mobility, and educational opportunity.

Faculty Excellence Supports the Mission

HTC's educational program quality is strengthened by faculty who demonstrate excellence in teaching, industry expertise, and commitment to student success. Faculty achievements at the institutional, state, and national levels provide evidence that HTC fulfills its mission through high-quality instruction and workforce-focused education.

Since 2020, HTC faculty have received multiple MinnState Board of Trustees Excellence Awards , the highest faculty honors conferred within the MinnState system. These recognitions include one Educator of the Year award and three Outstanding Educator awards received between 2020 and 2025. These honors recognize outstanding teaching, innovation, leadership, and dedication to student learning.

HTC faculty have also earned national recognition through the Dale P. Parnell Distinguished Faculty designation awarded by the American Association of Community Colleges. Between 2020 and 2022, three HTC faculty members received this distinction, which honors educators who demonstrate excellence in teaching and a strong commitment to student success.

Faculty members are further recognized within their professional industries. For example, Culinary Arts instructor Chef Tracy Figueroa was named the 2025 Postsecondary Educator of the Year by the Idaho Potato Commission and the Center for the Advancement of Foodservice Education (CAFÉ), reflecting both instructional excellence and strong industry engagement.

These recognitions demonstrate that HTC fulfills its mission not only through workforce-focused programs, but through faculty who bring industry expertise, instructional excellence, and a commitment to student success into every classroom and lab.

Public Articulation of the Mission

HTC clearly communicates its mission, vision, and values through multiple channels to ensure broad awareness among students, employees, and community stakeholders.

The mission is publicly available on the college website and is prominently featured within the Strategic Plan, reinforcing the connection between institutional planning and the

college’s stated purpose. Students encounter the mission through the Student Handbook. and during New Student Orientation, where the mission serves as an introduction to the college’s expectations, values, and commitment to student success.

The mission is also visible throughout HTC’s campuses. Physical displays located in high-traffic areas, including building entrances, student commons spaces, and the Gourmet Dining area, provide daily reminders of the college’s purpose and priorities. In addition, digital signage throughout campus communicates the mission and strategic priorities to students, employees, and visitors.

HTC integrates its mission into governance and operational processes. The mission appears on institutional meeting agendas and serves as a point of reference for planning, decision-making, and resource allocation. New employees are introduced to the mission, vision, and values during onboarding and new hire orientation, helping establish a shared understanding of institutional priorities from the beginning of employment.

As a result, HTC's mission is not simply a public statement; it serves as the foundation for institutional planning, educational delivery, employee engagement, and the student experience.

Sources

- 1.A.a HTC History
- 1.A.b Mission Vision Values
- 1.A.b State Statute 136F.01
- 1.A.c 2025-2026 Minnstate Guide Book
- 1.A.c PA labor market
- 1.A.d State Statute 136F.02
- 1.A.e Board Policy 3.24
- 1.A.f System Procedure 3.24.1
- 1.A.g 2018 strategic planning process
- 1.A.g 2025 Strategic Plan
- 1.A.h EPC location
- 1.A.h MN Demographics
- 1.A.h President Emails
- 1.A.i HLC enrollment profile
- 1.A.i Workshop Agenda
- 1.A.j 2023-2024 Minnstate Guidebook
- 1.A.k 2025 Annual Report
- 1.A.l Academic Programs
- 1.A.l student services
- 1.A.m Course Delivery Methods
- 1.A.n Student Handbook
- 1.A.o New Student Orientation Presentation
- 1.A.p New Hire Orientation
- 1.A.q BOT Excellence Awards
- 1.A.q BOT Faculty Awards
- 1.A.q HTC tuition rank
- 1.A.r Mission Photos
- 1.A.s Dale P. Parnell Distinguished Faculty

- 1.A.t Hennepin County Demographics
- 1.A.u Idaho Potato Commission Educator of the Year
- 1.A.z HTC tuition

1.B. Mission and Public Good

The institution's operation of the academic enterprise demonstrates its commitment to serving the public good.

Argument

Philosophy and Mission-Driven Commitment to Public Good

HTC fulfills this mission by preparing a highly skilled and diverse workforce that meets Minnesota's evolving economic needs. As shown in 1A, HTC served over 7,6000 students in FY26, with 55.9% of the student body identifying as minorities or people of color, including significant representation from Black, Hispanic, and Asian communities reflecting the community we serve. The college also maintains strong gender and age diversity, with a large proportion of adult learners and nontraditional students. These demographics reflect HTC's role in promoting equity and access for underrepresented populations.

HTC's graduates continue to obtain employment in their chosen fields within the first year of graduation. In 2023–2024, many HTC programs reported related employment rates of 80–100% among graduates available for employment, demonstrating the effectiveness of HTC's career-focused education and industry alignment. Additionally, employers responding to HTC's Graduate Employer Satisfaction Survey reported that graduates commonly performed 'Well' or 'Very Well' across key workplace competencies, including responsibility, communication, professionalism, and quality of work.

Alignment of Academic Programming with Public Good

HTC's academic programming aligns directly with its mission to provide excellence in career and technical education for employment and advancement by intentionally structuring programs, curriculum, and instruction to serve the broader public good. Program design and curriculum decisions are guided by workforce demand, licensure and accreditation standards, and input from industry and community partners to ensure graduates are prepared to contribute meaningfully to regional economic vitality and community well-being.

Advisory committees especially play a critical role in ensuring workforce alignment with regional needs, providing curriculum guidance, reviewing learning outcomes, and validating industry relevance. HTC also regularly examines labor market/industry data in its program review process, ensuring that its programming aligns with state and regional labor market needs. For example, the Automate Robotics program reviewed labor market information alongside employer partnerships to understand regional workforce demand and inform program planning, which has led to the program's expanded offerings at the Brooklyn Park campus and strengthened apprenticeship partnerships with employers including SkyWater, Seagate, Polar Semiconductor. To further illustrate the extent of how HTC aligns its academic offerings with public good, from 2023 to 2026, the college created, revised, or ended more than 400 academic awards , and nearly all of these changes to HTC's academic programming required industry input and labor market review.

Engagement with External Constituencies and Responsiveness

Expanding educational access continues to be a strategic priority for HTC. Through partnerships with K–12 districts and community organizations, HTC offers multiple pathways to college and career readiness. Programs such as TRiO serve hundreds of middle and high school students annually, providing tutoring, advising, and college preparation services. HTC's Early Middle College program has grown significantly, offering students the opportunity to earn college credits while completing a high school diploma.

Customized training programs and continuing education courses provide flexible, industry-specific solutions delivered on campus, online, or at employer sites. HTC's Customized Training Solutions remains a cornerstone of its public service mission, partnering with more than 200 businesses to address workforce development challenges. These partnerships strengthen regional talent pipelines while helping employers respond to evolving workforce demands.

Table 5. Customized Training Solutions Registrations 2020-25

CTS Registrations	Unduplicated	Total Registrations
FY 2020	3,093	3,937
FY 2021*	2,653	2,877
FY 2022	3,030	3,806
FY 2023	2,966	3,878
FY 2024	2,881	3,937
FY 2025	3,353	4,050

* Greatest COVID impact (7/1/2020 to 6/30/2021)

CTS illustrates how HTC's mission extends beyond traditional students to incumbent workers, employers, and regional industries seeking to remain competitive in a changing economy. As seen in Table 5, CTS enrollment declined during the COVID-19 pandemic but has since rebounded and exceeded pre-pandemic levels, demonstrating continued community demand for workforce training opportunities.

Community Partnerships to Support the Mission

HTC demonstrates its commitment to the public good through direct community engagement and support services. These initiatives reflect HTC's belief that workforce education and community well-being are inseparable. Food Pantries and Resource Rooms are available on each campus and are open to students, employees, and community members, helping address food insecurity and basic needs and supporting persistence and well-being. Many of these food resources are made possible because of community partnerships.

The college has hosted Veterans Reintegration events for the past two years, free and open to all veterans and their families, providing access to education, employment, healthcare, and community resources. Faculty and staff also contribute beyond the institution, serving

on various councils and boards. In addition, HTC engages with the broader community who support the college through donations, scholarships, and professional development. These partners include community organizations such as Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs, community garden organizations, and other civic and nonprofit groups. Many of these partners also serve as advisory committee members, creating a collaborative ecosystem that strengthens student learning, workforce readiness, and community impact.

Sources

- 1.B.a Graduate Employment Rates
- 1.B.b Employer Satisfaction Survey
- 1.B.c advisory boards
- 1.B.d new programs
- 1.B.e TriO Upward Bound
- 1.B.f Customized Training Solutions
- 1.B.g food resources at HTC
- 1.B.h veteran engagement at HTC
- 1.B.j ARET Labor Data
- 1.B.k EMC enrollment

1.C. Mission and Diversity of Society

The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Argument

Mission Alignment and Institutional Commitment

HTC fulfills its mission of providing excellence in career and technical education within an ever-changing global environment by preparing students to engage effectively in diverse communities, workplaces, and civic life. Because HTC graduates enter workplaces that are increasingly diverse, interconnected, and globally influenced, cultural competence and civic engagement are essential workforce skills. Consistent with HTC's values of Students, Innovation, Success, and Community, the college promotes civic engagement, cultural awareness, equity, and inclusion through its curriculum, co-curricular activities, community partnerships, and institutional practices. These efforts help students develop the knowledge, skills, and perspectives necessary to contribute responsibly to an increasingly interconnected and multicultural society.

Civic, Cultural, and Global Learning Through the Curriculum

Integrated throughout academic programs and general education offerings, HTC promotes students' cultural and global competencies through its HTC Learner Value of Cultural and Global Awareness. This commitment is reinforced through coursework aligned with the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) , particularly Goal Area 5 (History and the Social and Behavioral Sciences), Goal Area 6 (Humanities and Fine Arts), and Goal Area 8 (Global Perspective). Through these courses, students examine diverse cultures, social systems, historical contexts, and global issues while developing intercultural awareness and the ability to engage effectively with people whose experiences differ from their own.

Faculty further support these outcomes through culturally responsive pedagogy and intentional inclusion of diverse perspectives within course content. HTC has identified courses--such as Intro to Sociology, Race in America, Intercultural Communication, and Introduction to Humanities in which Cultural and Global Awareness is a primary learner value, ensuring that students encounter multicultural perspectives relevant to both civic participation and professional practice.

These curricular experiences help students develop the cultural competence, communication skills, and global awareness needed to thrive in diverse workplaces and communities. For HTC students, cultural and global awareness are not separate from technical expertise; they are essential components of professional success.

Student Engagement and Co-Curricular Learning

HTC complements classroom learning through co-curricular experiences that encourage

leadership development, civic participation, cultural awareness, and engagement with diverse perspectives. Student organizations provide opportunities for students to build community, develop leadership skills, and contribute to campus life while interacting with peers from a variety of backgrounds. Student organizations and leadership opportunities include Student Senate, SkillsUSA, Phi Theta Kappa, Blacks Rising in Education and Academics (BREA), Becoming Racially Inclusive Culture Club (BRICC), the HTC IOPP Student Chapter, and other student-led groups that support academic, professional, and personal development.

The college further integrates cultural understanding and civic dialogue through programming coordinated by the Equity and Inclusion division and other campus partners. Activities such as the Diversity Book Club, cultural celebrations, mentoring initiatives, intercultural workshops, and community-focused events encourage students, employees, and community members to engage with diverse perspectives and experiences. These opportunities help students develop communication, collaboration, and intercultural competencies necessary for success in a diverse society and workforce.

Many HTC students also participate in professional and career-focused organizations that connect learning to service, leadership, and industry engagement. Through activities such as SkillsUSA competitions, advisory committee interactions, and professional networking events, students apply classroom learning in authentic settings while developing a sense of professional responsibility and civic engagement. Together, these experiences extend learning beyond the classroom and reinforce HTC's commitment to developing engaged citizens and skilled professionals.

Community Partnerships and Civic Engagement

HTC demonstrates its commitment to civic engagement and service through extensive partnerships with educational institutions, workforce organizations, public agencies, and community-based nonprofits. Collaborations help expand access to education, support economic mobility, and address community needs while providing students with opportunities to engage with diverse populations and real-world challenges.

The college maintains strong partnerships with K–12 school districts through Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO), concurrent enrollment , and other dual-credit initiatives. Collaborations with Robbinsdale Area Schools, Intermediate School District 287, and other regional partners provide students from diverse backgrounds with access to college-level coursework, career exploration opportunities , and pathways to higher education. These partnerships strengthen educational attainment and promote civic and community engagement across the region.

HTC further advances the public good through workforce and community partnerships that support underserved and underrepresented populations. HTC's partnership with the Brooklyn Bridge Alliance for Youth (BBYA) brings together education and an equity-focused community organization to improve education and economic opportunity for youth and families in northwest Hennepin County. HTC collaborated with BBAY and North Hennepin Community College to develop the Blueprint for Persistence , a shared action plan that aligns institutional and community resources to address barriers to student persistence and completion through coordinated, student-centered strategies. The college also collaborates with organizations such as Emerge Community Development to provide workforce training

and career pathways that promote economic mobility and self-sufficiency. HTC also collaborates with healthcare organizations, including North Memorial, to address workforce needs and expand opportunities for students.

Through partnerships with the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), HTC administers initiatives such as Drive for Five, the Uniquely Abled Academy, and workforce training programs supported by the Future Forward Fund. These initiatives increase access to education and employment for individuals with disabilities, displaced workers, and populations historically underrepresented in high-demand industries.

HTC also contributes to regional civic and economic development through participation on the Hennepin County and Carver County Workforce Development Boards. Through these roles, college leaders engage in community conversations regarding workforce trends, economic development, and equitable access to education and employment opportunities. These partnerships ensure that HTC remains responsive to community needs while preparing students to contribute meaningfully to the social and economic vitality of the region.

HTC recognizes that creating an inclusive environment requires ongoing effort and continuous evaluation. Student and employee feedback, climate assessments, and equity-focused planning processes help the institution identify growth opportunities and strengthen its commitment to belonging and inclusion.

HTC regularly evaluates the effectiveness of its civic engagement, cultural awareness, and equity initiatives to ensure alignment with its mission and strategic priorities. Assessment activities include student learning outcomes assessment, participation data , advisory committee feedback, employer feedback , program review processes, and evaluation of institutional initiatives designed to improve student engagement and success. Information gathered through these processes is used to identify strengths, address gaps, and guide continuous improvement efforts.

The college further demonstrates its commitment to continuous improvement through institution-wide equity-focused initiatives. In Fall 2024, HTC implemented its Equity by Design Teaching and Learning Circle, which engaged faculty in examining instructional practices, student engagement strategies, and institutional policies through an equity-centered lens. Faculty participating in the Equity by Design Teaching Circle implemented projects across disciplines —from Liberal Arts faculty redesigning assignments to provide multiple formats for student participation and expression, to technical program faculty creating structured peer-review and inspection processes that promote transparency, engagement, and equitable learning opportunities—demonstrating a shared commitment to embedding equity-minded practices into teaching and learning.

HTC prepares students not only for employment, but for meaningful participation in a diverse society and globally connected workforce, reflecting the institution's commitment to civic engagement, inclusion, and student success.

Sources

- 1. C. a Mission
- 1.C.b. Minnesota State - Minnesota Transfer Curriculum

- 1.C.c. Hennepin Technical College - SOCI1100
- 1.C.d. Hennepin Technical College - SOCI1400
- 1.C.e. Hennepin Technical College - COMM1200
- 1.C.f. Hennepin Technical College - ENGL1200
- 1.C.g K12
- 1.C.h CE
- 1.C.i Cyber Challenge
- 1.C.j Robotics funding
- 1.C.k BBAY Blueprint for Persistence
- 1.C.k North memorial partnership
- 1.C.l Emerging Careers Program
- 1.C.m Drive for 5
- 1.C.n uniquely abled
- 1.C.p DEED 4.1
- 1.C.r mentorship program
- 1.C.s career summit
- 1.C.t Adoptees
- 1.C.u cocurricular activities
- 1.C.u student clubs
- 1.C.v. Culturally Responsive Customer Service - Action Research Projects - Survey Links
- 1.C.w. fy25-employer-satisfaction-survey-results
- 1.C.ww equity by design faculty examples
- 1.C.x. Concurrent Enrollment Partner Schools
- 1.C.z Equity Gaps Teaching Circle Description

Criterion 1 Summary

The institution’s mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution’s operations.

Argument

The Criterion 1 narrative demonstrates that Hennepin Technical College's mission is more than a public statement—it is the foundation for institutional planning, academic programming, resource allocation, and continuous improvement. Through an inclusive strategic planning process and alignment with Minnesota State policies, HTC regularly evaluates its mission, vision, and values to ensure they reflect a responsiveness to workforce needs and the communities it serves. The college's career and technical programs, flexible instructional delivery, comprehensive student support services, and commitment to affordability provide accessible pathways to employment, advancement, and lifelong learning for a diverse student population.

HTC further advances its mission by serving the public good through strong partnerships with employers, K–12 schools, community organizations, and government agencies. Workforce-informed curriculum, customized training, and active advisory committees ensure academic programs remain aligned with regional economic priorities and evolving industry demands. The college fosters civic engagement, cultural competence, and inclusive excellence through its curriculum, co-curricular programming, and equity-centered initiatives that prepare students to thrive in diverse workplaces and communities. Collectively, the evidence demonstrates that HTC's mission is fully integrated into institutional operations and guides the college's ongoing commitment to student success, workforce development, and continuous institutional improvement.

Sources

There are no sources.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

In fulfilling its mission, the institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A. Integrity

Actions taken by the institution’s governing board, administration, faculty and staff demonstrate adherence to established policies and procedures.

Argument

Ethical Governance and Institutional Integrity

As a public institution, HTC demonstrates institutional integrity through adherence to the governance framework established by the MinnState Board of Trustees, Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB), collective bargaining agreements, and applicable federal and state laws. For example, HTC operates under MinnState nondiscrimination policies and procedures, as well as ethical conduct, respectful workplace, and fraud prevention. HTC also operates under MinnState rules for student rights and responsibilities (policies and procedures) and complaint resolution (policies and procedures).

HTC further promotes institutional integrity through shared governance processes that encourage participation by faculty, staff, administrators, and students in institutional decision-making. Consistent with the Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCF) Master Agreement for shared governance, the College's Shared Governance Council meets monthly to discuss matters affecting the institution, including policies, planning initiatives, operational issues, and strategic priorities.

Policy Development, Review, and Approval

HTC maintains formal processes to ensure that institutional policies and procedures remain current, aligned with MinnState policy, and aligned with the College's mission, strategic priorities, and operational needs. HTC follows Policy 1A.1 and Procedure 1.A1.1, which govern the development and revision of policies and procedures. HTC’s policies and procedures are publicly available on the website. The College's Policy Committee is comprised of representatives from across the institution who lead the policy process. The committee meets monthly to review proposed policy changes, evaluate policy needs, recommend revisions, and support communication of policy updates to the campus community.

The committee addresses changes in federal or state law, MinnState requirements, accreditation expectations, operational needs, or continuous improvement efforts. For example, the committee developed a clearer policy for employees who telework. Also, the committee reviewed and updated the policy on professional development for faculty. Another

recent review of policies related to emerging technologies and artificial intelligence demonstrates HTC's commitment to ensuring that policies remain relevant, transparent, and responsive to evolving educational and operational needs.

Oversight, Compliance, and Accountability

HTC's commitment to institutional integrity is reinforced through internal, system-level, state, and federal oversight. The College is subject to review by the MinnState System Office, the Office of Internal Auditing, the Office of the Legislative Auditor, the Minnesota Office of Higher Education, and the U.S. Department of Education, as applicable. Oversight mechanisms provide independent evaluation of institutional operations and compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and Board policies.

Enrollment Services promotes ethical enrollment practices through employee training, oversight, and ongoing assessment. Employees are expected to provide accurate, transparent, and inclusive information to prospective students, and service quality is regularly evaluated through stakeholder feedback and performance measures.

Designated employees complete MinnState investigator and decision-maker training and are responsible for conducting investigations and resolving complaints in accordance with Board policies and procedures. HTC promotes accountability through established processes for investigating and resolving concerns related to discrimination, harassment, misconduct, and equal opportunity. Human Resources ensures HTC has qualified investigators and decision-makers. When conflicts of interest arise, or additional expertise is needed, MinnState provides access to trained personnel from other institutions to ensure impartial review and consistent application of policy.

The College complies with Title IX through a designated Title IX Coordinator who receives ongoing training and guidance from MinnState and is responsible for responding to reports of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and related misconduct. Students and employees are informed of reporting procedures, complaint processes, and available resources through institutional policies, employee training, student communications, public notices, and the Student Handbook.

Financial Integrity

The College manages its financial operations in accordance with MinnState Board policies and procedures governing financial administration, purchasing, contracting, grants, asset management, and financial reporting. Responsibility for financial stewardship rests with the President and designated financial administrators, who ensure compliance with applicable state, system, and federal requirements. Employees authorized to make purchases follow established MinnState purchasing procedures.

The HTC Foundation demonstrates financial integrity through annual independent audits, transparent financial reporting, and strong board oversight. The FY2025 Foundation audit provided an unmodified opinion confirming the accuracy of the Foundation's financial statements. While a material weakness related to segregation of duties was identified, it reflects a common limitation for organizations of similar size and is mitigated through active management and board review. The Foundation has also strengthened its financial practices by improving the tracking and reporting of board-designated and donor-restricted funds, reinforcing transparency and donor confidence, and a commitment to continuous

improvement.

As discussed in Criterion 4, HTC regularly evaluates its financial performance, allocates resources in support of institutional priorities, and monitors long-term financial sustainability through established planning and budgeting processes.

Academic Integrity and Responsible Academic Practice

HTC policies define expectations for academic integrity and provide transparent processes for addressing academic misconduct, student concerns, and grade appeals. These processes ensure that students are treated fairly while maintaining the academic standards expected of all learners.

The College also maintains procedures designed to ensure accurate academic records and compliance with federal and state financial aid requirements. Through its Last Date of Attendance (LDA) policy and procedure, HTC establishes expectations for documenting student participation and attendance.

HTC recognized that as many new faculty were hired, ongoing LDA training was needed, so the College's Center for Teaching and Learning developed annual training around LDA requirements and reporting responsibilities, helping ensure accurate recordkeeping and consistent administration of student financial aid programs.

Faculty and administrators regularly evaluate instructional technologies and academic integrity tools to ensure alignment with institutional values, student success goals, and evolving educational practices. For example, in response to the rise in AI in learning environments, faculty and administrators collaboratively provided a review of its current AI-detection platform, Turnitin, as well as other artificial intelligence-related detection tools, considering issues related to accuracy, privacy, equity, multilingual learners, and student learning before determining that the College would not renew Turnitin. This review process reflects HTC's commitment to evidence-based decision-making, shared governance, and the responsible use of technology in support of teaching, learning, and academic integrity.

Fair and Equitable Employment Practices

HTC is an Equal Employment Opportunity employer and maintains an Affirmative Action Plan that guides efforts to promote equitable employment practices and reduce barriers to opportunity. The Vice President of Human Resources is responsible for coordinating implementation of the plan, monitoring compliance, and providing updates to institutional leadership. Hiring processes are regularly reviewed to support fair and equitable employment practices and alignment with MinnState and state affirmative action requirements.

To promote consistency and fairness in hiring, employees who participate in search processes, as the search chair or member, complete required confidentiality, cognitive bias, and unconscious bias training. Human Resources provides oversight and guidance throughout the hiring process to support compliance with institutional and system expectations. These training requirements help ensure that applicants are evaluated fairly, confidentiality is maintained, and employment decisions are based on job-related qualifications and institutional needs.

HTC further supports employee accountability and professional growth through required training and performance evaluation processes. Faculty, staff, and administrators complete annual training on topics such as FERPA, cybersecurity, public data practices, and workplace expectations. Completion of required training is monitored through MinnState's Enterprise Learning Management (ELM) system. Employee evaluations are conducted in accordance with MinnState Board Policy 4.9 and MinnState Statute 43A.20 and provide opportunities to review performance, establish expectations, support professional development, and reinforce accountability.

Sources

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- 2.A.aa LDA Form Letter
- 2.A.b 1B.3 Sexual Misconduct Policy
- 2.A.b 1C.0.2 Respectful Workplace
- 2.A.b 1C.2 Fraudulent Acts
- 2.A.b HTC Code of Conduct
- 2.A.bb Website Redesign Scope
- 2.A.c 5.13 InfoTech Policy
- 2.A.c student code of conduct pro
- 2.A.c student code of conduct
- 2.A.c Student Complaint pol
- 2.A.c Student complaint pro
- 2.A.d HTC policy process
- 2.A.d HTC Telework Policy
- 2.A.d policy on policy
- 2.A.e Complaint Grievance form
- 2.A.e policy draft IPDP
- 2.A.f 5.22 Acceptable Use Computers
- 2.A.f LDA pol
- 2.A.f LDA pro
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- 2.A.g Recruiter Ethics Training
- 2.A.gg Student Code of Conduct pro
- 2.A.h 7.3 Financial Administration
- 2.A.hh Social Media Pol
- 2.A.i Student Handbook
- 2.A.ii AASC minutes
- 2.A.ii MSCF shared gov article 8
- 2.A.ii Shared Gov minutes
- 2.A.j LDA directions
- 2.A.j Search-Chair Process
- 2.A.j Title IX
- 2.A.k LDA Faculty Training

- 2.A.l Delegation of Authority
- 2.A.m Purchasing Card Agreement
- 2.A.n Foundation Audit Response
- 2.A.n Foundation Audit
- 2.A.n foundation board minutes
- 2.A.n Purchasing pol
- 2.A.p social media policy
- 2.A.q AI policy review and feedback
- 2.A.rr ELM training notice
- 2.A.t AffAction
- 2.A.u MinnState 4.9
- 2.A.u Sec. 43A
- 2.A.uu HR 4-9pol
- 2.A.v Respectful Workplace
- 2.A.x Academic Integrity Pol
- 2.A.x Academic Integrity Proc
- 2.A.x LDA
- 2.A.x Search Committee Process
- 2.A.y Decision Maker Training
- 2.A.y Title IX training
- 2.A.e Policies on the Web

2.B. Transparency

The institution presents itself accurately and completely to students and the public with respect to its educational programs and any claims it makes related to the educational experience.

Argument

Ensuring Students Have Accurate Information

HTC's website is the primary source for prospective and current students to access information about admissions, academic programs, costs, financial aid, student services, policies, and institutional resources. To ensure students receive accurate, timely, and accessible information, the College continually evaluates and improves its digital communications and online navigation.

In 2021, HTC launched Techie , an artificial intelligence-powered chatbot available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to help students and community members find information about admissions, advising, financial aid, registration, tuition, student services, and other college resources. Techie provides immediate assistance, supports multiple languages, and directs users to staff when additional support is needed, improving access to information beyond traditional business hours. HTC tracks Techie usage to determine what is being asked and how often users engage with it which drives improvement in the Enrollment Services.

In 2026, HTC also completed a comprehensive website redesign to improve accessibility, navigation, and access to information for prospective and current students. To further improve the student experience, HTC enhanced its Future Student website navigation to provide audience-specific pathways for prospective learners, including veterans, high school students, transfer students, and international students. The Future Student section organizes admissions information, support services, and enrollment resources in a streamlined format that helps prospective students more easily identify the information most relevant to their educational goals.

Additionally, the MinnState System Office has upgraded online planning tools that help students explore programs, understand degree requirements, and monitor academic progress. Enhancements available to HTC students include:

- Graduation Planner Tool
- Schedule Builder integrated into the College Source uAchieve Degree Audit package
- Renaming the package to Student Planner for greater clarity, including Graduation Planner, Degree Audit, and Schedule Builder resources

Communicating Academic Program Information

HTC communicates differences in specific programs through three main sources: the annual College Catalog, academic planning guides, and the HTC website. In recent years, HTC

transitioned from a PDF version to a Smart Catalog, published online, with access to current and past catalogs dating as far back as 2005.

Academic Planning Guides are part of the AASC review process; they track curriculum changes and serve as a student resource. They list required courses, recommended sequences of courses, and graduation requirements. If a program includes multiple awards (e.g., AAS and certificate), each has its own planner. Once a program is approved by the college, MinnState, and U.S. Department of Education for financial aid eligibility, planners are posted online and used by admissions staff, academic advisors, and program coordinators. Planners are regularly reviewed by the registrar, program coordinators, and faculty to ensure accuracy.

Communicating Student Rights and Responsibilities

As part of HTC's 2026 website redesign, student rights, responsibilities, policies, and support resources were reorganized within a more intuitive navigation structure to improve accessibility and ensure students can easily locate important compliance, safety, and consumer information. HTC disseminates information regarding student rights, responsibilities, policies, and procedures through multiple sources, including the College Catalog, Student Handbook, HTC website, and new student orientation in D2L. These resources ensure that students have ready access to information necessary for understanding academic expectations, institutional policies, available services, and avenues for addressing concerns.

New students are introduced to important college policies and student resources through orientation and guidance. The College also provides a self-paced D2L Orientation to Online Learning workshop that familiarizes students with online course expectations, Brightspace navigation, academic integrity, study skills, and available support services. The workshop includes interactive modules and assessments designed to prepare students for success in online learning and connect them with key institutional resources, and the New Student Transitions Coordinator creates additional resources to help students navigate institutional systems and services.

The College Catalog and Student Handbook provide comprehensive information regarding academic standards, grading policies, satisfactory academic progress, student conduct, student complaint procedures, privacy protections, transfer policies, technology use, and student rights and responsibilities. These policies are also accessible through the college website, allowing students to access current information at any time.

Consistent with federal Student Right-to-Know requirements and campus safety regulations, HTC maintains publicly available information regarding campus security, student consumer information,Title IX (addressed in 2.A), and institutional policies (addressed in 2.A). The Student Handbook includes information related to sexual misconduct, discrimination and harassment, student conduct expectations, grievance procedures, and campus safety resources. Additional information regarding student rights, responsibilities, and reporting procedures is available through the college website.

To ensure consistent communication of important student policies, faculty are required to include institutional syllabus statements in their courses each semester. Required syllabus statements communicate course expectations, learning outcomes, schedules, instructor

information, grading and assessment practices, required materials, academic integrity expectations, accessibility resources, student rights and responsibilities, and other institutional requirements, including Title IX and student support services.

Presenting Financial Information

HTC presents information regarding admissions, tuition and fees, financial aid, and career outcomes in a clear and transparent manner through its website and student services resources. Students have access to comprehensive information that supports informed decision-making about enrollment, financing their education, and evaluating the value of their educational investment.

Students are provided with a clear overview of the admissions process through the College's Admissions webpage, which outlines application requirements, enrollment steps, residency information, testing requirements, and pathways for various student populations. Financial Aid provides information regarding financial aid opportunities, eligibility requirements, application procedures, scholarships, student employment, and other funding resources through its Financial Aid webpages.

Students are guided through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) process, as well as grants, loans, work-study opportunities, and scholarship resources. The Net Price Calculator allows prospective students to estimate educational costs and financial aid eligibility, promoting transparency regarding the total cost of attendance. HTC annually publishes a Tuition and Fee Schedule that clearly identifies tuition rates, mandatory fees, and program-specific charges.

HTC also provides resources that help students understand the relationship between education and career outcomes. Through Career Development services, students have access to career exploration tools , employment resources, labor market information, resume assistance, interview preparation, and job search support. These services help students make informed choices regarding academic programs and career pathways.

HTC also provides on its website graduate follow-up data that reports employment and continuing education outcomes for program graduates. These annual reports provide information regarding graduate employment rates and educational advancement, allowing prospective and current students to evaluate program effectiveness and career opportunities associated with HTC credentials.

Communicating Institution and Program Accreditation

HTC communicates its accreditation status transparently through its accreditation webpages, College Catalog, and public information resources. HTC received HLC reaffirmation of accreditation in 2017. The webpage provides access to the HLC letter in 2017 reaffirming HTC's accreditation, HTC's 2020 Mid-Cycle Assurance Argument , HLC's response to HTC's Mid-Cycle argument, showing all Met with no concerns, HTC's Quality Initiative Proposal , and HLC's response to the QIP . HTC's accreditation webpage also provides current information regarding

- Specialized accreditationfrom external professional organizations and licensing agencies (each program page with specialized accreditation lists details about its accreditation)

- Disclosures
- Strategic planning and operational plans
- Assessment and improvement processes
- Student achievement data

Presenting Academic Information

HTC provides clear and accurate information regarding academic programs, degree requirements, and credential expectations through the College Catalog, program webpages, course outlines, and academic planning guides, allowing students to understand the requirements for completion before enrolling and throughout their academic journey.

The credit length of HTC awards complies with MinnState Board Policy 3.36 regarding Academic Programs and is communicated transparently to students through program materials and catalog information. All academic programs and awards are reviewed and approved through HTC's faculty-driven AASC curriculum approval process (see 3.A), from which common course outlines derive.

Course requirements, prerequisites, and learning outcomes are documented through official course outlines and published course descriptions. Except for developmental coursework, prerequisites are included within the total credits required for program completion and are clearly identified in course information available to students. These resources enable students to make informed decisions regarding course selection, academic planning, and program completion.

HTC also provides accessible information regarding faculty and staff qualifications and contact information through its website and directory resources. Faculty members communicate office hours, availability, and course expectations through course syllabi and other instructional materials, ensuring students have appropriate access to instructional support and comprehensive academic guidance.

Presenting Transfer Information

The Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC), discussed more in 3.A., serves as a 40-credit general education framework designed to facilitate transfer among participating institutions. HTC also participates in MinnState Transfer Pathways, which provide students with structured academic plans that align associate degree coursework with bachelor's degree programs at MinnState universities. Students transferring credits to HTC receive an evaluation consistent with MinnState Board Procedure 3.21.1 Transfer of Undergraduate Courses. Students who disagree with a transfer decision may appeal through the College's established academic petition and appeal processes.

Students can access information about transfer opportunities, transfer policies, articulation agreements, and degree pathways that support continued education beyond HTC. HTC provides students with clear guidance regarding the transfer of credits through its website, College Catalog, Student Handbook, academic advising services, and transfer resources. Online resources such as Transferology help students evaluate how credits may transfer among Minnesota institutions and colleges throughout the nation.

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- 2.B.d DARS
- 2.B.d Graduation Planner
- 2.B.d Schedule Builder
- 2.B.e smart catalog
- 2.B.f Planning Guides
- 2.B.g D2L student orientation
- 2.B.g rights responsibilities web
- 2.B.h First 30 Days
- 2.B.i handbook
- 2.B.j Public Safety
- 2.B.k consumer info)
- 2.B.l syllabus procedure
- 2.B.m admissions get-start
- 2.B.n FA overview
- 2.B.o 2017 reaffirmation
- 2.B.o Net Calculator
- 2.B.o Tuition Fees
- 2.B.p career planning
- 2.B.p Mid-Cycle Argument 2020
- 2.B.q HLC-Mid-Cycle report 2020
- 2.B.r QIP report
- 2.B.s QIP HLC response
- 2.B.t specialized accreditation
- 2.B.u credit hours course outlines
- 2.B.u minnstate 3.36
- 2.B.u specialized accreditation
- 2.B.v common course outlines
- 2.B.v courseschedulingguidelines
- 2.B.v Public Directory
- 2.B.w transfer policy
- 2.B.x transferology

2.C. Board Governance

In discharging its fiduciary duties, the institution’s governing board is free from undue external influence and empowered to act in the best interests of the institution, including the students it serves.

Argument

Board Authority and Institutional Oversight

Hennepin Technical College (HTC) is a member institution of MinnState and is governed by a 15-member Board of Trustees (BOT) appointed in accordance with Minnesota law. The Board of Trustees serves as the governing authority for MinnState colleges and universities and is responsible for establishing policies, providing oversight, and ensuring the long-term success and sustainability of the institutions within the system.

MinnState Board of Trustees deliberations reflect established priorities that support and strengthen institutions across the system. The board's work is guided by priorities focused on enhancing access and student success, meeting Minnesota's workforce and talent needs, serving as an anchor for the communities and regions served, and ensuring long-term financial and programmatic sustainability. Board agendas, discussions, and recommendations are public and advanced through standing committees, including Academic and Student Affairs, Audit, Executive, Human Resources, Outreach and Engagement, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Facilities, and Finance. These committee structures support informed decision-making and effective oversight of academic, financial, and operational matters. Core priorities demonstrate mission-aligned governance and responsible stewardship of institutional resources.

Presidential Accountability and Delegation of Authority

The Board of Trustees exercises oversight of institutional leadership through the appointment, evaluation, and accountability of college presidents. College presidents serve under the authority of the chancellor and are evaluated through a formal performance review process that assesses progress toward institutional goals, stewardship of resources, student success outcomes, and advancement of MinnState strategic priorities. This governance structure creates a clear framework of authority and accountability that enables HTC to respond effectively to institutional and community needs while remaining accountable to its governing board.

College presidents regularly participate in Leadership Council meetings with the chancellor and provide institutional perspectives that inform system-level planning and decision-making while supporting institutional and community needs. To ensure that stakeholder perspectives are systematically considered and that governance decisions reflect the needs of students, communities, employers, and institutions are included in ongoing collaboration.

Independence and Ethical Governance

The Board of Trustees operates in compliance with Minnesota's Open Meeting Law, which requires meetings to be publicly noticed and open to the public except in limited circumstances. Written communications, meeting agendas, and supporting materials are publicly available unless classified as nonpublic data. These requirements ensure transparency and public accountability. Board members are required, too, to disclose any potential conflicts of interest.

Board policies and system procedures are subject to a formal public review and comment process before adoption. Policies are reviewed internally, posted for public comment, considered by the appropriate board committee, and formally adopted by the Board of Trustees. All approved board policies and system procedures are publicly available and binding across MinnState institutions.

MinnState is authorized to adopt board policies and system procedures under Minnesota Statute 136F.06. The Board establishes policies governing system operations, while the chancellor adopts procedures to ensure consistent implementation across institutions as authorized by Board Policy 1.A.1. These clearly defined authority and accountability structures support ethical governance and institutional integrity.

MinnState trustees maintain independence from undue influence by donors, elected officials, ownership interests, or other external parties. Ethical conduct is governed through state statutes, board policies, and system procedures. New trustee orientation includes training on ethics in government, employee codes of conduct, open meeting requirements, and data practices laws.

Board Policy 1C.2 governs fraudulent or dishonest acts and requires ethical use of system resources and reporting of suspected violations to the Office of Internal Auditing. The Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Act further governs the conduct of trustees and the chancellor, including gift prohibitions, conflict-of-interest disclosures, and annual statements of economic interest. These requirements reinforce board independence, transparency, and public trust.

Shared Governance and Faculty Oversight

The Board of Trustees delegates authority for academic matters to faculty through established shared governance structures. Faculty oversight of academic matters is ensured through the MinnState College Faculty (MSCF) Master Agreement. Article 8 establishes the Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC) as the primary body for academic decision-making. Led by a faculty chair and composed primarily of faculty members, the AASC reviews academic policies, curriculum proposals, academic standards, and program requirements.

HTC also maintains a Faculty Shared Governance Council and other participatory governance structures established through collective bargaining agreements and institutional practice. Students participate in institutional governance through the HTC Student Senate, which serves as the official student governance organization in accordance with Board Policy 2.1. These structures ensure broad participation in institutional decision-making while preserving appropriate governing board oversight and accountability.

Hennepin Technical College Foundation

The Hennepin Technical College Foundation (HTCF) is a legally separate 501(c)(3) organization established to support the college's mission. Governed by a board of business and community leaders, the Foundation advances philanthropic partnerships, supports student success, and ensures donor funds are managed responsibly and in accordance with donor intent. The Foundation's governance and stewardship practices demonstrate ethical fundraising and financial accountability.

Sources

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- 2.C.b Board Materials Audio
- 2.C.b Board of Trustees roster
- 2.C.c 136F.06 POWERS DUTIES
- 2.C.c Equity 2030
- 2.C.d BoT Committees
- 2.C.e Board Policy 4.2
- 2.C.f Open Meeting Law
- 2.C.g Policy & Procedure Review
- 2.C.h Code of Conduct
- 2.C.i Trustees Calendar
- 2.C.l Fraudulent or Other Dishonest Acts
- 2.C.m Board Organization and Administration
- 2.C.o Campaign Finance
- 2.C.t Conflict of Interest
- 2.C.x MSCF AASC
- 2.C.y MSCF FSG
- 2.C.z Student Governance
- 2.C.r About the Foundation _ Hennepin Technical College

2.D. Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression

The institution supports academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of knowledge as integral to high-quality teaching, learning and research.

Argument

Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression

As a member institution of MinnState, HTC operates within a systemwide framework that protects freedom of expression, inquiry, teaching, and research. MinnState Board Policy 3.1 affirms the system's commitment to maintaining and encouraging full freedom of expression and academic freedom while recognizing the constitutional rights of students, employees, and community members. HTC adheres to these principles and supports the open exchange of ideas consistent with its educational mission, applicable laws, and institutional policies. The College balances these protections with its responsibility to maintain a learning and working environment free from discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and coercion.

Throughout the College, academic freedom for faculty is formally established through the Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCF) Master Agreement under Article 23. This article outlines rights related to teaching materials, academic freedom, intellectual property, patents, and work rules. Article 23, Section 3 specifically affirms that the employer shall maintain and encourage full freedom, within the law, of inquiry, teaching, and research, and that faculty members have the right to teach in an atmosphere of free intellectual inquiry without restraint or harassment that would impair instruction. These contractual protections safeguard faculty academic freedom and align with 2.D. Related Board Policies further support this framework, including Board Policy 3.22, Board Policy 3.26, and Board Policy 3.27, which establish clear expectations for academic content and ownership while preserving academic autonomy.

Faculty exercise academic freedom through primary responsibility for curriculum development, assessment, and program improvement. Through the Academic Affairs Standards Council (AASC), outcomes assessment processes, and Program Advancement, faculty review and revise curriculum, evaluate student learning, redesign assessments, update course content to reflect emerging industry standards, and recommend program modifications based on disciplinary expertise and evidence of student success. For example,

- English faculty developed and implemented a new Introduction to Humanities course to expand interdisciplinary learning opportunities and better serve student and program needs.
- Information Technology faculty regularly revise curriculum and instructional content to address emerging technologies, cybersecurity developments, and changing industry standards.
- Interactive Design and Video Production faculty incorporated emerging technologies and industry-relevant skills into program curricula and determined that specialized

courses such as Animation Rigging, Storyboarding, and JavaScript for Designers should remain in the curriculum because of their importance to student learning and degree outcomes.
- Biology faculty revised course content and assignments within prerequisite science courses to better align with the learning needs of students entering health science pathways.

Academic freedom is further demonstrated through faculty engagement in professional inquiry, industry practice, and ongoing disciplinary development. Faculty regularly participate in sabbaticals, industry internships, professional development activities, and other scholarly and professional learning opportunities that support exploration of emerging technologies, workforce trends, instructional practices, and disciplinary knowledge. Evidence of these activities is provided in Core Components 3.C and 4.B.

HTC's Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) provides structured opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to share and benefit from knowledge and perspectives on topics of their choosing in an open, professional setting. CTL material is emailed weekly and made available on the HTC website to support continued access and engagement. These practices actively foster a faculty-led environment of intellectual exchange, diverse viewpoints, as well as promising pedagogical practices.

Student rights related to academic freedom and freedom of expression are clearly articulated in Board Policy 3.1, which affirms students' rights to freedom to learn, freedom of expression, and freedom of association. Board Policy 3.8 and System Procedure 3.8.1 establish formal processes for student complaints and grievances, ensuring that students have clear and accessible mechanisms to raise concerns. Furthermore, HTC has developed a policy to support freedom of expression by affirming the right of students, employees, and the public to hear diverse viewpoints and express their own ideas while providing equitable access to campus facilities through reasonable, content-neutral time, place, and manner regulations that protect the College's educational mission. Together, these policies demonstrate institutional compliance with Criterion 2.D by protecting student expression and providing fair processes that support an open and respectful learning environment.

Sources

- 2.D.b MSCF academic freedom IP
- 2.D.c MinnState free speech
- 2.D.e CTL
- 2.D.p ITEC PA
- 2.D.q IDVP PA
- 2.D.r Humanities
- 2.D.s Biology Pa
- HTC Policy 6HTC.1 Facilities Management Facility Use
- Minnesota State - 3.1 Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Minnesota State - 3.8 Student Complaints and Grievances
- Minnesota State - 3.22 Course Outlines and Course
- Minnesota State - 3.26 Intellectual Property
- Minnesota State - 3.27 Copyrights
- Minnesota State - System Procedure 3.8.1 Student Complaints and Grievances

2.E. Knowledge Acquisition, Discovery and Application

The institution adheres to policies and procedures that ensure responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge.

Argument

Institutional Policies Supporting Ethical Scholarship

HTC operates within MinnState policies that support responsible scholarly and creative activity. Board Policy 3.26 affirms prevailing academic practice by recognizing faculty members as the copyright owners of works created independently for traditional academic purposes, while also identifying circumstances in which ownership rights may be modified through agreement or other conditions. These provisions promote ethical management of intellectual property and support responsible scholarly practice.

The College also establishes expectations for ethical use of technology resources through Board Policy 5.22 and System Procedure 5.22.1. Users are required to comply with applicable laws, board policies, system procedures, contracts, and licensing agreements; are responsible for the content of their authorized use; and may access only those resources for which they have explicit authorization. Access alone does not confer permission for use, reinforcing responsible and ethical use of institutional information resources.

MinnState further prohibits inappropriate use of information technology resources, including activities that violate state or federal law; wagering or betting; harassment, threats, defamation, stalking, or illegal discrimination; unauthorized fundraising or commercial activity; access to obscene or sexually explicit materials unrelated to academic or professional purposes; and the dissemination of unsolicited or unauthorized electronic communications.

Across all MinnState colleges, all employees are required to complete annual training and comply with Code of Conduct policies, which include acceptable use of computers and technology. These standards promote accountability, ethical conduct, and protection of institutional resources.

Research, Information Literacy, and Academic Support

HTC provides students and faculty with resources that support ethical research practices and information literacy. The College Library offers research assistance through its website, providing topic-specific research guidance, best practices, and access to reference materials, databases, multimedia resources, professional websites, and evaluation tools. The librarian also provides individualized support to students to assist with research assignments and effective use of information resources, helping students develop responsible research habits.

Faculty receive support through library instruction integrated into courses. Instruction may

be delivered in person or through recorded sessions for online courses and includes topics such as research strategies, evaluating sources, developing research questions, database searching, effective internet searching, and interpreting scholarly literature. These services help ensure that students receive consistent guidance in the ethical acquisition and use of information.

Additional academic support is available through the Tutoring Centers, which provide individual and group tutoring, guided study groups, and assistance with research and citation practices. HTC's Tutoring Centers have earned International Tutor Training Program Certification through the College Reading and Learning Association, demonstrating adherence to recognized professional standards and supporting responsible scholarship.

Academic Integrity and Student Accountability

HTC maintains and enforces clear standards of academic honesty and integrity. The Student Code of Conduct defines expectations for academic honesty, outlines sanctions for violations, and establishes procedures for appeal. Depending on the severity of the violation, sanctions may range from warnings to assignment failure, course failure, or removal from a class.

The College is responsible for establishing and promoting clear standards, while all members of the campus community are expected to understand and adhere to those standards. The College's Academic Integrity Policy further affirms that faculty, students, staff, and administrators share responsibility for upholding academic integrity as a core institutional value.

Documented outcomes demonstrate that academic integrity policies are actively enforced and that the College holds students accountable for ethical conduct. Policies related to academic honesty, expectations, sanctions, and appeal processes are published in the Student Handbook. While individual cases remain confidential, institutional records confirm documented instances over the past five years in which findings of academic dishonesty resulted in assignment or course failure.

Application of Knowledge in Academic and Technical Programs

HTC supports the responsible application of knowledge by providing students with opportunities to apply disciplinary knowledge, critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and technical skills to authentic workplace and societal challenges. Across academic and technical programs, faculty intentionally design learning experiences that require students to analyze real-world problems, evaluate information, and apply knowledge in practical contexts.

Within the Philosophy curriculum, as shown in its program review, students apply logical reasoning and ethical situation skills to contemporary issues and professional situations. Course outcomes require students to apply critical thinking to real-world problems, evaluate moral dimensions of emerging technologies and medical issues, analyze ethical dilemmas, conduct respectful discussions, and apply philosophical and religious perspectives to contemporary social, ethical, and political issues. Philosophy faculty also partner with technical programs, including Robotics, Culinary Arts, and Ford ASSET, to ensure that critical thinking and ethical reasoning are integrated into students' broader educational experiences.

Technical programs likewise provide opportunities for students to apply professional competencies in workplace settings. The Medium/Heavy Truck Technology program review identifies three internship courses among the program's highest-success courses and concludes that students' internship performance demonstrates that the technical curriculum has prepared them to enter the industry. Faculty use these internship outcomes as evidence that students can successfully apply technical knowledge and skills in authentic workplace environments.

These examples illustrate HTC’s commitment to helping students responsibly acquire, evaluate, and apply knowledge in ways that prepare them for professional practice, civic engagement, and lifelong learning.

Navigating the Ethical Implications of Artificial Intelligence

To support responsible and ethical use of AI, the committee developed draft institutional guidance addressing academic integrity , student rights, due process, data privacy, accessibility, equity, and appropriate use of generative AI in coursework. The proposed guidance emphasizes transparency, responsible citation practices, protection of sensitive information, and fair evaluation processes while encouraging students and faculty to use AI as a tool to support learning rather than replace independent thought and academic work.

Recognizing the growing impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on education and the workforce, HTC established a cross-functional AI Committee in FY26 to guide the responsible integration of AI across instructional, administrative, and operational areas of the College. The committee includes faculty, administrators, staff, student support personnel, and library professionals representing a broad range of academic and operational perspectives.

As part of its work, the committee reviewed MinnState guidance on generative AI, examined higher education AI readiness frameworks, and identified strategies for educating students and employees about responsible AI use, data privacy, intellectual property, information accuracy, and the limitations of AI-generated content. Committee discussions emphasized the importance of teaching students how to critically evaluate AI-generated information, recognize AI hallucinations, understand appropriate citation practices, and use approved technologies that comply with MinnState privacy standards.

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- Minnesota State - 3.26 Intellectual Property
- Minnesota State - 5.22 Acceptable Use of Computers and Information Technology Resources
- Minnesota State - Procedure 5.22.1, Acceptable Use of Computers and Information

Technology Resources

- Policy 3HTC.9 Educational Policies Academic Integrity
- Procedure 3.6.1 Student Code of Conduct
- Procedure 3HTC.9.1 Academic Integrity
- Student Rights & Responsibilities _ Hennepin Technical College
- Tutoring Centers _ Hennepin Technical College

Criterion 2 - Summary

In fulfilling its mission, the institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Argument

The Criterion 2 narrative demonstrates that Hennepin Technical College fulfills its mission with integrity by embedding ethical and responsible practices throughout its governance, operations, and educational enterprise. Guided by Minnesota State Board policies, state and federal regulations, and established institutional procedures, the college maintains transparent, accountable, and mission-centered decision-making. Shared governance, regular policy review, comprehensive compliance processes, and responsible financial stewardship ensure that institutional actions reflect sound governance and continuous improvement.

HTC is equally committed to transparency in its communications with students, employees, and the public by providing accurate, accessible information regarding academic programs, costs, student rights, accreditation, and institutional performance. The college fosters an environment that supports academic freedom, freedom of expression, and responsible inquiry while protecting the rights of students and employees through clearly defined policies and equitable processes. Ethical scholarship is reinforced through academic integrity standards, information literacy, intellectual property protections, and thoughtful guidance on emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence. Collectively, the evidence demonstrates that integrity is embedded in the college's governance, educational practices, and daily operations, strengthening public trust and advancing student success.

Sources

There are no sources.

3 - Teaching and Learning for Student Success

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program is consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.

3.A. Educational Programs

The institution maintains learning goals and outcomes that reflect a level of rigor commensurate with college-level work, including by program level and the content of each of its educational programs.

Argument

Academic Programs, Degree Types, and Curriculum Approval

Hennepin Technical College (HTC) ensures that its academic programs demonstrate the rigor, quality, and integrity expected of higher education through a comprehensive system of state-level oversight, faculty-led curriculum governance, and continuous program review.

HTC awards associate degrees, diplomas, and certificates in accordance with MinnState Procedure 3.36.1, which establishes requirements for academic awards, program structure, credit expectations, and general education requirements. These system standards help ensure consistency in academic quality and rigor across all MinnState institutions while supporting workforce preparation and student success.

HTC's credentials are:

Table 6. HTC Academic Credentials by Type

Credential Type	Total Credits Required
Associate of Science (AS)	60
Associate of Applied Science (AAS)	60
Diploma	31-60
Certificate	9-30

When a credential requires additional credit hours due to industry, accreditation, or licensure standards, a waiver request is submitted to the MinnState. For example, the Electrician program submitted a waiver because Minnesota licensing requirements mandate at least

2,000 hours of supervised instruction and training for individuals seeking entry into the electrical trade. This extended program length ensures students develop the technical competencies and practical experience necessary for safe and effective practice.

Curriculum quality is supported through a faculty-driven approval process called the Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC). AASC serves as HTC's primary academic governance body and reviews new courses, revised course outlines, new awards, revised award outcomes, and substantive curriculum changes before implementation.

Faculty proposing curricular changes provide supporting documentation that addresses program need, learning outcomes, curriculum alignment, and potential impacts on other programs and students. Through this collaborative review process, HTC ensures that curriculum decisions are intentional, evidence-based, and aligned with institutional and workforce needs.

Common Course Outlines and Syllabi

HTC establishes consistent academic expectations through common course outlines and standardized syllabus practices. Together, these documents ensure that course content, learning outcomes, instructional expectations, and academic standards remain consistent across instructors, campuses, and instructional modalities.

In accordance with HTC's Course Outlines and Syllabi Procedure, course outlines serve as the official curriculum documents for all HTC courses and provide the foundation for course design, instruction, assessment, curriculum review, and program evaluation. Course outlines include course descriptions, credit and contact hour requirements, prerequisites, learning outcomes, transfer information, and other essential academic requirements. Because course outlines are approved through HTC's AASC processes, they establish the official expectations that all course sections must meet regardless of instructional format or location.

Faculty are expected to teach to approved course outlines, ensuring that students encounter consistent learning outcomes and academic expectations across sections and instructors. This common curricular framework supports instructional equity, promotes consistency in student learning experiences, and helps ensure that all students achieve the knowledge and skills associated with a particular course.

Course syllabi complement approved course outlines by communicating course-specific information to students. In accordance with Article 23 of the MSCF faculty contract that governs faculty rights to course syllabi and the HTC Course Outline and Syllabi procedure, syllabi identify course expectations, grading practices, assessment methods, required materials, instructional schedules, and student responsibilities while maintaining alignment with approved course outcomes and curriculum requirements.

To support consistency, HTC utilizes Simple Syllabus, a centralized syllabus platform that standardizes required syllabus content and incorporates approved institutional language, policies, student support resources, and course information. Syllabus completion and compliance are monitored through institutional reporting processes, providing ongoing oversight and helping ensure that students receive accurate and consistent information across all courses and modalities.

General Education Requirements

HTC recognizes that higher education requires students to develop broad intellectual skills and knowledge in addition to technical and occupational competencies. Consistent with MinnState requirements, associate degree programs incorporate general education coursework that supports these expectations. HTC fulfills MinnState general education requirements through participation in the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC), a statewide framework consisting of common learning expectations distributed across ten goal areas:

1. Communication;
2. Critical Thinking;
3. Natural Sciences;
4. Mathematical and Logical Reasoning;
5. History and the Social and Behavioral Sciences;
6. Humanities and Fine Arts;
7. Human Diversity;
8. Global Perspective;
9. Ethical and Civic Responsibility; and
10. People and the Environment

The MnTC supports seamless transfer of general education coursework among participating colleges and universities. Students are supported in understanding and completing general education requirements through advising, degree planning resources, and Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS) tools. DARS enables students, advisors, and faculty to monitor progress toward program completion, evaluate fulfillment of Minnesota Transfer Curriculum goal areas, and identify remaining degree requirements.

HTC faculty play an active role in the selection and integration of general education coursework within academic programs. Since all associate degrees require fifteen credits of MnTC courses, technical program faculty work collaboratively with general education faculty and, when appropriate, advisory committees, to identify MnTC courses that support program outcomes and transfer objectives.

Programs with Licensure Requirements and Specialized Accreditation

Many HTC programs are subject to external review through specialized accreditation, professional licensure requirements, industry certification standards, and state regulatory oversight. Specialized accreditation and licensure requirements complement HTC's internal curriculum governance and assessment processes by providing additional measures of accountability and program effectiveness.

These standards typically address curriculum content, student learning outcomes, faculty credentials, clinical and laboratory experiences, and graduate readiness for employment or licensure. Through periodic review, reporting, site visits, and accreditation processes, HTC receives external feedback regarding program quality and effectiveness.

Recent approvals and reaffirmations demonstrate HTC's ongoing commitment to maintaining these standards. Emergency Medical Technician and Nursing Assistant programs received state approval to offer coursework through multiple concurrent enrollment locations, reflecting continued confidence in HTC's curriculum, instructional quality, and

program oversight. Additionally, HTC's Professional Peace Officer Education program received successful certification renewal through the Minnesota Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST), affirming the program's continued alignment with state requirements for peace officer preparation.

Curriculum Currency and Continuous Improvement

HTC maintains current and relevant curriculum through an integrated process that combines advisory committee recommendations, program review, assessment findings, labor market information, accreditation requirements, and faculty-led curriculum governance.

Advisory Committee Engagement. HTC's advisory committees provide critical external validation of curriculum relevance and workforce alignment. For example, in Automotive Technology, advisory members discussed emerging vehicle technologies, internship opportunities, equipment needs, ASE accreditation expectations, and curriculum updates designed to align instruction with evolving industry standards. Advisory members also identified facility, equipment, and staffing needs to support student learning and workforce preparation. Similarly, other advisory committees have provided recommendations regarding technology adoption, industry certifications, workforce trends, student preparation, and program modernization, helping ensure that HTC curriculum reflects current professional practice and employer expectations.

Program Advancement and Evidence-Based Improvement. HTC's program review process, called Program Advancement (see 3F), serves as a comprehensive three-year review cycle focused on continuous program improvement. Program Advancement reports culminate in action plans and program goals that guide future improvements. For example, Engineering CAD Technology faculty used enrollment trends, workforce demand, and program data to redesign curriculum, create a fully online Mechanical Drafting AAS degree, revise existing awards, expand delivery options, and modernize program offerings to meet changing student and employer needs. Similarly, the Dental Assistant Program used Program Advancement findings, accreditation requirements, workforce demand data, and enrollment analyses to evaluate curriculum structure, delivery methods, staffing needs, facility improvements, and future program expansion opportunities. Faculty also identified emerging changes under consideration by the Minnesota Board of Dentistry that may require future curriculum revisions and credential development.

Faculty-Led Excellence: Center for Teaching and Learning

To support excellence in teaching and learning across all programs and instructional formats, the college established the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), a faculty-led organization dedicated to advancing effective, inclusive, and evidence-informed instructional practices. Established in FY23 and endorsed by the Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC), the CTL serves as a central resource for faculty development and instructional improvement across the institution. Faculty coordinators, selected through an AASC-governed process and supported through release time, lead CTL initiatives and collaborate with instructors to promote effective teaching practices throughout the college. The CTL also coordinates a robust portfolio of professional development opportunities to support continuous improvement in teaching and learning. Signature initiatives include new faculty onboarding and orientation, the HTC Effective Teaching course, and annual in-service programming,

While the CTL provides support to faculty teaching in all modalities, a significant area of CTL leadership has been HTC's commitment to high-quality online and hybrid learning. As instructional modalities have expanded, the CTL has played a central role in helping faculty design engaging and academically rigorous online learning experiences. The CTL has been particularly instrumental in advancing HTC's implementation of Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) expectations for distance education. Through the RSI Workgroup and related professional development initiatives, faculty receive guidance regarding instructor-initiated interaction, timely and constructive feedback, student engagement monitoring, and instructional practices that support meaningful learning experiences in online and hybrid courses.

HTC's investment in faculty development and the implementation of RSI practices have helped strengthen the quality of online and hybrid instruction. During the same period that the CTL expanded support for effective online teaching, student success rates across delivery modalities remained strong and improved over time, particularly in online and hybrid courses. While student success rates in online courses remain lower than those in hybrid and classroom-based courses, HTC has made meaningful progress in narrowing that gap. As seen in Table 7 below, online course success rates have increased from 68.7% to 74.6% over the last 4 years, a gain of nearly six percentage points, while hybrid and classroom-based courses have also demonstrated strong performance. These improvements coincide with the CTL's expanded efforts to support high-quality online instruction, including faculty development related to Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI), course engagement strategies, and effective online teaching practices. Although HTC continues to focus on improving outcomes in fully online courses, the positive trend in student success rates suggests that these initiatives are contributing to a stronger online learning experience for students.

Table 7. Student Success Rates by Course Delivery Mode, FY2022–FY2025

Mode of Delivery	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	Change (FY2022–FY2025)
Online	68.7%	71.0%	73.8%	74.6%	+5.9 percentage points
Blended/Hybrid	85.9%	84.6%	89.2%	91.8%	+5.9 percentage points
In-Person/Classroom	87.7%	87.6%	93.4%	92.9%	+5.2 percentage points

The CTL's work is strengthened through collaboration with other institutional initiatives, including the Academic Technology Workgroup, Last Day of Attendance Workgroup, and Student Choice Multi-Modal initiatives, which support effective use of instructional technologies and consistent academic expectations across delivery formats. HTC's participation in the MinnState Network for Educational Development (NED) further expands access to systemwide expertise and professional development opportunities related to instructional design, accessibility, Universal Design for Learning, and innovative teaching practices.

Credit Transfer and Academic Pathways

HTC supports student mobility and educational attainment through established transfer policies, transfer pathways, and credit evaluation processes. Students who transfer to HTC may have previous coursework evaluated for applicability toward program requirements. As

a member of MinnState, HTC follows MinnState Policy 3.21, which establishes students' rights to transfer credits and outlines institutional responsibilities for evaluating and applying transfer coursework consistently and transparently. Transfer credits are applied through HTC's Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS). HTC participates in MinnState Transfer Pathways, which facilitate transfer among MinnState institutions and support efficient degree completion. The college also provides transfer advising, Transferology resources, and articulation agreements that help students understand transfer opportunities and continue their education at four-year institutions.

Dual Enrollment and Concurrent Enrollment Quality Assurance

HTC provides multiple opportunities for high school students to earn college credit through Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO), Concurrent Enrollment, and Early Middle College partnerships. Across all dual enrollment pathways, HTC applies the same academic standards, learning outcomes, course expectations, and quality assurance processes used for students enrolled directly at the college.

Concurrent Enrollment courses are college courses taught in high schools by qualified secondary instructors who meet MinnState and HTC credentialing requirements. Students complete approved HTC courses, earn HTC transcripted credit, and are held to the same course outcomes and academic standards as students enrolled in equivalent campus sections. HTC maintains partnerships with multiple school districts and charter programs throughout the region and offers concurrent enrollment opportunities in technical and transfer disciplines.

HTC maintains multiple layers of oversight to ensure academic equivalency between concurrent enrollment courses and their campus counterparts. Faculty liaisons review course syllabi, learning outcomes, assessments, grading practices, and instructional materials to verify alignment with approved HTC curriculum. Annual Statements of Equivalency document how concurrent enrollment courses maintain consistency with campus-based instruction while allowing instructors appropriate academic freedom in instructional delivery. These reviews ensure students receive substantially equivalent educational experiences regardless of location.

Instructor qualifications are also reviewed to ensure that concurrent enrollment faculty meet appropriate academic and occupational credentialing requirements. HTC maintains documented credential reviews for concurrent enrollment instructors and verifies educational preparation, professional qualifications, occupational experience, and recency requirements where applicable.

Faculty credentialing reviews are coordinated through Human Resources and are aligned with MinnState requirements. Additionally, concurrent enrollment instructors complete annual discipline-specific professional development and ongoing interaction with college faculty. Professional development activities include faculty mentoring, discipline-based training, curriculum discussions, classroom observations, scholarly review activities, and participation in college-sponsored learning opportunities.

HTC has long viewed external quality review as an important component of educational excellence. In 2020, the college earned accreditation from the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP). During its most recent accreditation review

cycle, however, HTC's application for reaffirmation was not advanced for review. Rather than viewing this outcome as a compliance exercise, the college used the review process as an opportunity to conduct a comprehensive assessment of its concurrent enrollment systems and documentation practices.

HTC developed a NACEP accreditation readiness framework focused on strengthening faculty oversight, instructor credentialing, professional development tracking, assessment alignment, student onboarding, program evaluation, and evidence collection processes. Planned improvements include formal faculty approval workflows, Instructor of Record documentation, standardized course alignment procedures, documented faculty observations and site visits, annual professional development tracking, student support verification processes, program evaluation measures, and centralized evidence management systems designed to support continuous improvement and future accreditation efforts.

Sources

- 3.A.a CELE waiver
- 3.A.a Procedure 3.36
- 3.A.a System Procedure 3.36 waiver
- 3.A.aa transfer MN policy
- 3.A.b AASC-CurriculumProcess
- 3.A.bb Transfer to HTC
- 3.A.c AASC minutes
- 3.A.cc Transfer from HTC
- 3.A.d Advisory Committee Handbook
- 3.A.d Spring 2026 welcome syllabus message
- 3.A.dd Credit for Prior Learning
- 3.A.ee Test Out
- 3.A.f HTC syllabus course outline procedure
- 3.A.f MSCF academic freedom
- 3.A.ff NACEP Executive Work Session
- 3.A.g Hand Book Syllabus
- 3.A.gg NACEP readiness action plan
- 3.A.i simple syllabus
- 3.A.ii NACEP tracking
- 3.A.j Fall 2025 syllabus tracking
- 3.A.jj Auto-Syllabi-Alignment
- 3.A.jj SoE
- 3.A.k MnTC
- 3.A.kk CAD assessment
- 3.A.l DARS
- 3.A.l specialized accreditation
- 3.A.ll HTC CE educator guide
- 3.A.m license program approvals
- 3.A.mm CE PD form
- 3.A.n AASC MSCF
- 3.A.n NACEP and CE
- 3.A.nn CE Assignment and Credentialing

- 3.A.nn CNA PD
- 3.A.o AASC agenda minutes
- 3.A.p Advisory minutes
- 3.A.p PSEO
- 3.A.pp NACEP letter
- 3.A.q CAD PA
- 3.A.q EMC
- 3.A.qq online and hybrid success rates
- 3.A.r Dental Assistant PA
- 3.A.ss ARCH PA
- 3.A.t AASC-MtgMins
- 3.A.t transfer HTC
- 3.A.u CTL Organizational Structure
- 3.A.v CTL FY26 Plan & Goals
- 3.A.w Guide to RSI at HTC
- 3.A.x graduate-percent-by-program 2023
- 3.A.x graduate-percent-by-program 2024
- 3.A.x NED
- 3.A.y Program Advancement Cycle
- 3.A.z Assessment Cycle

3.B. Exercise of Intellectual Inquiry

The institution's educational programs engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in practicing modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

Argument

Student Engagement in Collecting, Analyzing, and Communicating Information

HTC's academic and general -education programs ensure students collect, analyze, and communicate information through applied and inquiry-based learning by design. The college's mission emphasizes communication, problem solving, and adaptability as essential workforce skills. HTC operationalizes these expectations through institution-wide Learner Outcomes and Learner Values, which guide curriculum and assessment across all programs.

Assessing student learning is a vital part of teaching at Hennepin Technical College. Assessments help faculty understand how well students are meeting course and program objectives and provide data to improve instruction, course design, and program development. Results inform program review and continuous improvement (See 3.E and 3.F). Faculty map each course to at least one HTC Learner outcome and value, and HTC uses SalesForce to collect assessment data consistently across delivery modalities.

Development of Critical and Creative Inquiry

General education courses aligned with the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum engage students in communication, critical thinking, scientific inquiry, quantitative reasoning, cultural awareness, ethical decision-making, civic responsibility, and global perspectives. Course outcomes across the ten MnTC goal areas require students to collect, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information while applying knowledge to real-world problems.

Embedding and Contextualizing General Education in Workforce Education

All AS, AAS, Diploma, and Certificate programs include embedded general education requirements. HTC ensures this by embedding required MnTC General Education courses for its degrees, with options for diplomas and certificates. The minimum number of required general education courses for each credential type is defined by MinnState Board Procedure 3.36.1 Academic Programs, as shown in Table 8 below:

Table 8. HTC General Education Credits by Credential			
Credential Type	**Credits Required**	**Min. Gen Ed Credits**	**Distribution Requirement**

Associate of Science (AS)	60 credits (minimum)	30 MnTC credits	At least 6 MnTC goal areas
Associate of Applied Science (AAS)	60 credits (minimum)	15 MnTC credits	At least 3 credits each in Goal 1 (Communications), Goal 2 (Critical Thinking), and Goal 3 (Natural Sciences), Goal 4 (Mathematics), or Goal 5 (Social Sciences)
Diploma	31 credits (minimum)	Varies by program	Varies, can be pre-requisite
Certificate	9 credits (minimum)	Varies by program	Varies, can be pre-requisite

Faculty also contextualize MnTC content to technical programs, strengthening students' ability to apply academic concepts to real-world problems. When needed, General Education courses can be offered for an entire cohort of students in a program to meet one or more of the MnTC courses. For example, Technical Writing, which is required by Ford ASSET students, has been designed and delivered to align the course content with automotive industry expectations. Similarly, Introduction to Physics I regularly emphasizes concepts like electricity, cooling systems, and combustion for Automotive Technology students, while also providing a more in-depth understanding of sound waves and acoustics for Audio Production students.

Technical programs at HTC also provide students with the opportunity to use workforce skills in clinical settings, capstone projects, industry partnerships, and internships. Through these applied learning experiences, students engage in both critical and creative inquiry by analyzing complex, real-world problems, evaluating evidence-based solutions, and adapting their knowledge to dynamic professional environments. Automotive programs, like Medium Heavy Truck, provide structured internships, where students apply skills to meet industry-approved outcomes.

In programs such as Child Development, students demonstrate critical inquiry by observing and assessing developmental milestones, interpreting behavioral data, and designing responsive learning environments that support diverse needs. Creative inquiry is fostered as students develop and implement engaging, developmentally appropriate activities that encourage exploration and problem-solving in young learners. Similarly, in engineering and technical fields, students apply critical thinking to diagnose system challenges, interpret technical specifications, and evaluate multiple design solutions.

Creative inquiry is also evident in capstone projects and industry collaborations, where students design, prototype, and refine solutions to authentic problems, often working within real-world constraints. For example, Automation Robotics collaborates with Buhler, a multinational food equipment manufacturer with sites in Minnesota, to accommodate apprentices working on-site at Buhler three days a week while attending class two days a week. Across disciplines, these experiences are reinforced through structured reflection, collaboration, and feedback from faculty and industry professionals, ensuring that students

acquire technical competencies along with critical analysis, innovation, and lifelong learning habits.

Diversity, Inclusion, and Adaptability

HTC is committed to fostering a learning environment that promotes diversity, inclusion, and adaptability as essential components of student development. Exposure to varied perspectives strengthens students' ability to collaborate, communicate, and respond to complex workplace challenges.

HTC's "Be Bold: Break the Mold " initiative provides co-curricular learning opportunities that connect students with industry professionals through workshops, networking events, career exploration activities, and employer partnerships. Designed to support women pursuing nontraditional careers, the initiative encourages professional inquiry, exposes students to workforce expectations and career pathways, and helps participants develop the skills, relationships, and confidence needed for success in technical fields.

Through HTC's Teaching Circles program, faculty engage in reflective inquiry and evidence-based improvements designed to strengthen student learning and address equity gaps. In a Financial Accounting course, an instructor implemented structured module overviews, assignment checklists, and weekly video announcements to improve clarity, engagement, and student support. Early feedback indicates that students valued the increased guidance and reported feeling more connected to the instructor, demonstrating how faculty use instructional innovation and continuous improvement practices to enhance student learning and success.

Applied Scholarship and Creative Work

Students engage in a multitude of scholarly and creative work that demonstrates their application of academic knowledge and skill:

- SkillsUSA. HTC students regularly earn state and national recognition in SkillsUSA competition
- Interactive Design and Video Production. Crystal Pillar Award. IDVP students received top honors from the Upper Midwest Emmy Foundation, earning a Crystal Pillar Student Production Award for their animated short film.
- Cyber Challenge. ITEC students sharpen their technical skills while building confidence in a competitive environment.
- Landscaping/Horticulture Student Plant Sale. All plants are grown and maintained by students as part of their hands-on training in greenhouse production, horticulture science, and landscape design; the annual event generates between $65-75k for the program.

Every year, multiple faculty complete sabbaticals that allow them to deepen disciplinary expertise, explore emerging trends, and bring current, real-world knowledge back into the classroom. Faculty also have an opportunity to engage in summer internships that provide paid experiences with industry to maintain currency and gain skills in their field. Eleven faculty applied for summer internships during the 2025-26 academic year.

Continuous Assessment and Improvement

HTC systematically evaluates how well students demonstrate inquiry, communication, and adaptability. The Program Advancement Cycle, departmental outcome reports, and SalesForce course survey reports inform curricular revisions, faculty development, and strategic planning. The college has an active Assessment Committee to ensure continuous improvement.

The Program Advisory Committee (PAC) for each technical program is dedicated to excellence, student success, and program improvement. The committees provide guidance and advice on program design, operation, accountability, and closure. They also review awards and curriculum to ensure alignment with industry standards and identify new training opportunities.

Sources

- 3.B. x Cyber Challenge
- 3.B.e Ford Repair Order Case Studies
- 3.B.e Internship Agreement MHTT
- 3.B.m Be Bold
- 3.B.u Robotics Reverse Career Fair
- 3.B.w Student Chef of the Year
- 3.B.y Student Video Award
- 3B.z Student Plant Sale
- a. Mission and Vision Statement
- b. htc-learner-outcomes-definitions-and-rubrics
- e. Technical Writing - Disussion Post with Student work
- f. Child Dev-planning and assessment document
- g. Learning Activity - Child Development Example
- h. ICATT – Apprentice Program
- k. Addressing Equity Gaps - Finance Example
- n. Advisory Committee Handbook 01.25
- o. Assessment Committee Charter FY26
- r. AcadHR_MSCF_Sabbatical Packet
- s. Faculty Internship Application 3.7.24 PDF Fillable
- c. HTC Learner Outcomes Assessment user guide, draft 11.4.25
- d. MnTC_2026-27
- e. Physics Dept Adv FY26
- 3B SkillsUSA Competition
- 3B Advisory Committee Handbook 01.25

3.C. Sufficiency of Faculty and Staff

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

Argument

Sufficient Faculty and Staff Levels

To support workforce planning and resource allocation, HTC maintains historical employee staffing data by employee group and reviews staffing trends over time. Annual tracking of all employees provides college leaders with information needed to evaluate organizational capacity, identify emerging workforce needs, and make data-informed staffing decisions that align with enrollment, operational priorities, and available resources. Per the MSCF contract, each college must employ at least 60% of total FTE faculty as unlimited full-time or part-time faculty, or 70% system-wide.

The college employs a combination of full-time and part-time faculty that provides both instructional continuity and flexibility in responding to enrollment fluctuations, scheduling needs, and emerging workforce demands. The MinnState Human Resources Office sends out a Hiring Practices Report each February This report monitors each campus's status and identifies which colleges need to make additional hires for the following year. Additionally, as part of MinnState, HTC can request staffing information as needed. For example, a recent question about administrator ratios prompted a survey of similarly sized campuses, confirming that HTC is aligned with peer institutions.

Academic leaders regularly review enrollment trends, course demand, program growth, instructional modality needs, and available resources when determining faculty staffing levels, particularly around student-to-faculty ratios. For example, in HTC's most recent cost study, from 2022-2024, the student-to-faculty ratio (FYE/FTE) averaged 15.9/1 from 2022-2024, which shows consistent attention to staffing to maintain sufficient student/faculty ratios.

Staffing needs are discussed through ongoing planning and budget processes, allowing the college to respond to changing enrollment patterns while maintaining instructional quality and student access. During program advancement in both academic and student services areas, staffing levels are evaluated in terms of holistic and long-term sustainability.

In addition to instructional personnel, HTC maintains professional, technical, and student support staff necessary to promote student success and institutional effectiveness. Organizational structures establish clear reporting relationships and responsibilities across academic affairs, student affairs, enrollment management, finance and operations, human resources, advancement, and student support services. The college employs advisors, financial aid staff, admissions personnel, TRIO staff, tutors, disability services professionals, student life personnel, information technology staff, facilities personnel, and public safety staff who collectively support students throughout their educational experience.

HTC regularly evaluates staffing capacity in student support areas to ensure services remain responsive to student needs. Cabinet discussions and budget planning processes provide opportunities to identify emerging service demands, review staffing requests, and allocate resources where additional capacity is needed. Recent requests have included positions to support grant development and compliance activities, replacement of critical student success leadership positions, and creation of a part-time laboratory assistant position to address workload, safety, and operational concerns within the Landscape and Horticulture program. These reviews help ensure that staffing decisions are data-informed, strategically aligned, and responsive to institutional needs while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

The college also monitors advising capacity through program-specific advisor assignments and ongoing review of advisor caseloads. These reviews help ensure students have access to individualized guidance and support while allowing the college to adjust resources as enrollment patterns change. Similarly, HTC's federally funded TRIO Student Support Services program reviews its student success data as it evaluates staffing needs. TRiO learned that it served 231 students during 2024–25 and exceeded federal benchmarks for persistence, academic standing, graduation, and transfer. TRIO participants achieved an 80% persistence rate compared with a 66% federal target, while 86% maintained good academic standing compared with an 81% target, indicating sufficient staffing. These outcomes demonstrate the positive impact of coordinated instructional and student support resources on student success.

Maintaining Adequate Instructional Staffing

Maintaining adequate instructional staffing can be particularly challenging in career and technical education programs that require faculty to possess both teaching ability and extensive industry experience. Through ongoing collaboration with industry partners, advisory committees, faculty, and alumni, HTC proactively addresses instructional staffing challenges and maintains the faculty expertise necessary to support workforce-focused programs.

Because qualified candidates often have opportunities to earn higher wages in industry settings, HTC employs multiple strategies to recruit and retain faculty in high-demand workforce fields. These strategies include leveraging employer partnerships, advisory committee relationships, professional networks, referrals from current faculty, and recruitment of qualified alumni to identify prospective instructors and build future faculty pipelines.

Advisory committees regularly assist HTC in identifying qualified faculty candidates and addressing staffing challenges in high-demand workforce fields. Recent discussions in Electrical, HVAC, and Automotive programs focused on instructor recruitment, succession planning, and program expansion needs.

Faculty Credentialing

HTC ensures that faculty possess the credentials, experience, and professional expertise necessary to support student learning and academic quality. Faculty qualifications are governed by MinnState Board Policy 3.32 and System Procedure 3.32.1, which establish minimum qualifications for instructional assignments and require that individuals performing faculty work meet credentialing standards aligned with Higher Learning Commission

expectations. All faculty position descriptions detail the specific credentials needed for that field.

Faculty hired at HTC must demonstrate the academic preparation, industry experience, licensure, certification, and other qualifications required for their assigned credential field. Prior to instructional assignment, credentials are entered into Workday and reviewed through a formal verification process involving HTC Human Resources and MinnState. Official transcripts, occupational experience, industry credentials, and other required documentation are evaluated to ensure faculty meet established qualification standards before instructional assignments are approved.

Credentialing requirements vary by discipline and are designed to reflect both academic rigor and workforce relevance. Liberal arts and sciences faculty must meet graduate-level educational requirements within their disciplines, while career and technical faculty must demonstrate appropriate educational preparation, occupational experience, recency of professional practice, and required industry licensure or certifications as established by MinnState credential fields.

HTC applies the same credentialing standards to concurrent enrollment instructors. High school instructors seeking approval to teach HTC courses through concurrent enrollment must submit transcripts and work-history documentation for review by the appropriate academic dean. Following review, instructors are approved, provisionally approved with a professional development plan, or denied approval based on MinnState credentialing requirements. To support ongoing compliance, HTC maintains a comprehensive credential-tracking system for concurrent enrollment instructors. The system documents required qualifications, credential status, occupational experience, recency requirements, approved exceptions, and progress toward meeting credentialing expectations.

Faculty credentialing is not limited to the point of hire. Human Resources monitors required licenses, certifications, and professional qualifications to ensure continued alignment between faculty credentials and instructional assignments. For example, when an Automotive Instructor needed ASE certifications to be completely credentialed, Human Resources followed up until the credential was obtained.

Faculty Evaluation

Faculty evaluations provide a structured framework for assessing performance, recognizing accomplishments, identifying opportunities for growth, and supporting the college's commitment to student learning and success.

Faculty evaluations are conducted in accordance with MinnState Board Policy 4.9 and institutional policy and procedures that establish expectations for employee performance, evaluation, and professional development. Through these processes, faculty reflect on accomplishments, challenges, and professional growth while supervisors provide feedback aligned with institutional expectations, departmental goals, and position responsibilities.

Academic deans conduct classroom and online observations to assess instructional quality, regular and substantive interaction (RSI) with students, course organization, and alignment with course learning outcomes. Observation processes provide faculty with meaningful feedback regarding teaching effectiveness and create opportunities for ongoing dialogue about instructional practices and student learning.

Faculty evaluations also include review of professional expectations and contributions that support HTC's educational mission. Evaluation discussions consider responsibilities related to instruction, advising, assessment, curriculum development, professional development, and service to the college. This comprehensive approach recognizes the multiple ways faculty contribute to student success and institutional effectiveness.

In addition to formal evaluations, academic deans engage in ongoing conversations with faculty throughout the year to provide coaching, feedback, and support. These discussions help faculty respond to changing student needs, instructional challenges, and emerging workforce expectations while promoting a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

Professional Development

Professional development activities help faculty maintain current knowledge, respond to evolving workforce and educational needs, and contribute to institutional improvement.

New faculty participate in structured onboarding processes designed to support a successful transition into the college community. Human Resources provides orientation, required training, and access to institutional resources, while faculty receive additional support through New Faculty Orientation, instructional resources, and mentoring opportunities provided through the Center for Teaching and Learning. These onboarding activities establish clear expectations, promote institutional consistency, and connect faculty with resources that support effective teaching and student learning.

Professional development opportunities are available throughout an employee's career at HTC. Collegewide Workshop Days provide institution-wide learning opportunities that promote collaboration, professional growth, and shared understanding of institutional priorities. Faculty also participate in professional development activities supported through the Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCF) Professional Development Fund and Individual Professional Development Plans (IPDPs), which support conferences, coursework, workshops, industry engagement, and other learning experiences that enhance instructional quality and disciplinary expertise.

Through onboarding, mentoring, institutional training, professional development funding, and ongoing learning opportunities, HTC supports instructor effectiveness and ensures that faculty remain prepared to meet the evolving needs of students, employers, and the communities the college serves.

Staff Qualifications, Development, and Evaluation

HTC employs professional, technical, and administrative staff who possess the qualifications, knowledge, and skills necessary to support student success and institutional effectiveness. Staff members play essential roles in advising, enrollment services, financial aid, information technology, facilities operations, human resources, and other functions that support the college's mission.

Staff qualifications are verified through hiring processes aligned with MinnState, State of Minnesota, and institutional requirements. Human Resources ensures that position postings clearly identify minimum qualifications and required credentials and that recruitment and selection processes are conducted consistently and equitably. Educational credentials, employment history, licensure, and other required qualifications are reviewed before

appointment, and background checks are completed in accordance with applicable state requirements.

HTC maintains ongoing processes to ensure staff qualifications remain current and aligned with position responsibilities. Supervisors and Human Resources monitor required licenses, certifications, and professional requirements as applicable to individual positions. Staff members also complete required training related to topics such as nondiscrimination, respectful workplace practices, employee conduct, and data privacy to ensure continued compliance with MinnState and institutional expectations.

Staff members work with supervisors to identify learning opportunitie s that support evolving student, operational, and compliance needs. Advising, One Stop, and student affairs staff regularly participate in professional conferences, system-sponsored training, webinars, and specialized programs focused on student success, advising practices, financial aid, equity, and customer service. These activities help employees maintain current knowledge, strengthen professional competencies, and improve services provided to students.

Staff members participate in annual evaluation processes that provide opportunities for reflection, feedback, goal setting, and professional growth. Consistent with MinnState Board Policy 4.9 and institutional procedures, evaluations include review of responsibilities, accomplishments, performance expectations, and future development priorities. Supervisors also engage in ongoing conversations throughout the year to provide coaching, support, and feedback that promote employee success and organizational effectiveness.

Through rigorous hiring practices, ongoing training, professional development opportunities, and evaluation processes, HTC ensures that staff members possess the expertise necessary to support students, advance institutional priorities, and contribute to continuous improvement.

Workforce Planning and Continuous Improvement

HTC integrates workforce planning, staffing decisions, and employee development into its broader strategic planning and continuous improvement processes. Through regular review of enrollment trends, program demand, student support needs, workforce conditions, and available resources, the college evaluates workforce capacity and makes adjustments to support instructional quality, student success, and operational effectiveness.

Workforce planning occurs through ongoing collaboration among college leadership, supervisors, and departments. Enrollment patterns, student service demand, program growth opportunities, and operational needs are reviewed regularly through cabinet discussions, budget planning processes, and departmental planning activities. These reviews inform hiring decisions, position reallocations, workload adjustments, and succession planning efforts designed to maintain institutional effectiveness and service quality.

The college's Strategic Plan, *Opening Doors: Access to Success (2025–2030)*, provides the framework for aligning staffing decisions, employee development, and resource allocation with institutional priorities related to Student Success, Managed Growth, Workplace Culture, and Organizational Effectiveness.

HTC's commitment to continuous improvement is reflected in its use of institutional data to

inform staffing and resource decisions. Student success indicators, enrollment trends, advising demand, program performance, evaluation results, and employee feedback help identify emerging needs and opportunities for improvement. The college's workforce planning efforts also support MinnState's Equity 2030 framework through employee development, inclusive hiring practices, student support services, and evidence-based decision-making.

By integrating staffing decisions with strategic planning, evaluation processes, and institutional priorities, HTC maintains the faculty and staff capacity necessary to fulfill its mission, respond to changing workforce and student needs, and support long-term institutional effectiveness.

Sources

- 3.A.hh ASE cert
- 3.A.hh certification verify
- 3.a.jj faculty positions
- 3.C.a faculty levels
- 3.C.a MSCF Contract Article 20 Section 7
- 3.C.b Cabinet Meeting Minutes
- 3.C.bb position justifications
- 3.C.c HTC org chart
- 3.C.c Monitoring Hiring Process 2022-2025
- 3.C.d Advisor Caseloads
- 3.C.d Minnesota State 3.32 Faculty Qualifications
- 3.C.d TRIO stats
- 3.C.e Entering Credentials in Workday
- 3.C.f Concurrent Credential Tracking
- 3.C.f concurrent instructor approval process
- 3.C.f Teaching Waivers for Spring 2026 Concurrent Enrollment
- 3.C.g MinnState Board Policy and Procedure 1B.1
- 3.C.gg ATEC Advisory Minutes staffing
- 3.C.gg CELE advisory staffing
- 3.C.gg HVAC minutes staffing
- 3.C.h MMB HR LR Policy 1434
- 3.C.i MMB HR LR Policy 1421
- 3.C.j Minnesota Statute 43A.08 Unclassified Service
- 3.C.k Sample Position Posting
- 3.C.l Required Training
- 3.C.m Minnesota Statute 13
- 3.C.m New Faculty Orientation D2L Page - Content
- 3.C.n New Faculty Orientation August 18 2025
- 3.C.o Faculty Resource Book - Table of Contents
- 3.C.p FY26 Academic Calendar
- 3.C.p Sample Workshop Day Agenda
- 3.C.q MSCF Contract Article 17 Professional Development
- 3.C.r MSCF Contract Article 17 Section 4 Sabbaticals
- 3.C.r sabbatical examples
- 3.C.s Faculty Professional Development Criteria

- 3.C.s IPDP examples
- 3.C.t Drew Goddard Professional Dev Funding
- 3.C.t HTC Policy 4.9 Employee Evaluation Policy
- 3.C.t staff PD
- 3.C.u Minnesota State Board Policy - 4.9 Employee Evaluation
- 3.C.v MN Statute 43A.20 Performance Appraisal and Pay
- 3.C.w HTC Procedure 4.9.1 Employee Evaluation Procedure
- 3.C.x employee totals
- 3.C.x staff evaluations examples
- 3.C.y Evaluation of Professional Expectations
- 3.C.y faculty on campus observations
- 3.C.y Online observation 2
- 3.C.y online observations
- 3.C.z Hennepin Technical College Strategic Plan
- 4.C.nn fye to fte ratio

3.D. Support for Student Learning and Resources for Teaching

The institution provides student support services that address the needs of its student populations, as well as the teaching resources and infrastructure necessary for student success.

Argument

Student Navigation and Advising

HTC provides an integrated advising and student-support model designed to help students successfully navigate college processes, connect with resources, and make informed academic decisions. Recognizing that many students balance work, family, and other responsibilities, the college emphasizes coordinated support throughout the student lifecycle.

OneStop serves as a centralized point of access for admissions, registration, financial aid, advising, testing, records, graduation services, transfer support, and referrals to additional resources. By consolidating key student services, HTC reduces barriers and creates a more seamless student experience.

Advising responsibilities are shared among Enrollment Services staff, Student Success Advisors, and faculty advisors. Admissions and recruitment staff support prospective students as they explore educational opportunities and transition into college. Student Success Advisors caseloads include assisting with academic planning, registration, transfer pathways, and goal attainment, while faculty advisors provide discipline-specific guidance and workforce expertise.

HTC continuously strengthens advising through its Strategic Enrollment Management and Persistence Plan , which identifies onboarding, retention, persistence, and equity-gap reduction as institutional priorities. Advising and student-support services are supported by Salesforce , which enables coordinated communication, proactive outreach, and early intervention for students experiencing academic or enrollment challenges.

Student engagement with these services demonstrates their importance. During FY25, OneStop staff provided more than 12,800 in-person student interactions and managed more than 20,700 phone inquiries while maintaining service-level goals designed to ensure timely support. Advising services are offered in person, by phone, and virtually, providing students with flexible access to assistance that supports persistence and completion.

Financial Aid and Affordability Support

HTC recognizes that financial barriers are among the most significant challenges affecting student enrollment, persistence, and completion. To promote access and affordability, the college provides comprehensive financial aid services that help students understand funding options, complete financial aid processes, and navigate the costs of higher education.

Financial aid staff provide personalized assistance with FAFSA completion, award notifications, verification processes, loan counseling, satisfactory academic progress requirements, and financial literacy. Students can access support through in-person appointments, phone, email, and virtual meetings, ensuring services remain accessible to traditional, nontraditional, and working students.

HTC administers federal, state, institutional, and scholarship aid programs, including Pell Grants, MinnState Grants, federal loans, work-study opportunities, and foundation scholarships. Students experiencing unexpected financial hardship may also receive support through institutional Crisis Grants and Minnesota's Emergency Assistance for Postsecondary Students (BEAM) grants. HTC's Crisis Grant program provides emergency assistance for expenses that could otherwise prevent students from remaining enrolled, while BEAM grants support students facing unforeseen financial emergencies that threaten their ability to continue their education.

The college has made a sustained investment in emergency financial assistance. HTC budgets $30,000 annually for Crisis Grants and has approved 69 applications in FY24, 71 applications in FY25, and 44 applications during FY26 to date. Through the BEAM Grant program, HTC has supported 249 students with a total of $179,220 in emergency assistance and an average award of $717 per student.

Outcome data demonstrate the effectiveness of these interventions. Since FY24, HTC has tracked outcomes for 142 students who received Crisis Grant assistance. Of these students, 98.6% were retained, 46.5% have graduated, only 1.4% dropped out, and 86.6% achieved a cumulative GPA above 2.0. These results indicate that targeted financial support can play a significant role in helping students persist, complete their credentials, and achieve academic success.

Testing, Placement, and Academic Readiness

HTC recognizes that appropriate placement and academic readiness are important contributors to student success. Consistent with MinnState policy, HTC uses multiple measures to determine placement, including high school GPA, standardized test scores, prior coursework, CLEP examinations, ACCUPLACER results, and other indicators of academic preparation. This approach promotes equitable access while reducing unnecessary barriers to enrollment and progression.

HTC also provides specialized placement processes for English Language Learners (ELLs) to help ensure that students whose first language is not English are placed into coursework aligned with their demonstrated academic readiness and language proficiency. ELLs who do not meet placement through multiple measures may complete ACCUPLACER assessments and receive individualized guidance regarding developmental coursework, Adult Basic Education resources, retesting opportunities, and pathways into college-level English courses.

Academic Tutoring Services

HTC provides academic support services that help students develop college-level skills, successfully complete coursework, and progress toward credential attainment. Through its Tutoring Centers, the college offers free academic assistance designed to support student learning, strengthen academic confidence, and promote persistence and completion.

Tutoring services are available to enrolled students in person on both campuses and virtually through Zoom, providing flexible access to support regardless of location or schedule. Students may receive assistance in mathematics, writing, study skills, learning technologies, and course-specific content areas. Tutors help students strengthen foundational academic skills, improve problem-solving abilities, develop effective learning strategies, and gain confidence in their coursework.

A distinguishing feature of HTC's Tutoring Centers is their certification through the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) International Tutor Training Program. CRLA certification demonstrates that tutor training, professional development, and program operations align with nationally recognized standards for quality tutoring services and student learning support. This commitment to continuous improvement helps ensure that tutoring services are effective, student-centered, and grounded in best practices for learning assistance.

Student Wellness and Basic Needs

A Hennepin County study found that approximately 45% of HTC students experienced food insecurity and that 32% reported food insecurity negatively affected their academic performance. HTC recognizes that student success depends on more than academic preparation and therefore provides a comprehensive network of wellness and basic-needs resources designed to reduce non-academic barriers to persistence and completion. The college's approach is informed by documented student needs. Through its Basic Needs program, HTC provides access to food assistance, clothing, personal care items, public-benefit navigation, referral services, and connections to housing, transportation, childcare, healthcare, and mental-health resources. Students are also connected to resources such as SNAP eligibility assistance, energy assistance programs, health insurance resources, emergency financial support, and community-based services that help address challenges affecting educational success.

Both campuses maintain food pantries and resource rooms that provide food and essential items to students and community members. The CARE Committee reviews service utilization, student feedback, and emerging needs to ensure resources remain responsive and effective (3.D.o CARE Team). During a recent reporting period, the Eden Prairie food pantry distributed more than 5,300 pounds of food, while the Brooklyn Park pantry distributed more than 53,000 pounds of food and served nearly 14,000 visitors (3.D.p Food Resources). HTC's designation as a Hunger-Free Campus further demonstrates the institution's commitment to addressing food insecurity and supporting student well-being.

Assessment data indicate that students are aware of and actively utilize these services. A 2025 student survey found strong awareness of campus food resources, food distributions, and resource-room services, with most students reporting positive experiences and satisfaction with available support resources. Student feedback has also informed ongoing improvements related to food variety, communication, resource awareness, and service accessibility, demonstrating HTC's commitment to continuous improvement and responsiveness to student needs.

HTC further supports student well-being through professional counseling services designed to help students navigate personal, academic, career, and life challenges that may affect their educational success. Counseling services provide confidential support related to stress

management, mental health concerns, academic challenges, personal crises, career exploration, and referrals to community-based resources and services. Counselors work collaboratively with students and campus partners to identify barriers to success, develop strategies for overcoming challenges, and connect students with appropriate resources that support persistence, well-being, and achievement of educational goals.

Access, Equity, and Inclusive Student Support

HTC is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment in which all students have equitable opportunities to access educational resources, participate fully in college life, and achieve their academic and career goals. This commitment is guided by the college's Academic and Student Affairs Plan, which aligns institutional priorities with MinnState's Equity 2030 initiative and establishes measurable strategies to improve student success, retention, persistence, completion, and engagement for first-generation students, Pell-eligible students, and students of color.

Through coordinated efforts involving student services, academic affairs, faculty development, advising, counseling, TRIO, accessibility services, and student-success initiatives, HTC works to identify and remove barriers that contribute to equity gaps while creating pathways that support success for all learners. Accessibility Services ensures equal access to educational opportunities for students with documented disabilities by coordinating accommodations and support services that enable full participation in academic programs, student services, and campus activities. Accommodations may include testing modifications, assistive technology, note-taking assistance, alternative-format materials, and other individualized supports designed to meet students' specific needs.

HTC's commitment to accessibility extends beyond accommodations to the promotion of inclusive learning environments and institutional practices, especially with digital accessibility. The college provides digital accessibility resources and guidance for students, faculty, and staff to help ensure equitable access to instructional, technological, and student-service environments.

HTC further supports military-affiliated students through comprehensive Veteran Services designed to assist veterans, active-duty service members, reservists, National Guard members, and their families as they transition to and succeed in higher education. HTC maintains a Veterans Resource Center on both campuses, offering dedicated space for studying, networking, accessing information, and connecting with other military-affiliated students. Veterans also have access to Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs Higher Education Regional Coordinators, veteran work-study support, and resources that help students navigate educational benefits and academic requirements.

Educational equity is further advanced through TRIO Student Support Services, which provides individualized support for first-generation college students, students from low-income backgrounds, and students with disabilities. Participants receive advising, academic coaching, tutoring referrals, financial literacy support, transfer planning assistance, and help navigating college systems and resources. These services support HTC's broader institutional goals of reducing achievement gaps and improving persistence and completion outcomes for historically underserved student populations.

HTC also provides dedicated resources for immigrant and refugee students, connecting

them with academic, workforce, language, and community resources that support successful transitions into higher education and career pathways.

Student Engagement and Campus Life

HTC recognizes that student success is strengthened when students feel connected to the college community and engage in experiences that support personal growth, leadership development, and civic responsibility. Through student organizations, leadership opportunities, wellness initiatives, and co-curricular programming, the college fosters belonging and encourages students to become active participants in their educational experience.

Student Life and Career Development (SLCD) serves as the primary hub for student engagement activities. Campus events, leadership experiences, educational programs, and student organizations provide opportunities for students to connect with peers, faculty, and staff while developing leadership and interpersonal skills that contribute to persistence and success. SLCD also provides input for the HTC Student Handbook.

HTC recognizes that student success is not only measured by completion, but by successful transition into employment and career advancement. HTC's Career Development services help students prepare for employment, internships, and career advancement. Students have access to individualized career coaching, resume and cover-letter development, interview preparation, job-search assistance, internship support, and connections to employers and workforce opportunities.

Career Development staff work with students throughout their educational journey to help them identify career goals, develop professional skills, and successfully transition from college to employment. Through Handshake, HTC's career-management platform, students can access job and internship postings, connect with employers, participate in recruitment opportunities, and explore career pathways aligned with their programs of study. These services reinforce HTC's workforce-focused mission by helping students translate their academic experiences into meaningful career opportunities and long-term professional success.

Student organizations and clubs support a wide range of academic, professional, cultural, and personal interests. Examples include Blacks Rising in Education and Academics (BREA), which promotes student success, leadership, and belonging for Black students and allies; the Becoming Racially Inclusive Culture Club, which encourages dialogue, cultural awareness, and inclusive community building; and the HTC Institute of Packaging Professionals (IOPP) Student Chapter, which provides professional networking and career-development opportunities connected to industry and workforce preparation. Through these and other student organizations, students develop leadership skills, professional connections, and a stronger sense of community and belonging.

HTC promotes student leadership and shared governance through Student Senate and the Student Life Board. Student Senate serves as the official voice of the student body and provides opportunities for students to participate in institutional decision-making, advocate for student interests, and collaborate with college leadership. Student leaders regularly meet with college administrators to discuss institutional priorities, review budget and tuition proposals, provide input regarding the impact of financial decisions on students, and

participate in the budget consultation process required by MinnState policy. Through these discussions, students receive information about college finances, enrollment trends, tuition-setting considerations, and strategic priorities while providing feedback that informs institutional decision-making.

The Student Life Board provides additional leadership development opportunities by involving students in planning activities, managing budgets, allocating student-life resources, communicating with stakeholders, evaluating programs, and solving challenges associated with campus events and initiatives. These experiences help students develop practical leadership, teamwork, communication, financial stewardship, and decision-making skills that complement their academic learning and prepare them for leadership roles in their careers and communities.

The college further supports civic engagement by encouraging students to become informed and active participants in the democratic process. HTC provides voter registration information , election resources, and nonpartisan voter-engagement opportunities that help students understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens. Student wellness is also supported through fitness and recreation opportunities available on both campuses, reinforcing the connection between personal well-being, engagement, and academic success.

Library, Technology, and Learning Resources

HTC recognizes that access to information, technology, and academic resources is essential to student learning and success. To support students across all instructional modalities, the college provides an integrated network of library services, technology resources, and digital tools that ensure equitable access to learning resources.

Technology Services supports the educational mission through instructional technologies, classroom technology, network infrastructure, enterprise systems, and technical support services. Students and employees receive assistance with D2L, Microsoft 365, account access, and other technologies that support teaching, learning, and communication.

The HTC Library serves as a central learning resource that supports teaching, learning, writing/research, and information literacy. Students have access to more than 80 research databases, research assistance, information literacy instruction, textbook reserves, study spaces, computer labs, group study rooms, and virtual support services. Librarians collaborate with faculty to strengthen students' academic skills and support learning across disciplines.

The library also advances educational equity by reducing barriers to technology and learning resources. Students have access to computer labs, specialized software, textbook reserves, and a laptop checkout program that helps ensure reliable access to the technology required for coursework (3.D.hh Laptop Loan).

Resources for Teaching Excellence

HTC recognizes that student success depends on effective teaching, continuous improvement in instructional practice, and access to high-quality learning environments. To support instructional excellence, the college maintains a faculty-led Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) that serves as the primary hub for faculty development, instructional support,

and the advancement of evidence-informed teaching practices.

Guided by the college's strategic priorities, the CTL promotes accessibility, inclusion, student engagement, and academic achievement through workshops, instructional resources, consultations, and professional learning opportunities. The CTL's faculty-led structure encourages collaboration, peer learning, and the sharing of effective teaching practices while ensuring that professional development remains grounded in classroom, laboratory, and online instructional environments.

HTC further supports instructional excellence through eLearning services that provide assistance with course design, D2L Brightspace, accessibility, instructional technologies, and online teaching practices. These services help ensure consistent instructional quality across all delivery modalities while expanding access for students with diverse schedules and learning needs.

Through investments in faculty development, instructional technology, and learning environments, HTC strengthens teaching effectiveness and supports student engagement, achievement, and workforce readiness.

Continuous Improvement of Student Support Services

HTC is committed to the ongoing assessment and improvement of student-support services and learning resources through evidence-based decision-making, stakeholder feedback, strategic planning, and performance measurement. These efforts help ensure that services remain responsive to changing student needs and aligned with institutional priorities.

A significant recent advancement has been the expansion of HTC's Program Advancement process beyond academic programs to include Student Affairs and Enrollment Services departments. Beginning in FY26, student-support areas such as OneStop, Financial Aid, Counseling, and other student-service units participate in a structured review process that incorporates key performance indicators, survey results, departmental self-assessments, strategic goals, and leadership review.

Departments analyze quantitative and qualitative evidence to identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement. Findings are used to develop action plans that align departmental initiatives with institutional priorities, including the Access to Success Strategic Plan and Equity 2030 commitments.

The first cycle of Program Advancement reviews has already generated meaningful improvements. OneStop examined student-service delivery patterns, application conversion data, call-abandonment rates, and student feedback to strengthen communication and onboarding processes. Financial Aid evaluated FAFSA completion trends, service-access data, and student feedback to improve support for students navigating financial aid processes. Counseling reviewed student-engagement data and developed strategies to expand outreach to students on academic warning or probation while strengthening career counseling support for undecided students.

Sources

- 3.D.a caseloads
- 3.D.a One Stop

- 3.D.aa Student Senate
- 3.D.b Advising
- 3.D.bb student budget consulation
- 3.D.c SEM Plan
- 3.D.cc Student Life Board minutes
- 3.D.cc Student Life Board
- 3.D.d Salesforce input
- 3.D.dd Get out the Vote
- 3.D.e OneStop Advising Data
- 3.D.ee fitness
- 3.D.f financial aid
- 3.D.ff Library services
- 3.D.g FA help
- 3.D.gg Instructor Library support for students
- 3.D.h FA Programs
- 3.D.hh Library Laptop Checkout
- 3.D.i Crisis Grant data
- 3.D.i Crisis Grants
- 3.D.ii Technology Services Students
- 3.D.jj Technology Plan
- 3.D.k Course Placement
- 3.D.kk CTL structure
- 3.D.kk CTL Updates
- 3.D.l ELL placement
- 3.D.ll eLearning
- 3.D.m food insecurity report
- 3.D.n Basic Needs
- 3.D.nn Student Services PA Cycle
- 3.D.o CARE Team
- 3.D.oo One Stop PA
- 3.D.p Food Resources
- 3.D.pp financial aid PA
- 3.D.q Hunger Free Campus
- 3.D.qq Counseling PA
- 3.D.r food pantry data
- 3.D.s counseling
- 3.D.ss Tutoring
- 3.D.t Academic and Student Affairs Plan
- 3.D.tt CRLA tutoring
- 3.D.u Access Services
- 3.D.v Digital Accessibility
- 3.D.w TRIO stats
- 3.D.w TRiO
- 3.D.x Immigrant Refugee Resources
- 3.D.x veterans services
- 3.D.y Career Development
- 3.D.y Student Handbook
- 3.D.y Student Life
- 3.D.z HTC Clubs

- 3.F.uu Registrar PA
- 3D1 Co-Curricular Learning _ Hennepin Technical College
- 3D1 Co-Curricular Outcomes _ Hennepin Technical College
- 3D3 2025-09-05 PSEO User Guide
- 3D3 Academic Affairs CTL Resources & Links

3.E. Assessment of Student Learning

The institution improves the quality of educational programs based on its assessment of student learning.

Argument

HTC improves the quality of education programs based on its assessment of student learning. The mission of HTC focuses attention on the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed and advance in the workplace. This focus begins with the development of learning outcomes at the course level, the program level, and the institutional level that are necessary for career success. Instructional strategies and methods are then identified and employed to best ensure that students are mastering the identified skills.

Through regular assessment practices, students are evaluated on how well they have mastered the skills. Data is collected and analyzed to identify gaps between the necessary skills and the student mastery of those skills. Finally, faculty reflect on all three areas (curriculum, instruction, and assessment) to identify ways to improve student learning. These improvements get documented and tracked through our annual assessment process and aggregated and revisited during our tri-annual program and department advancement process.

As detailed in 3A, HTC's curriculum approval process ensures that every award has identifiable award outcomes and every course within that award has identified course outcomes that support both the program's award outcomes and our institutional-level HTC Learner Outcomes (3E.m. HTC Learner Outcomes). The combination of program and institutional outcomes reflects the full scope of skills and knowledge necessary for success in a specific career area.

The program award outcomes are the technical skills required for that career field, and the HTC Learner Outcomes are the general skills necessary for employment and advancement in any field. Program award outcomes vary depending on the program, but through our Advisory Committee and curriculum development process, all award outcomes have been created by faculty, reviewed by that program's advisory committee to ensure relevance to industry needs, and are clearly and publicly available on the HTC website. Similarly, HTC Learner Outcomes are available clearly and publicly on HTC's website .

As detailed in 3B, instructional strategies and methods then translate these curricular goals into tangible, scaffolded learning activities, building upon and interweaving knowledge and skills until the goals and outcomes are met. HTC's Center for Teaching and Learning identifies priorities for professional development for HTC faculty and facilitates opportunities for faculty to learn and practice effective teaching strategies and methods.

Assessment of Student Learning is the next phase of teaching where instructors at HTC evaluate how well students are learning the knowledge and skills we have established through institutional, program, and course outcomes. HTC has six institutional outcomes, called the HTC Learner Outcomes.

Each outcome has three subcomponents.

- Oral Communication
  - Modify and Clarify for Understanding
  - Presents Verbally with Organization
  - Uses Delivery Appropriate to Situation

- Written Communication
  - Organize and Support Ideas
  - Clarity of Writing
  - Writes with Purpose

- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
  - Identify Potential Causes of a Problem
  - Create Reasonable Solutions to a Problem
  - Evaluates Results of Solutions

- Mathematical Reasoning
  - Communicate Mathematical Discoveries
  - Apply Mathematical Processes
  - Demonstrate familiarity with Mathematical Concepts

- Scientific Reasoning
  - Demonstrate familiarity with Science Concepts
  - Apply Scientific Method
  - Analyze Scientific Data

- Technological Literacy
  - Use Basic Technological Tools
  - Use Technology to Research
  - Ability to Learn New Technology

Every course at HTC aligns with one of these six Learner Outcomes to ensure that these skills are reinforced broadly across the curriculum. Each semester, liberal arts faculty assess each student in each of their class sections using Salesforce. That data can then be aggregated across the entire college or disaggregated by department, instructor, and semester to look for ways to improve student learning.

At the program level, all award outcomes are assessed by program faculty over a three-year rotation. Each year, in the fall semester, approximately 1/3 of each program's award outcomes are assessed by identifying specific assignments or artifacts from courses mapped to each outcome. During the fall semester, faculty confirm the specific program outcomes to be assessed that year and identify the specific artifacts that will be used in the assessment. During the spring semester, data on student learning is then compiled from across the department and analyzed for opportunities to make curricular, instructional, or assessment-related changes that would improve student learning.

Examples from across the College of recent improvements based on assessment of student learning include:

Curricular Improvements

- Architectural Drafting reviewed curriculum and changes within their industry and added new outcomes to integrate the use of drones in site mapping.
- Audio Recording evaluated student performance data and determined that reading skills are a barrier to learning program skills. Faculty has engaged in system-wide efforts to develop guidelines and processes to improve student success in technical programs through “tech prep” courses that target foundational reading and comprehension skills necessary for student success in technical areas.
- Automotive Mechanics consulted with their industry advisory committee to integrate more EV and hybrid content into their curriculum.
- Cabinetmaking determined a big obstacle to better assessment practices was that their award outcomes needed to be rewritten. Now, program outcomes are stackable across their awards.
- English redesigned its curriculum to expedite student readiness for college-level work by creating co-requisites for college-level English classes and Tech Prep courses for technical courses.
- Fluid Power faculty were able to streamline award outcomes to be more straightforward and stackable in innovative educational offerings. By adjusting award outcomes, good aggregation of data across the program is now possible.
- Information Technology & Cyber Defense faculty reviewed curriculum, and in consultation with their advisory committee, faculty have developed new curriculum in cyber-defense, artificial intelligence, and data centers.
- Machine Tool program outcomes demonstrated that teamwork was not well aligned with course-level outcomes. The program is now exploring with its advisory committee whether to keep the program-level outcomes or build out the course-level outcomes to support the program-level outcome.
- Math faculty used co-requisites and Tech Prep courses to ensure that students in the traditional string of developmental math classes expedite the learning of fundamental math skills. Math faculty worked to streamline pathways, reducing obstacles to getting to college-level math classes.
- Philosophy faculty reviewed current curriculum in collaboration with ITEC instructors, and realized that they did not have sufficient content in existing courses to address the unique skills of moral analysis for the new AI Developer degree. As a result, faculty developed a new Ethics in AI course.
- Plumbing analyzed suboptimal results on the mastery of state plumbing codes; faculty dedicated more instructional time to their area by adding 1 credit to their first plumbing code class.
- Practical Nursing assessed data that revealed students were struggling due to insufficient foundational knowledge in anatomy and physiology. Previous attempts to address the learning gap within the program had not been successful. Faculty instituted new prerequisites to the program in Anatomy and Physiology I and II and will monitor student performance to see if additional adjustments to resources will be necessary.

Instructional Improvements

- Automation Robotics, program faculty realized that their students do well on application- level skills yet are unable to demonstrate the crucial higher-level skills. Using data from an industry-recognized standardized exam, instructors integrated more lab activities focused on complicated troubleshooting and analysis; student

scores improved.

- Business faculty in the department took HTC's Effective Online Teaching course and developed a "shell" online business format to standardize the student experience in their online business classes. After identifying inconsistencies across the department in their online modalities, faculty development in online modality delivery was implemented.
- Dental Assisting identified two courses with lower-than-desired success rates; faculty partnered with the college Tutoring Center to add a dedicated tutor knowledgeable in the content and skills of these classes.
- Emergency Medical Services observed discrepancies between results on written and demonstrated skills portions of a national exam. To improve students' performance on the written portion, faculty integrated more connections between theory and practice.
- Engineering CAD began offering "multi-modal" delivery after initial trials were successful; new students can choose to engage in class activities either in-person or online for all of their coursework.
- Fire Protection faculty identified four "gateway" courses that lay the foundation for success throughout the rest of the program. Significant silos between instructors created gaps across the program. Through enhanced communication, coordination, and more consistent learning experiences, scores have improved as students have had a more uniform and higher-quality foundation.
- Ford ASSET expanded the types and iterations of troubleshooting experiences; faculty have integrated virtual reality (VR) and gamification into their instruction.
- HVAC recognized patterns of safety infractions; faculty delineated clear lines in the lab to distinguish "learning areas" from "walkways."
- ITEC modernized equipment to keep up in this industry sector; faculty worked with internal and external stakeholders to enhance equipment and learning spaces.
- A Law Enforcement virtual reality platform was being used to give students more practice from a wider variety of possible interactions in areas like de-escalation, mental health-related calls, and high-risk calls. A "trauma-informed pedagogy" is being used to structure student learning experiences and activities.
- Medium/Heavy Truck reviewed assessment data; faculty recognized that they were not allotting enough time to cover material on steering systems and adjusted instructional time.

Assessment-related Improvements

- Automotive Mechanics leveraged well-established industry relationships with partners who hire many students to establish a more formal process to gather qualitative feedback on graduate skill mastery necessary for industry.
- Biology analyzed student learning data to identify one area (biofilms) where students weren't meeting benchmarks and were not advancing to a higher level of mastery. In reviewing the current 3-phase assessment structure, administrators adjusted the process to emphasize achieving these higher levels.
- Child Development updated faculty course rubrics after reviewing data from a standardized exam. Revised rubrics include clear expectations and resources to help students improve.
- Dental Assisting included additional practice exams based on student performance on a first attempt at a state jurisprudence exam to better prepare students and familiarize them with the format of the exam.

- Graphic Design noticed more students enrolling in online delivery options. Because online students were struggling with time management as they worked on their capstone projects, faculty included additional formative assessments and a series of drafts to ensure that online students were consistently progressing in their learning.
- After previous assessments measuring professionalism were identified as too vague, Marine Motorsports faculty developed clear rubrics on professionalism that could be used across the program.
- Sociology faculty adjusted standardized rubrics to facilitate easier collaboration amongst full-time and part-time faculty at multiple sites, including high school partners.

Assessment of student learning at HTC is a well-documented process of continuous improvement. Assessment is integrated in HTC's Program and Department Advancement process in which each program and department receives a comprehensive review every three years. This period of review allows faculty to follow up on previous changes made based on annual assessments to see whether the changes are having the intended impact and, generally, to review larger trends in students' learning.

The assessment process at HTC is overseen by the Assessment Committee , jointly chaired by the VP of Academic and Student Affairs and the Assessment Coordinator, which is a partial-release faculty position. Currently, there are 6 faculty members and 6 administrators on the committee. The Assessment Committee meets monthly to plan, develop faculty resources, review and provide feedback on assessment reports, strategize how to continuously improve HTC's collective assessment efforts, as well as present to faculty at in-service days.

In FY26, the committee began two initiatives to better close the loop after assessment reports are submitted.

Each month, the committee reviews assessment reports of a sample of programs and departments that went through the Advancement process in the prior year. Strengths of that program/department are identified as well as opportunities to improve their assessment efforts. These strengths and opportunities are then included in a formal letter to program/department faculty. The Assessment Coordinator follows up with faculty to assist with the next steps.

As part of the comprehensive Program/Department Advancement process, faculty meet with administrators to review the overall health and vitality of the program/department. Although the Advancement process includes a 3-year review of assessment efforts, prior to FY26, assessment was rarely discussed at the Advancement meetings between faculty and administrators. The Assessment Committee recognized an opportunity to elevate and include assessment discussions directly with faculty during Program/Department Advancement meetings. Starting in FY26, the Assessment Coordinator was included in Advancement meetings to center assessment in the broader Advancement conversations.

Strengthening Co-Curricular Learning Assessment

HTC has established co-curricular learning outcomes and assessment processes for student engagement activities, leadership experiences, and student support initiatives. Current practices include the identification of learning outcomes, collection of assessment data, and documentation of resulting improvements through annual assessment planning and

reporting processes. The Assessment Committee determined that while co-curricular learning activities are being assessed, the scope and ownership of assessment activities vary across departments and would benefit from greater consistency and alignment with institutional assessment processes.

Beginning in 2026–2027, HTC will refine its co-curricular assessment framework by establishing a narrower institutional definition of co-curricular learning that aligns with the mission of a comprehensive technical college. Initial assessment efforts will focus on areas that best align with the mission of the College, for example, student clubs, Student Senate, and SkillsUSA. To strengthen accountability for assessment, HTC will clarify ownership of co-curricular learning assessment and integrate assessment activities into existing institutional assessment processes.

To further align curricular and co-curricular learning, HTC will map co-curricular learning experiences to the existing HTC Learner Outcomes and utilize the same continuous improvement model employed for academic assessment. This work will allow the college to better evaluate how learning experiences outside the classroom contribute to the development of communication, critical thinking, professionalism, and other learner outcomes valued by employers and industry partners. The resulting framework will provide a more systematic approach to measuring student learning, documenting improvements, and demonstrating the collective impact of curricular and co-curricular experiences on student success.

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3.F. Program Review

The institution improves its curriculum based on periodic program review.

Argument

Curriculum Improvement Through Systematic, Evidence-Based Review

HTC's Program Advancement and Department Advancement processes provide a consistent, institution-wide framework for evaluating academic programs. Programs undergo comprehensive review on a three-year rotation that uses common data sets from the real-time Power BI database and financial data from the MinnState system while providing clearly defined expectations for analysis and reporting.

The process includes structured stages of data preparation, faculty-led analysis, collaborative review with deans, and formal presentation to senior leadership. Institutional Research maintains the Power BI dashboards to ensure consistency in key performance indicators, including enrollment, retention, completion, student success, and cost. This systematic structure ensures that all programs are reviewed on a regular cycle and that findings are used to evaluate and improve the quality, currency, and relevance of curriculum and program design, consistent with HLC expectations for ongoing program evaluation.

Evidence-Based Evaluation of Program Quality and Relevance

Program review at HTC is grounded in the systematic use of quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate program effectiveness and ensure alignment with workforce and transfer needs.

In the Communications department, Department Advancement data revealed a direct relationship between staffing levels and course availability, prompting adjustments in faculty capacity and course scheduling to maintain access and support student progression in general education pathways.

Increasing saturation rates alongside targeted retention efforts reflect a focus on maintaining program quality and efficiency. In Automotive Technology, faculty analyzed enrollment, retention, and course demand trends, identifying opportunities to improve persistence and streamline course offerings.

In Philosophy, faculty used data to identify enrollment declines during the pandemic and implemented increased in-person offerings, contributing to enrollment recovery and improved student engagement. Departments ensure currency and responsiveness to changing student needs and learning environments.

In the Medium/Heavy Truck Technology (MHTT) program, faculty analyzed enrollment and retention trends in relation to labor market demand and implemented targeted retention strategies, resulting in enrollment stabilization and improved program sustainability (3.F.i MHTT retention). This work demonstrates how program review ensures continued relevance

to industry needs and student career pathways.

Integration of Outcomes Assessment and Curriculum Quality

HTC intentionally integrates outcomes assessment with program review to ensure that curriculum quality is continuously evaluated and improved based on direct evidence of student learning. Within the Program Advancement and Department Advancement processes, faculty analyze course- and program-level student learning outcomes alongside enrollment, retention, and success data to identify gaps in student achievement and opportunities for instructional improvement. These findings are then incorporated into program work plans, ensuring that assessment results lead to specific, measurable changes in curriculum and instruction.

In the Medium/Heavy Truck Technology (MHTT) program, outcomes assessment is grounded in direct evidence of student performance collected through structured internship evaluations completed by industry partners at the end of each eight-week rotation. These evaluations provide consistent, real-world data on student attainment of course and program outcomes and serve as a primary measure of applied competency development. Analysis of these assessment results, along with feedback from industry partners, allows faculty to identify specific skill areas where student performance may not fully meet industry expectations. When gaps are identified, faculty make targeted updates to curriculum and lab activities based on internship evaluation data and advisory feedback.

In the Communications department, Department Advancement analysis combined outcomes assessment data with course success metrics to identify high D/F/W rates in specific general education courses. Faculty implemented targeted instructional interventions, including redesigned assignments, increased formative assessment opportunities, and enhanced student engagement strategies. As a result, student success rates increased significantly while D/F rates declined, demonstrating measurable improvement in both instructional effectiveness and student learning outcomes.

The Automotive Technology program further demonstrates the integration of assessment and program review through formal feedback received during Program Advancement. Senior leadership identified the need to strengthen consistency and rigor in outcomes assessment practices. In response, faculty collaborated with the Center for Teaching and Learning and Institutional Research to improve assessment design, align course-level outcomes with program competencies, and ensure that assessment results are systematically reviewed and used to inform instructional decisions.

Similarly, the Philosophy department incorporated assessment findings into ongoing curriculum refinement. Department Advancement data and outcomes assessment results informed revisions to course structure, including updates to core courses such as Critical Thinking, as well as expanded use of Open Educational Resources to reduce cost barriers and improve access. Faculty also adjusted course delivery methods to better align with student needs, including increasing in-person offerings to support engagement and learning. These changes reflect a deliberate effort to use assessment data to improve both accessibility and the quality of student learning experiences.

Use of Disaggregated Data to Improve Equity and Program Effectiveness

HTC’s program review process includes analysis of disaggregated data to ensure equitable

student outcomes and to improve program effectiveness across diverse student populations. Programs such as Culinary, Communications, and Philosophy use disaggregated demographic and student success data to identify trends and implement targeted strategies that improve access and outcomes for underrepresented students.

In the Culinary program, Program Advancement data show that students of color increased from 45.8% to 52.7% of enrollment over a three-year period, reflecting intentional outreach and partnership efforts. In response to identified barriers related to cost and access, faculty implemented strategies such as collaboration with TRIO and Student Life, adjustments to required materials, and expanded support for students needing equipment and supplies, resulting in improved access and persistence.

In the Communications department, Department Advancement data indicate that students of color consistently represent over 50% of enrollment, with follow-up analysis demonstrating improved student success rates among students of color, Pell-eligible, and first-generation students. Faculty attributed these improvements to targeted instructional changes, including proactive student communication, increased faculty availability, and redesigned assignments in high-DFW courses to reduce barriers to success.

In the Philosophy department, demographic data show that approximately half of enrolled students identify as students of color, with relatively stable representation across campuses over multiple years. Enrollment data further demonstrate recovery from pandemic-related declines, with credits generated increasing to exceed pre-pandemic levels, indicating improved access and engagement. Department analysis connected these longitudinal trends to the composition of the technical programs served and the analysis informed strategies such as expanded in-person course offerings and increased outreach to programs with higher proportions of underrepresented students.

In the Automation Robotics Engineering Technology (ARET) program, faculty used disaggregated demographic data to evaluate access and representation as the program expanded. Program Advancement data show that students of color represented 45.66% of enrollment in FY2022, declined slightly to 43.20% in FY2023, and rebounded modestly to 44.72% in FY2024, even as overall enrollment increased. Faculty interpreted this pattern as an indication that while the total number of students of color remained relatively stable, growth in total enrollment was outpacing gains in underrepresented student participation, which required them to develop additional strategies going forward.

Program Review Driving Curriculum Currency and Innovation

Program review at HTC leads directly to curriculum redesign and program innovation, ensuring that programs remain current, relevant, and aligned with student and workforce needs.

In the Culinary program, Program Advancement data identified both structural inefficiencies and opportunities to better align offerings with industry demand. Analysis of completion rates and award-level data showed that certain credentials, including diploma pathways, had low completion and limited student demand. In response, faculty eliminated low-completion awards and restructured the program to focus on high-value credentials. Faculty used enrollment and retention data to expand flexible scheduling and course delivery options, improving access for working students. The changes demonstrate how program review

informed both curriculum relevance and program efficiency, resulting in stronger alignment with industry needs and improved student progression. Program review also identified emerging industry trends and student interest areas, leading to the development of new pathways such as Food Truck entrepreneurship and expanded Baking and Pastry offerings.

Data-driven actions reflect the ongoing effort to improve program quality, efficiency, and student completion outcomes, using data to guide both curricular and structural change. In the Automotive Technology program, Program Advancement data revealed patterns in course enrollment, student success, and program progression that indicated opportunities to improve efficiency and completion. Faculty identified several low-enrollment courses and redundancies within the curriculum that created barriers to timely completion. In response, the program streamlined course offerings by removing or consolidating low-demand courses and revising course sequencing to better support student progression. Program data also showed increasing saturation rates alongside relatively lower retention, prompting faculty to revise scheduling practices and increase focus on student persistence strategies.

In the Philosophy department, Department Advancement data highlighted enrollment declines during the pandemic, shifts in course modality, and opportunities to improve student access and engagement. Faculty used these data to expand in-person course offerings, which were directly associated with increased enrollment, as credits generated in FY2024 exceeded prior years. Additionally, faculty analyzed course performance and identified opportunities to improve accessibility and reduce student costs, leading to the expansion of Open Educational Resources (OER) in courses such as ethics and medical ethics. The department also reviewed revisions to core courses, including Critical Thinking, and incorporated those findings into ongoing curriculum evaluation and prerequisite considerations. These actions demonstrate how the department uses program review to ensure currency of curriculum, accessibility of materials, and responsiveness to student learning needs.

In the Automation Robotics Engineering Technology (ARET) program, Program Advancement data showed significant enrollment growth —from 2,085 credits generated in FY2022 to 2,465 in FY2024—alongside expansion to a second campus. The program strengthened partnerships with industry leaders such as SkyWater, Seagate, and Polar Semiconductor, informing curriculum updates and the development of apprenticeship learning opportunities. Faculty identified the need to expand course availability across campuses and invest in updated equipment to support emerging technologies. Program review ensures that curriculum remains current, workforce-aligned, and responsive to industry needs, while supporting continued program growth and student opportunity.

Continuous Improvement of Dual Enrollment

HTC uses its comprehensive program review system to ensure the continuous improvement, quality, and expansion of dual enrollment (PSEO and concurrent enrollment) opportunities. Dual enrollment is not managed as a separate initiative; rather, it is embedded within both academic Program/Department Advancement processes and student services Program Advancement within Enrollment Services. This integrated approach ensures that dual enrollment pathways remain current, accessible, and aligned with student success and workforce goals.

From an academic perspective, Program and Department Advancement processes provide

clear evidence of how dual enrollment is evaluated and improved at the course and program level. In the Physics department, for example, Department Advancement data show that the number of PSEO students increased from 25 to 43 over a two-year period, contributing to overall enrollment growth and influencing course scheduling and delivery decisions. Faculty responded to this growth by adjusting course modalities and scheduling—including expanded face-to-face offerings—to better meet the needs of dual enrollment students and the technical programs they support. This demonstrates how program review data directly informs instructional decisions that improve access and success for dual enrollment students.

The Landscape/Horticulture program demonstrates how Program Advancement supports the intentional development of concurrent enrollment pathways. The program identified Landscape Operations as a key course offered through a partnership with Buffalo High School, serving as a pipeline into the program. Program data further show increasing diversity within the student population, with students of color increasing from 10.26% to 14.80% over three years, suggesting that these partnerships contribute to expanding access and supporting institutional equity goals.

Aligned with HTC's academic program review, HTC's Dual Enrollment Program Advancement process —a new process starting FY26—ensures that the operational and student support aspects of dual enrollment are continuously evaluated and improved. Within the Partnerships and Pathways unit, dual enrollment is reviewed as part of a structured continuous improvement cycle that includes key performance indicators, stakeholder surveys, work plans, and annual evaluation timelines.

By bringing together Admissions, Advising, Registrar, and other student services areas to coordinate processes, improve communication, and streamline the dual enrollment student experience from application through enrollment and course completion, HTC ensures high-quality academic experiences for dual enrollment students. Program review findings directly inform improvements in curriculum, scheduling, partnerships, and support services, demonstrating that dual enrollment is an intentional and continuously improving component of the college's overall academic and student success strategy.

Linking Program Review to Resource Allocation and Sustainability

HTC integrates program review findings into institutional decision-making related to budgeting, staffing, and program sustainability, ensuring that resources are strategically aligned to support program quality, effectiveness, and long-term viability. Program Advancement and Department Advancement processes require faculty and administrators to analyze cost, enrollment, and workload data alongside student success metrics, ensuring that resource decisions are informed by both financial and educational outcomes. Programs use current data to guide decisions related to staffing, equipment, facilities, and program structure.

In the Automation Robotics Engineering Technology (ARET) program, Program Advancement data showed sustained enrollment growth—from 2,085 credits generated in FY2022 to 2,465 in FY2024—alongside expansion to the Brooklyn Park campus. Faculty identified increasing instructional demand and the need to expand course offerings across locations. In response, the program worked with administration to plan for additional faculty capacity, increased use of adjunct instructors, and expanded instructional space and

equipment. These resource decisions were directly tied to program growth and industry demand, ensuring that the program could maintain instructional quality while scaling to meet workforce needs.

The Culinary program provides a strong example of how program review informs cost management and financial sustainability. Program Advancement data identified high cost per FYE and rising supply expenses as key challenges. In response, faculty and administration implemented targeted strategies, including vendor evaluation, shared purchasing practices, and increased reliance on industry partnerships and donations to offset equipment and supply costs. These actions resulted in measurable reductions in cost per FYE over time, demonstrating how program review can lead to improved financial efficiency while maintaining program quality.

In the Automotive Technology program, analysis of enrollment, course demand, and retention data revealed both strong student interest (as evidenced by increasing saturation rates) and challenges with student persistence. Program Advancement findings led to targeted resource decisions, including collaboration with advising and tutoring services, as well as plans to support lab instruction through additional staffing (e.g., student workers in lab environments) to improve student support and retention. HTC consistently uses program review data to align resources with program needs—whether expanding capacity in high-demand programs, improving cost efficiency, or addressing barriers to student success.

Formal Feedback and Accountability for Program Quality

HTC's program review process includes a structured and transparent system of feedback from senior leadership, ensuring accountability for program quality, relevance, and continuous improvement. Following completion of Program Advancement and Department Advancement reports, programs receive written follow-up letters that document key elements of the review, including identified strengths, areas for improvement, program health designation (e.g., stable, excelling, or program of concern), and expectations for future action. These letters serve as both a summary of the evaluation and a mechanism for accountability, ensuring that program-level findings are clearly communicated and acted upon.

For example, follow-up feedback to the Automotive Technology program highlighted strong faculty engagement, industry alignment, and program demand, while also identifying opportunities to improve student retention and strengthen outcomes assessment practices. In response, faculty incorporated these priorities into their program work plan, including collaboration with institutional support units to enhance assessment processes and targeted strategies to improve persistence.

Similarly, feedback to the Automation Robotics Engineering Technology (ARET) program recognized strong student success rates and alignment with workforce demand, while identifying opportunities to expand apprenticeship pathways, strengthen recruitment pipelines, and secure additional resources to support program growth. These priorities were incorporated into program planning efforts, including expanded industry partnerships and strategic enrollment initiatives.

In addition to identifying program-level actions, feedback letters often outline areas where institutional support is needed, such as marketing, facilities, equipment, or staffing. This

ensures that accountability is shared between faculty and administration, reinforcing a collaborative approach to program improvement.

Importantly, these feedback mechanisms are not isolated to the three-year review cycle. Progress on identified priorities is monitored through annual updates, Division Analysis reviews (described below), and ongoing conversations between faculty and leadership. Programs may be elevated for additional monitoring or, conversely, recognized for improvement based on demonstrated progress over time.

Annual Division Analysis: A Proactive and Integrated Approach to Continuous Improvement

HTC's Division Analysis process serves as a critical, integrated component of the college's overall program review system, providing an annual, data-informed evaluation of program performance that complements the comprehensive three-year Program Advancement and Department Advancement cycles. This process ensures that program review is not limited to periodic evaluation, and instead functions as a continuous and proactive system of monitoring, intervention, and improvement.

Division Analysis is conducted annually and includes a systematic review of key performance indicators across all programs, including enrollment trends, retention, completion, student success, faculty workload, and cost efficiency. These data are reviewed collaboratively by deans, academic leadership, and the executive team, creating a shared understanding of program health across the institution. By examining multi-year trends each year--2024, 2025, 2026--HTC ensures that emerging challenges are identified early and addressed before they become systemic issues.

Early identification and proactive intervention is the defining feature of Division Analysis. Programs demonstrating concerning trends—such as declining enrollment, low retention, or increasing costs—are formally designated as "programs of concern." This designation initiates a structured and supportive follow-up process that includes regular meetings between faculty, deans, and senior leadership to analyze root causes, develop targeted strategies, and align resources to support improvement.

The Auto Body Collision Repair and Emergency Medical Services programs demonstrate the effectiveness of this proactive approach. Based on enrollment and retention trends, both programs were identified through Division Analysis as needing focused attention. Through ongoing, structured check-ins, faculty and leadership implemented targeted strategies, including adjustments to scheduling, recruitment efforts, and student support practices. These interventions resulted in measurable improvement in key performance indicators over time, leading to both programs being formally removed from Division Analysis monitoring. Follow-up letters confirm that, after sustained progress and continued data review, these programs transitioned back to standard annual monitoring processes.

This progression—from early identification to targeted intervention to demonstrated improvement—illustrates how Division Analysis strengthens HTC's ability to close the loop on program review. The process ensures that:

- Data are reviewed and acted upon annually
- Programs receive timely, structured feedback and support
- Improvement efforts are monitored and adjusted in real time

- Successful outcomes are recognized and sustained

By embedding Division Analysis within its broader program review framework, HTC ensures continuous oversight of program quality, relevance, and effectiveness.

Integration of Program Review Across Academic and Student Services

HTC has expanded its Program Advancement model beyond academic programs to include student services, applying the same evidence-based, structured review process to areas that directly support student access, persistence, and completion. Beginning in FY2026, departments within Enrollment Services—including One Stop, Financial Aid, and related student support areas—engage in a formalized review process that mirrors academic Program Advancement, including data analysis, stakeholder feedback, goal setting, and administrative review.

HTC OneStop tracks conversion rates and call center performance to evaluate its effectiveness in supporting prospective and current students. Program review data show measurable improvements in both student engagement and service efficiency, including increased student interactions and reduced call abandonment rates, reflecting more timely and effective service delivery.

Financial Aid increased timeliness and clarity in communicating deadlines and requirements, with most students reporting services were "*satisfied or very satisfied*" and information was "*very accurate*." This reflects a shift toward more consistent, student-centered communication practices, even as feedback identified remaining gaps in access and responsiveness that are now informing further process improvements. The expansion of Program Advancement to student services ensures that the full student experience—from initial enrollment through program completion—is subject to the same level of continuous evaluation and improvement as academic programs.

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- 3.F.uu One Stop PA
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- 3.F.w Philosophy SoC
- 3.F.x ARET SoC
- 3.F.z CULA improvements

3.G. Student Success Outcomes

The institution's student success outcomes demonstrate continuous improvement, taking into account the student populations it serves and benchmarks that reference peer institutions.

Argument

Institutional Commitment and Goal Setting for Student Success

Hennepin Technical College (HTC) demonstrates an institution-wide commitment to student success and educational effectiveness through integrated strategic planning, measurable goal setting, statewide accountability alignment, and coordinated institutional action. Student retention, persistence, completion, and equitable outcomes are embedded within the College's 2025 Strategic Plan, 2025 Academic and Student Affairs Plan, and 2025 Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan, all aligned with MinnState Equity 2030 goals and Student Success Accountability Metrics. Equity priorities are fully integrated within these plans, ensuring that closing achievement gaps for students of color, Pell-eligible students, and First-Generation students is a sustained institutional responsibility rather than a stand-alone initiative.

Statewide accountability metrics require multi-year cohort tracking, and the most recent validated MinnState system comparisons reflect 2021–2022 cohorts. These legislatively required metrics use standardized cohort definitions across all two-year colleges. HTC supplements these externally reported measures with institution-defined retention dashboards that are reviewed annually through its SEM Plan and Program Advancement. Progress toward student success goals is reviewed regularly during college-wide in-service days, reinforcing institutional accountability and transparency.

Current goals build upon quantified commitments established in HTC's 2020 mid-cycle accreditation review under former Core Component 4.C. At that time, the College established baseline benchmarks across federal (IPEDS), statewide (MinnState), and institutional retention measures, including: a 30% IPEDS graduation rate (150% of normal time), 67% IPEDS full-time retention rate, 38.8% part-time completion rate, 52.5% full-time completion rate, 67.3% MinnState persistence rate, and 48% institutional dashboard retention rate.

To assess institutional follow-through, HTC reviewed subsequent validated outcomes across each reporting framework. According to MinnState Student Success Accountability Metrics, the Completion Rate (All Students)—measured as graduation by the third spring following entry—increased from 45.9% for the Fall 2015 cohort to 57.4% for the Fall 2020 cohort, exceeding the system college average of 51.8% by 5.6 percentage points.

Second Fall Persistence and Completion peaked at 69.8% for the Fall 2019 cohort and met or exceeded system averages in four of the last six cohorts. Institution-defined dashboard retention improved from a 48% baseline (FY2017–FY2020 average) to 51% in FY2020 and has remained above pre-2020 levels.

Below, Table 9 summarizes baseline benchmarks established in 2020, corresponding 2025 targets, and the most recent validated outcomes drawn from IPEDS Data Feedback Reports, MinnState Student Success Accountability Metrics, and HTC's finalized 2020 institutional retention dashboard. While one goal is still progressing, five were achieved, with four goals exceeded.

Table 9. Progress Toward 2020 Strategic Student Success Goals

2020 Strategic Goal	2020 Baseline	2025 Target	Most Recent Validated Outcome	Status
Increase IPEDS Graduation Rate (150% of normal time; full-time, first-time students)	30% (2014 cohort)	33%	44% (Fall 2020 cohort; completion within three years)	Exceeded
Increase IPEDS Retention Rate (full-time, first-time students)	67% (Fall 2016 cohort)	70%	73% (Fall 2022 cohort)	Exceeded
Increase Full-Time Completion Rate (MinnState)	52.5% (Fall 2010–2015 cohort window)	55.1%	67.6% (Fall 2020 cohort)	Exceeded
Increase Part-Time Completion Rate (MinnState)	38.8% (Fall 2010–2015 cohort window)	44.6%	46.3% (Fall 2020 cohort)	Exceeded
Increase MinnState Persistence (Second Fall Persistence & Completion)	67.3% (Fall 2012–2017 window)	77%	69.8% (Fall 2019 cohort)	Progressing
Increase Institutional Dashboard Retention (institution-defined metric)	48% (FY2017–FY2020 average)	50%	51% (FY2020 finalized)	Achieved

Sources: *IPEDS Data Feedback Report (2024); MinnState Student Success Accountability Metrics (2024); HTC Institutional Retention Dashboard (FY2020).*

At the same time, disaggregated system data confirm that equity gaps persist and require sustained attention. For the Fall 2020 cohort, the MinnState Completion Rate (All Students) was 51.7% for Students of Color and 62.0% for White students, reflecting a 10% gap. Second Fall Persistence for the Fall 2021 cohort was 58.1% for Students of Color and 73.5% for White students. These externally validated data both affirm overall institutional improvement and inform HTC's strategic goal to reduce persistence and completion disparities to within a 3% margin by FY30.

Together, longitudinal goal setting, systematic monitoring across federal, statewide, and institutional frameworks, documented improvement in completion and persistence, and explicit equity benchmarks demonstrate HTC's sustained, data-informed commitment to advancing student success across accreditation cycles.

Systematic Measurement and Analysis of Student Success Outcomes

Beyond statewide accountability metrics, HTC measures and analyzes student success outcomes at the program level through integrated data systems and structured review processes. This occurs most formally through the triennial Program Advancement process, described in detail in 3.F. During this three-year cycle, faculty and administrators analyze longitudinal program data using the college's Power BI dashboard, which is connected to the institutional records system. Data can be filtered and disaggregated to support nuanced analysis of student outcomes across demographics, enrollment patterns, and performance indicators.

Each review culminates in a comprehensive Program Advancement report, which includes rubric-based evaluation of student success metrics and results in action-oriented improvement plans. Programs also have continuous, year-round access to these dashboards, enabling ongoing monitoring rather than episodic review. Within Power BI, program-level performance is contextualized against college-wide benchmarks, reinforcing shared accountability.

Faculty regularly review student success data during program meetings--Auto Body and Ford ASSET, for example--and advisory committee meetings, ensuring that external stakeholders and industry partners are engaged in interpreting trends and identifying areas for improvement.

Disaggregated data in Program Advancement examined include:

- Enrollment trends (FYE and headcount)
- Student FYE/Faculty FTE ratios
- Demographic distributions
- Capacity utilization
- Course completion rates
- Awards and degrees conferred
- Related employment rates
- Grade distributions
- Retention by program major

In addition to standardized dashboards, the Office of Institutional Research provides data responses to program and leadership inquiries (3.G.m IR Requests), allowing the College to investigate emerging trends and assess the impact of specific interventions. These processes support continuous monitoring of graduation, persistence, retention, completion, transfer, and program-level outcomes over time.

A recent example of a data-informed continuous improvement process is the Cabinetmaking program. During Program Advancement review , faculty identified declining retention rates between 2019 and 2021 and a pattern of students not completing the full two-year pathway (3.G.s cabinetmaking advancement report). In response, the program analyzed internal retention and course success data, consulted industry advisory partners, and redesigned the

curriculum in 2023 to allow completion in three semesters rather than four . Following implementation, program-level fall-to-fall retention rates increased from 29% and 23% in earlier reporting cycles to 44% and 57% in subsequent terms.

Additional indicators, including student success rates (A–C) ranging from 83–95% and consistently low withdrawal rates (generally below 3%), reflect improved student momentum and pathway completion. This example illustrates how program-level data analysis, combined with industry engagement, leads to structural redesign and measurable improvement in student outcomes.

To deepen institutional understanding beyond quantitative metrics, HTC conducted the 2019 Stop, Drop, Enroll persistence study, which examined institutional data alongside qualitative student feedback. The analysis identified key predictors of attrition, including low course performance, withdrawals, financial insecurity, housing and food instability, mental health challenges, and technology access barriers. These findings informed structural reforms described in the Continuous Improvement section below and demonstrate HTC's use of both quantitative and qualitative evidence to diagnose and address barriers to student success.

Evidence of Continuous Improvement and Equity-Focused Action

HTC student success evidence is used to inform structural redesign, remove barriers, and close equity gaps. Over the last five years, institutional analysis of student success data has led to coordinated academic, advising, and policy reforms.

Stop, Drop, Enroll Research Initiative

Structural retention reforms were catalyzed by the 2020 Stop, Drop, Enroll persistence study and subsequent Blueprint for Persistence action plan. This IRB-approved research found that approximately 40% of students did not persist to their second year and identified three primary institutional predictors of attrition: (1) administrative holds, (2) unsuccessful course performance (below "C"), and (3) course withdrawals. Students identifying as Black/African American or multiracial were twice as likely to experience these risk factors, while students who received mentoring, counseling, or peer support were 12% more likely to persist, reducing an equity gap.

The findings of this initiative helped inform the Academic and Student Affairs Plan, SEM Plan, advising redesign, and policy revisions. Subsequent improvements in IPEDS retention (67% to 73%) and completion rates (45.9% to 57.4%) reflect institutional follow-through on these findings.

Student Progress Reports (QIP)

Through its Quality Initiative Project, HTC expanded Student Progress Reports (SPRs) into an integrated predictive analytics framework within Salesforce. The redesigned reporting incorporated machine learning, creating an at-risk student score and helping reduce intervention response time from more than one week to near real-time outreach. Through the support of ongoing training at college in-service days, faculty participation increased to 70%, more than doubling prior engagement rates, significantly expanding early-alert coverage across courses, including short-session offerings.

Preliminary monitoring shows increased coordination between faculty and advising staff and

improved timeliness of intervention. While longitudinal persistence and completion outcomes are still being evaluated, defined assessment metrics include changes in D, F, and withdrawal rates, first-term persistence, and retention among students flagged as high-risk. As additional cohort data become available, HTC will continue to analyze the relationship between at-risk scores, academic performance, and subsequent enrollment to assess the long-term impact of this predictive framework.

ABE Partnership for English Language Learners

Advisors intentionally connect multilingual students to geographically aligned ABE providers, creating a structured pathway from language development to college-level coursework. Analysis of ESOL enrollment and progression data (FY18–FY22) revealed declining FYE enrollment (73.56 to 15.36), negative cost per credit (-$844), and that 22.7% of ESOL students did not transition into a technical program, with 57 students stopping out entirely. In response, HTC redesigned placement and support processes for English Language Learners and strengthened partnerships with local Adult Basic Education providers (3.G.v ESOL data). Revised intake protocols now align Accuplacer Reading Comprehension cut scores with clearer pathways: developmental coursework, a six-credit ENGL0998 pilot for mid-range scorers (205–235), or direct referral to ABE partners below 205. Early monitoring shows improved clarity in placement and reduced attrition among newly enrolled ESOL students.

Food Pantry and Hunger-Free Campus Expansion

In 2020, HTC learned that approximately 40–45% of its students experience food insecurity, with 32% reporting it negatively affects their academic performance and 44% unable to afford balanced meals. Disparities are significant, with 58% of Black students experiencing food insecurity compared to 34% of White students. Drawing on these validated basic needs data, HTC expanded its food access infrastructure at its campuses to become a Hunger Free Campus and to establish a centralized pantry model with electronic tracking to monitor demand and guide resource allocation. Utilization data now inform inventory planning, outreach, and service expansion, embedding food access into HTC's equity and persistence strategy. This initiative reflects a clear evidence-to-action cycle linking student need identification to structural investment and ongoing assessment.

Electronic tracking of pantry utilization enables HTC to monitor demand trends, allocate resources strategically, and assess the relationship between basic needs support and student persistence. Following the December 2025 expansion at the Eden Prairie campus, the pantry has served 277 students and community members and distributed 5,368.63 pounds of food. At the Brooklyn Park campus, from January 2025 through January 2026, the expanded physical food pantry served 13,918 students and distributed 53,174.47 pounds of food. These measurable service outcomes provide tangible evidence of both identified need and institutional response.

Revision of Student Hold Thresholds

In response to findings from Stop, Drop, Enroll identifying administrative holds as a key attrition factor, HTC conducted a cross-functional review of all student holds beginning in 2019 as part of its Persistence Plan. The College evaluated each hold's purpose, impact, and resolution pathway, eliminated outdated or redundant holds, clarified ownership and

communication, and aligned workflows through data cleanup since 2020. The redesigned process shifted from reactive enforcement to preventive outreach, reducing unnecessary barriers while maintaining compliance requirements.

Preventive outreach also includes a process for regular tuition reminders to students to prevent drops for non-payment. By directly addressing one of the primary institutional predictors of attrition, HTC leadership aligned policy with student success goals. As of 2026, Enrollment Services has reduced the number of holds from 168 to 39.

Evidence-Based Advising and Enrollment Redesign

Drawing on multi-year trend data, HTC strengthened its advising and enrollment model through performance monitoring. From July 1, 2024–June 30, 2025, HTC recorded 12,858 in-person student interactions (7% annual growth for the third consecutive year), processed 8,014 applications (17% year-over-year increase), and maintained a call-abandon rate below 5%, indicating improved access and operational effectiveness. Salesforce conversion tracking, which is now exceeding 25,000 cumulative applications, enables monitoring of application-to-registration yield and supports a 30% Navigator caseload conversion benchmark.

Disaggregated service data (68.7% virtual engagement; peak walk-in demand prior to term start) informed staffing realignment , proactive outreach to students with incomplete enrollment tasks, and dashboard enhancements for real-time case management. Coordinated, data-informed adjustments demonstrate HTC's systematic use of operational and student-level data to remove enrollment barriers and strengthen persistence. Together, these initiatives demonstrate that HTC not only measures student success outcomes but uses disaggregated evidence to redesign systems, remove structural barriers, and advance equitable outcomes across student populations.

External Validation and Benchmarking of Student Success Results

HTC validates the credibility, rigor, and comparability of its student success outcomes through statewide accountability metrics, federally reported data, externally verified licensure pass rates, employment outcomes, and public reporting frameworks.

MinnState provides standardized Student Success Accountability Metrics that enable direct comparison across all MinnState two-year colleges . Using common cohort definitions and shared methodologies, these legislatively required measures, refreshed annually or biannually, include Developmental Education One-Year Completion, Second Fall Persistence and Completion, Completion Rate, Licensure Exam Pass Rate, and Related Employment Rate. Because these metrics are system-defined and publicly reported, they provide useful comparisons and external validation beyond institutional self-reporting.

Across multiple measures, HTC performs at or above system averages. The MinnState Completion Rate (All Students), measured as graduation by the third spring following entry, increased from 45.9% for the Fall 2015 cohort to 57.4% for the Fall 2020 cohort, exceeding the system college average of 51.8% by 5.6 percentage points. Second Fall Persistence and Completion met or exceeded system averages in four of the last six cohorts, including a 69.8% rate for the Fall 2019 cohort, nearly four points above the statewide average, with subsequent years at or above. These results demonstrate sustained institutional improvement within a shared, legislatively mandated accountability framework.

Developmental Education outcomes further illustrate competitive performance. For the Fall 2019 cohort, HTC achieved a 54.8% one-year developmental completion rate compared to the system average of 43.3%. Performance, though declining, remained above system averages during pandemic-affected cohorts, reinforcing the strength of instructional and support practices under common statewide definitions.

Workforce alignment is similarly benchmarked. HTC's Related Employment Rate for Graduates reached 83.8% in FY2022, exceeding the system average of 81.6%. Prior to the pandemic, employment rates consistently surpassed system averages by margins exceeding 9–11 percentage points (FY2017–FY2019). These employment outcomes are derived from graduate follow-up surveys and the Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLEDS), providing independent, externally validated confirmation of workforce relevance.

Licensure exam pass rates , as reported directly by external licensing bodies such as the Minnesota Board of Nursing and the Peace Officer Standards and Training further strengthen institutional accountability. While HTC's aggregate licensure pass rate across externally licensed programs exceeded system averages in 2019 and 2020 (89.5% and 89.7%), it declined in 2022 to 60.5%—below the system's 81.7%. This decline was attributed primarily to the Practical Nursing program, with subsequent first-time annual pass rates dropping to 60% and 66% in subsequent years. The decline triggered a comprehensive set of programmatic changes and the establishment of a strategic goal to increase aggregate licensure pass rates by 5% by FY30.

By adopting Assessment Technologies Institute (ATI) curriculum resources and NCLEX-focused preparation tools (Virtual ATI and a required three-day in-person NCLEX Live Review), the program was able to transition course delivery from hybrid/online to fully on-campus, to better diagnose student learning needs. The curriculum was redesigned from bundled 8-credit courses to 1–3 credit courses, allowing greater flexibility, expanded 16-week course durations, and more timely opportunities for course repetition, resulting in stronger student mastery of essential content. First-time pass rates have now improved to 93.7% (2024) and 91.6% (2025).

Disaggregated system comparisons further validate HTC's equity-focused priorities. For the Fall 2020 cohort, the MinnState Completion Rate (All Students) was 51.7% for Students of Color and 62.0% for White students. However, trend data demonstrates measurable improvement over time. As shown in Table 10 below, completion rates for Students of Color increased from 41.4% for the Fall 2015 cohort to 51.7% for the Fall 2020 cohort, representing a 10-percentage-point gain over six years. During the same period, completion rates for White students increased from 49.7% to 62.0%, indicating overall institutional improvement alongside a persistent but actively monitored equity gap. Because these measures are derived from MinnState's legislatively required Student Success Accountability Metrics using standardized cohort definitions, they provide credible and externally validated evidence of both progress and ongoing equity challenges.

Table 10. Completion Rate Trends by Race/Ethnicity (All Students), Fall 2015–Fall 2020 Cohorts

Fall Entering Cohort	Students of Color	White Students	Equity Gap

Fall 2015	41.4%	49.7%	8.3 pts
Fall 2016	41.5%	54.3%	12.8 pts
Fall 2017	41.6%	54.4%	12.8 pts
Fall 2018	45.9%	54.9%	9.0 pts
Fall 2019	47.4%	58.8%	11.4 pts
Fall 2020	**51.7%**	**62.0%**	**10.3 pts**

Source: *MinnState Student Success Accountability Metrics (2024).*

In addition to MinnState benchmarking, HTC reviews IPEDS Data Feedback Reports to contextualize performance relative to national peer institutions. Unlike MinnState metrics, IPEDS graduation and retention measures include only full-time, first-time degree-seeking students, providing a federally defined comparison point. The most recent IPEDS Data Feedback Report indicates a 44% graduation rate within 150% of normal time (three years for associate degree programs) for the Fall 2020 cohort and a 73% full-time retention rate for the Fall 2022 cohort—both exceeding comparison group medians. These federally reported measures further confirm the validity and comparability of HTC's student success outcomes.

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Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program is consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.

Argument

The Criterion 3 narrative demonstrates that Hennepin Technical College assumes responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and student support services through an integrated system of faculty leadership, evidence-based decision making, and continuous improvement. Guided by Minnesota State standards and institutional processes, HTC ensures that academic programs maintain consistent rigor regardless of instructional modality or location. Faculty play a central role in curriculum development, assessment, and program review, ensuring that learning outcomes remain aligned with industry expectations, transfer requirements, and evolving workforce needs. Applied learning, experiential education, advisory committee engagement, and ongoing professional development further strengthen instructional quality and student learning.

The college recognizes that student success extends beyond the classroom. Comprehensive academic advising, tutoring, accessibility services, counseling, career development, library resources, technology support, and equity-focused initiatives create learning environments that promote access, persistence, completion, and career readiness for an increasingly diverse student population. Through strategic initiatives aligned with Minnesota State's Equity 2030 framework, HTC intentionally identifies and removes barriers that impede student success while fostering inclusive and supportive educational experiences.

Underlying each of these efforts is a comprehensive culture of assessment and institutional learning. Student learning outcomes, program performance, and student success metrics are systematically evaluated through outcomes assessment, Program Advancement, Department Advancement, annual Division Analysis, and strategic planning processes. Assessment results are analyzed, disaggregated, and translated into measurable improvements in curriculum, instructional practices, student support services, and resource allocation. By integrating assessment with planning, budgeting, and institutional decision-making, HTC ensures that evaluation serves as a catalyst for improvement rather than a compliance activity.

Collectively, the evidence demonstrates that HTC maintains rigorous educational programs and effective learning environments through a sustained commitment to quality, innovation, accountability, and continuous improvement. This integrated approach ensures that students are well prepared for employment, lifelong learning, and meaningful contributions to their professions and communities while advancing the college's mission and strategic priorities.

Sources

There are no sources.

4 - Sustainability: Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

The institution's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

4.A Effective Administrative Structures

The institution's administrative structures are effective and facilitate collaborative processes such as shared governance; data-informed decision making; and engagement with internal and external constituencies as appropriate.

Argument

Administrative Structures that Enable Effective Leadership and Shared Governance

The governance framework ensures that decision-making processes at HTC are structured, transparent, and collaborative. As part of MinnState, HTC operates within a well-defined hierarchy—governed by a 15-member Board of Trustees (BOT), with authority delegated through State Statute 136F.06. This system-level structure provides the foundation for institutional consistency, policy oversight, and statewide alignment. Delegation of authority for specific actions to the BOT, the Chancellor, and individual college and university Presidents is articulated in System Procedure 1A.2.2 (4.A.c procedure 1A 2 2).

At the campus level, HTC's four interconnected divisions (Academic & Student Affairs, Advancement & IT, Finance & Operations, Human Resources) report directly to the President and function collectively as the Executive Team. Bi-weekly Cabinet meetings, which consist of the Executive Team and campus deans, facilitate cross-divisional collaboration, shared consideration of institutional planning, budget management, enrollment, human resources, and recommendations from councils, committees, and Student Senate. These routines ensure that leadership decisions are informed by multiple perspectives. These routines ensure that leadership decisions are informed by multiple perspectives.

HTC demonstrates strong commitment to employee and faculty participation in governance. The college collaborates with four bargaining units —MSCF, MAPE , AFSCME, and MMA —through regular and contractually defined Meet & Confer processes. These meetings foster transparent communication about personnel issues, budget allocations, and operational priorities. In addition, the Executive Team meets with Employee Leaders regularly.

Faculty governance is robust. The Faculty Shared Governance Council (SGC), chartered under MSCF Article 8.1 represents all educational divisions and collaborates directly with the

President to shape academic and institutional decision-making. SGC also receives reports from councils, committees, and task forces, promoting broad transparency and participation.

The Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC), required by MSCF Article 8.2 and composed of two-thirds faculty and one-third administrators, oversees all academic matters, including curriculum, standards, and award requirements. Its norms ensure that administrative decisions align with faculty recommendations unless compelling reasons exist otherwise.

Student governance is well-supported through the HTC Student Senate, governed by Board Policy 2.1. Student Senate exercises authority over student clubs, and represents student interests to campus leadership. Ensuring student voice is included is crucial to the HTC collaborative decision-making process.

The public website ensures access to governance-related and accreditation information for internal and external stakeholders. College-wide committees and task forces provide avenues to solicit more campus engagement and input from employees and students. Employees participate through the committee sign-up process each year. Fifteen committees and three task forces are formalized, each with charters and membership expectations. These structures intentionally cultivate a culture of evidence, transparency, and community input. Currently, visibility and communication across the campus community is done through SharePoint and an HTC-Everyone Microsoft Teams repository for college-wide information. The College has struggled to communicate committee and task force efforts effectively to across the campuses, so this is an area of improvement for FY2027.

Data-Informed Administrative Decision Making

HTC's administrative structures integrate real-time data to guide resource allocation, strategic planning, and academic decision-making. HTC Institutional Research (IR) maintains Business Intelligence (BI) dashboards with real-time enrollment and program data, made accessible to all leaders and faculty. Bi-weekly enrollment reports are sent to all leaders at the college to help leaders make data-informed decisions about enrollment. Also, academic deans and faculty can "drill down" while in BI to their assigned areas and access data and make data-informed decisions during program advancement and program meetings.

The Enrollment Services division uses Salesforce to track recruitment pipelines, measure prospective student engagement, monitor enrollment trends, and identify demographic patterns. Through regular team meetings, leaders in the Enrollment Services division use Salesforce data to support balanced recruiter assignments to shape marketing, staffing, and program-specific outreach strategies.

MinnState annual performance metrics allow HTC to monitor institutional progress on criteria such as Degrees Awarded, Instructional Cost per FYE, and Space Utilization. MinnState Weekly Enrollment Compare Reports further assist leaders in tracking institutional performance relative to peer institutions for each term throughout the academic year.

Two years ago, HTC noticed in the MinnState and internal enrollment reports that we had significantly more student drops compared to other MinnState institutions. Through a

coordinated, data-driven tuition drop-prevention process, the college reduced final tuition drops by more than 90%, lowering the number of students dropped for non-payment from approximately 800 at-risk students to just 37–50 students per term. This improvement strengthened student retention, preserved academic momentum, and demonstrated measurable institutional effectiveness through proactive, cross-departmental student support and communication.

Evidence-based decision-making is demonstrated through its Quality Initiative Project (QIP). The QIP centers on integrating Student Progress Reports (SPRs) into a broader predictive analytics framework within Salesforce. Key accomplishments include developing an at-risk student scoring model powered by machine learning, designing targeted follow-up strategies, and automating outreach for timely interventions. The college also expanded SPR coverage to short-session courses, increased faculty participation in the SPR submission process, and developed dashboards and training resources to support a cross-departmental, data-informed approach to student success. Leveraging Salesforce analytics has enabled more accurate follow-up strategies and increased faculty participation in targeted retention activities.

Collaborative Decision Making with Internal and External Constituencies

Advisory committees support the college through equipment donations, scholarship assistance, job shadowing, professional development, and classroom support—further deepening the collaborative ecosystem that sustains HTC's mission and community relevance. HTC ensures that faculty, staff, students, and external stakeholders are involved in collaborative decisions regarding academic requirements, program quality, and industry alignment. Each technical program maintains a Program Advisory Committee (PAC) as required by MinnState Board Policy 3.30. Committees comprising industry partners, alumni, and other stakeholders meet twice annually, providing recommendations on curriculum, program relevance, workforce trends, equipment needs, student opportunities, and long-range program goals.These partnerships strengthen the college's responsiveness to local employer needs and ensure ongoing program quality improvement.

Sources

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4.B Resource Base and Sustainability

The institution’s financial and personnel resources effectively support its current operations. The institution’s financial management balances short-term needs with long-term commitments and ensures its ongoing sustainability.

Argument

Financial Stewardship and Resource Allocation

As a member of the MinnState system, HTC operates within a comprehensive framework of state appropriations, tuition revenue, grants, and auxiliary funding sources. Financial resources are allocated through the MinnState allocation model , which incorporates enrollment, instructional costs, facilities, student success, and other institutional factors to distribute state appropriations among system colleges and universities. Based on this framework, approximately two-thirds of HTC’s operating revenue is derived from state appropriations, while tuition, fees, grants, and other sources provide the remaining one-third of institutional funding, as seen in HTC's most recent allocation.

For example, HTC generates other revenue through its Customized Training Solutions (CTS) division. CTS partners with more than 200 employers to provide workforce training, continuing education, and customized industry instruction. These activities not only advance the college's mission by addressing regional workforce needs but also contribute to HTC's financial sustainability.

CTS operates as a self-supporting enterprise that generates revenue beyond its operating expenses and returns funds to the college for strategic investments. As shown in Table 11, following enrollment declines during the COVID-19 pandemic, CTS experienced significant growth, generating nearly $3.9 million in revenue in FY2025 and returning more than $1.3 million to support institutional priorities and academic programs.

Table 11. Customized Training Solutions Revenue 2020-25

Fiscal Year	Gross Revenue	Dollars returned to college
2020	$2,306,439	$208,371
2021	$2,105,464	$333,060
2022	2,121,622	$430,762
2023	$2,714,016	$736,022*
2024	$2,365,506	$276,707
2025	$3,928,744	$1,308,562

Consistent with MinnState Board Policy 2.3 and System Procedure 2.3.1, students participate in formal consultation regarding tuition and fee proposals, ensuring transparency and shared responsibility in financial planning. For budget development, HTC engages faculty, staff, administrators, and students through a collaborative process designed to align expenditures with institutional goals and mission fulfillment. Cost center managers submit budget requests supported by enrollment trends, expenditure history, staffing needs, and programmatic priorities.

The College's strategic plan , *Opening Doors: Access to Success*, establishes four strategic directions—Student Success, Workplace Culture, Managed Growth, and Organizational Effectiveness—to guide institutional priorities and investment decisions. Budget development, staffing decisions, facilities planning, and technology investments are evaluated in relation to these priorities to ensure that resources are directed toward activities that advance the College's mission and support long-term sustainability.

Monitoring Financial Health and Responding to Emerging Challenges

HTC regularly monitors its financial health through a combination of internal reviews, independent audits, MinnState oversight processes, and system-defined financial performance indicators. These monitoring activities provide institutional leaders with timely information regarding financial capacity, resource utilization, and long-term sustainability, enabling the College to make informed decisions and respond proactively to emerging challenges.

Financial performance is evaluated regularly during fall and spring semesters through budget reviews, enrollment and revenue analyses; performance is reviewed annually for key financial indicators, such as Composite Financial Index (CFI), fund balance levels, operating revenues, and expenditure trends Internal audits conducted by MinnState provide additional oversight of business processes and financial controls, and the College uses audit findings to strengthen financial management practices and improve operational effectiveness.

During FY2025 and FY2026, HTC experienced significant enrollment growth—and FY27 is on track for similar growth—recording two consecutive years of enrollment increases totaling 25.8 percent, the largest growth among MinnState institutions. The College strategically invested resources to support this growth through personnel restructuring, development of new academic programs, construction of instructional laboratories, and facilities improvements designed to expand workforce education capacity and improve student access.

While these investments strengthened HTC's long-term position, financial monitoring processes identified emerging concerns related to fund balance levels and the College's Composite Financial Index. A significant contributing factor was the implementation of MinnState's enterprise-wide Workday Human Capital Management and Financial Management platform in FY2025 (4.B.h NextGen).

The complexity of this transition affected expenditure tracking, payroll reconciliation, and budget monitoring processes and contributed to challenges in maintaining established budget controls. During this transition period—and currently—the College operated within two parallel systems, requiring reconciliation between legacy student information and payroll

systems and the new financial and human resource management platform.

MinnState as a whole remains financially stable, but a significant number of colleges and universities have limited unrestricted reserves and are vulnerable to new cost pressures. Additional unfunded expenses—such as ongoing Workday implementation and support costs—could create financial challenges for institutions that already have negative or very small unrestricted net positions, as seen in the audit supplement.

HTC concluded FY2025 with a reduced fund balance and a CFI below its acceptable performance levels as a result. Rather than treating these indicators as isolated financial measures, institutional leadership used the information as an opportunity to evaluate financial practices, identify underlying causes, and implement corrective actions designed to strengthen the College's financial position while preserving educational quality and student services.

Table 12. CFI (HLC Audited) and Fund Balance Trends Compared with Enrollment

Measure	**FY2022**	**FY2023**	**FY2024**	**FY2025**
Composite Financial Index (HLC Audited)	-2.85	1.85	1.14	0.95
Fund Balance (%)	27%	24%	23%	19%
Enrollment Trend	Declining	Stabilizing	Growing	Strong Growth

As shown in Table 12, HTC's CFI improved substantially from -2.85 in FY2022 to positive scores in FY2023 through FY2025, reflecting strengthening financial performance. Although FY2025 indicators triggered additional monitoring related to fund balance and MinnState's adjusted CFI calculation, the institution's recovery plan projections anticipate several years of improving financial metrics and significant enrollment growth.

Workforce planning decisions were informed by both institutional and system-level data. HTC reviewed staffing patterns across MinnState colleges and universities and compared its staffing levels by employee group to peer institutions. These analyses helped institutional leaders evaluate administrative, faculty, professional, and support staffing levels and identify opportunities to achieve cost savings while maintaining student support and instructional capacity. HTC's staffing profile remained generally consistent with peer institutions serving comparable enrollment levels, allowing the College to focus reductions on operational efficiencies, vacancy management, and organizational restructuring rather than across-the-board reductions.

HTC communicated this situation to the college community during multiple (November and March) all-staff in-service days and a Town Hall , soliciting input and solutions. HTC developed a multi-year financial recovery strategy focused on restoring financial stability and supporting long-term sustainability. The College established two primary financial goals: restoring the unrestricted fund balance to at least 20% of annual general fund revenue and increasing the Composite Financial Index to above 1.0 by the end of FY2027.

To achieve these goals, the College implemented strategies, as seen in Table 13 below, that

include personnel savings through position management, expansion of alternative revenue sources, growth in customized training activities, continued expansion of high-demand academic programs, improved course schedule management, and efforts to reduce instructional cost differentials relative to comparable MinnState institutions.

Table 13. HTC Actions and Goals to Improve Financial Status		
FY2025 Status	**FY2026 Actions**	**FY2027 Goal**
Fund balance 19%	Personnel savings, vacancy management, retirement incentives, organizational restructuring	Fund balance ≥20%
CFI 0.19	Improved reporting, Workday controls, expenditure monitoring	CFI >1.0
Enrollment growth 25.8%	Expand high-demand programs and customized training	Sustainable growth
Revenue diversification	Grants, rentals, customized training expansion	Increased non-tuition revenue

Initial personnel savings included retirement incentives, elimination of vacant positions, organizational restructuring, and workforce reductions identified through institution-wide review processes. Additionally, the College has sought support from MinnState to strengthen Workday implementation processes and improve institutional capacity for financial reporting, expenditure monitoring, and budget management. The College continues to use its established planning and evaluation processes to develop and implement strategies that align financial recovery efforts with its mission, strategic priorities, and commitment to students.

HTC's resource allocation decisions were guided by data, stakeholder engagement, and strategic priorities. Staffing analyses, financial health indicators, enrollment trends, and peer benchmarking informed the College's recovery strategy, while extensive communication through workshops, shared governance groups, bargaining-unit consultations, and campus town halls ensured transparency and college-wide participation throughout the decision-making process.

Human Resource Improvements

Employees are HTC’s greatest resource—it’s one of the College’s Strategic Plan pillars . Human Resource practices are governed by MinnState Board policies, state statutes, collective bargaining agreements, and institutional policies that promote equitable hiring, employee development, workforce planning, and continuous improvement. The Human Resources Office collaborates with supervisors, cabinet members, and the MinnState system office to maintain accurate position descriptions, conduct position audits, and ensure compliance with applicable statutes and policies.

HTC values employee feedback alongside institutional data to evaluate workplace culture, identifying opportunities for organizational improvement. In 2024, the College participated in the PACE Climate Survey, which informed development of the 2025–2030 Strategic Plan

and workplace culture initiatives. As seen in Table 14 below, a comparison of the 2024 results with HTC's 2017 PACE survey demonstrates measurable improvement in overall campus climate.

The percentage of employees who would recommend HTC as a place to work increased from 77% to 82%. While the survey identified opportunities for continued improvement in areas such as communication, administrative processes, and advancement opportunities, the results indicate positive progress in employee engagement, collaboration, and supervisory support.

Table 14. PACE Survey Results Comparison 2017 and 2024

PACE Climate Factor	**2017**	**2024**	**Change**
Institutional Structure	3.388	3.489	+0.101
Student Focus	4.104	3.983	-0.121
Supervisory Relationships	3.691	4.004	+0.313
Teamwork	3.755	4.185	+0.430
Overall Climate	**3.705**	**3.850**	**+0.145**
Recommend HTC as a Place to Work	77%	82%	+5%

In addition to workplace culture, HTC has worked to strengthen organizational effectiveness and fiscal sustainability by emphasizing position management and staffing needs. At monthly Cabinet meetings, supervisors review position status reports, vacancy requests, and proposed new positions, providing a structured process for evaluating staffing needs across the institution and aligning personnel investments with strategic priorities.

The College's response to recent financial challenges demonstrates how workforce planning supports responsible resource stewardship. Rather than automatically replacing vacated positions, HTC evaluates each vacancy based on operational need, enrollment trends, and institutional priorities. For example, the College did not replace a vacant Academic Dean position, instead redistributing responsibilities among the remaining academic deans based on a staffing model previously used successfully by the institution. Similarly, HTC eliminated the Director of Security position upon retirement by reallocating responsibilities among existing security and operations personnel. In Academic Affairs, a retiring full-time Auto Body instructor position was not replaced after enrollment analysis identified opportunities to reduce underutilized evening course offerings while maintaining program quality. These decisions allowed the College to reduce expenditures while preserving essential services and educational quality.

HTC has strengthened the hiring processes by utilizing standardized recruitment, screening, and selection procedures designed to improve consistency, transparency, and compliance with state hiring requirements. Hiring managers evaluate applicants using established rating criteria and document selection decisions through formal justification processes. These practices help ensure that new employees possess the essential qualifications, skills, and

experience necessary to support student learning, workforce preparation, and institutional effectiveness.

Retaining and developing current employees is as important as hiring new staff who stay. HTC provides opportunities for professional growth through tuition waiver benefits, professional development funding, faculty internships, and sabbatical opportunities. In 2025, the College funded all eleven faculty internship proposals submitted, supporting faculty engagement with industry and emerging workforce trends. Also, since 2022, twenty-five faculty members, across technical and general education areas, have participated in sabbatical experiences that contributed to instructional innovation, professional growth, and program improvement. Faculty also benefit from professional development funds, per the MSCF contract, to engage in activities that support their teaching.

HTC invests in staff professional development. The College has expanded professional development opportunities for administrators and non-faculty employees—AFSCME, MAPE, MMA, and Administrator plans—through a discretionary tuition waiver that allows eligible employees to pursue additional education through MinnState universities (4.B.w HTC policy PD). This initiative supports employee career advancement, succession planning, and organizational capacity building while reinforcing HTC's commitment to lifelong learning and professional growth.

Improvements to employee onboarding and faculty support are a result of strategic planning efforts. In response to Workplace Culture goals established through the strategic planning process, HTC revised Division Chair responsibilities to include structured mentoring of new faculty. Division Chairs now conduct regular meetings with assigned mentees, provide guidance regarding institutional processes and expectations, and support new faculty as they transition into their instructional roles.

HTC continues to strengthen its employee performance evaluation processes to remain in compliance with Board Policy 4.9. During FY2025, the College fell behind on annual evaluations. Evaluations were initiated for most employees; of 574 evaluations distributed, 240 were fully completed and signed, 243 were not, and 91 had been waived. To further improve performance management practices, HTC volunteered to participate in MinnState's Workday Performance Management pilot. The new system is designed to enhance goal setting, employee feedback, performance evaluations, talent development, and succession planning while supporting compliance with Board Policy. HTC's participation in the pilot positions the College to contribute to systemwide improvements while implementing more effective processes to increase evaluation completion rates and strengthen employee development and performance management.

Facilities Improvements

Facilities planning has historically been guided by the College's Comprehensive Facilities Plan (CFP), which was originally completed in 2017 and updated in 2020. The CFP identified priorities related to facilities modernization, space utilization, accessibility improvements, technology infrastructure, maintenance planning, health careers expansion, transportation program facilities, and student support spaces.

Following the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, HTC, like many MinnState institutions, delayed development of a subsequent CFP while focusing on operational

continuity, enrollment recovery, and evolving instructional needs. Currently, MinnState is revising its criteria for CFPs, so HTC and other colleges across the state have delayed developing a new CFP. Nevertheless, facilities planning has continued at HTC through analysis of enrollment trends, program expansion opportunities, safety requirements, deferred maintenance needs, and workforce demands. As seen in Table 15, many of the planning priorities identified in the CFP are ongoing and continue to inform facility investments and capital improvement decisions.

Table 15. Comprehensive Facility Plan Improvements

CFP Priority	Location	Purpose / Description	Status
Law Enforcement Center Building Environmental Renovation	Brooklyn Park	Renovate and modernize the Law Enforcement/Public Safety instructional environment.	Completed
Accessibility Upgrades & Classroom Rightsizing	Both Campuses	Improve accessibility and optimize instructional spaces to better meet program needs and student demand.	Ongoing
Health Careers Expansion	Brooklyn Park and Eden Prairie	Expand capacity for healthcare programs and create opportunities for growth in health-related fields.	Dental Assistant lab Completed NAHA expansion Ongoing Dental Hygiene Ongoing Nursing Lab Ongoing
Video Lab Renovation & Media Careers Collaboration	Brooklyn Park	Modernize instructional space supporting media and communication programs.	Completed
Centralize Student Services	Both Campuses	Improve student access by consolidating and enhancing student support services.	Completed
Automation Program Facilities	Brooklyn Park	Support advanced manufacturing and automation workforce programs through dedicated instructional	Brooklyn Park 1st year Completed

		space.	2nd year Ongoing
IT Support Services Space	Brooklyn Park	Improve facilities supporting information technology instruction and operations.	Ongoing
Transportation Program Facilities	Both Campuses	Expand and modernize facilities supporting transportation-related programs.	Ongoing
CTS Suite / Conference Center	Brooklyn Park	Create collaborative instructional and meeting spaces supporting workforce partnerships and campus operations.	Ongoing
Faculty Support Space	Brooklyn Park	Improve workspace and support facilities for faculty.	Ongoing
Student Health and Wellness Space	Eden Prairie	Enhance facilities supporting student well-being and student services.	Completed
HVAC, Roof, and Facility Renewal Projects	Both Campuses	Address deferred maintenance, infrastructure renewal, and long-term facility sustainability.	Ongoing
Parking and Site Improvements	Both Campuses	Maintain and improve campus access, parking, and site infrastructure.	Ongoing

Since the CFP, other emerging priorities have occurred that ensure HTC instructional environments remain aligned with industry standards, workforce expectations, enrollment growth, and student learning needs

Table 16. Emerging Improvement Priorities

Emerging Priority	Location	Rationale	Status
Construction Electrician Laboratory (4.B.bb CELE Add)	Eden Prairie	Enrollment growth and workforce demand in the electrical trades.	Completed
Public Safety Range Improvements	Brooklyn Park	Safety improvements and modernization of training facilities.	Completed

New Comprehensive Facilities Plan	Both Campuses	Update facility priorities to reflect post-pandemic operations, enrollment growth, and workforce needs.	Planned 2028-2 (contingent on MinnState new CFP criteria)

Customized Training Solutions Revenue

CTS demonstrates how HTC aligns mission fulfillment with financial sustainability. Through partnerships with employers, industry associations, and public agencies, CTS delivers workforce training that responds to regional economic needs while creating an additional revenue stream for the institution. The growth of CTS revenue, as seen in Table 17, provides HTC with increased flexibility to invest in strategic priorities, support innovation, and maintain the resources necessary to fulfill its educational mission. The significant increase in CTS revenue in FY2025 reflects growing demand for workforce development and illustrates HTC's ability to leverage its technical expertise to support both regional employers and institutional sustainability.

Table 17. Customized Training Solutions Revenue 2020-25

Fiscal Year	Gross Revenue	Dollars returned to college
2020	$2,306,439	$208,371
2021	$2,105,464	$333,060
2022	2,121,622	$430,762
2023	$2,714,016	$736,022*
2024	$2,365,506	$276,707
2025	$3,928,744	$1,308,562

* Includes an $850,000 college investment.

Technology Improvements

Through FY2025, technology investments at HTC were guided by the College's Technology Plan, which allocated technology resources to support institutional priorities, instructional needs, operational requirements, cybersecurity considerations, and infrastructure replacement cycles. As the investment discussion reached the end of its planning period, the College intentionally incorporated technology-related priorities into both the Academic and Student Affairs (ASA) Plan and the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan. The technology initiatives included website redesign, expansion of Salesforce functionality, implementation of student progress reporting tools, increased use of Simple Syllabus, preparation for Workday Student, and technology-supported advising and student success initiatives.

Through implementation of these improvements, HTC recognized that while technology initiatives were embedded within broader academic and enrollment strategies, the institution would benefit from a dedicated technology planning framework that more comprehensively addresses infrastructure, cybersecurity, enterprise systems, instructional technology, equipment lifecycle management, and long-term technology governance. As a result, the College is developing a new Technology Plan by the end of FY27 that will provide a more comprehensive structure for prioritizing technology investments and aligning technology resources with institutional goals.

Student Support Services Improvements

Beginning in FY2026, HTC expanded its Program Advancement process beyond academic programs to include student services departments. Through this process, these departments review performance indicators, such as student satisfaction data, operational challenges, staffing capacity, and strategic goals, to identify resource needs and support evidence-based planning and budgeting decisions.

OneStop reviews application conversion rates, call center performance, student interaction volumes, and service delivery trends as part of its annual assessment process. Despite sustained growth in student interactions and application conversions, the department identified staffing capacity as a significant constraint and recommended restoring staffing levels from six to seven navigators to maintain service quality, responsiveness, and student support. The OneStop report specifically notes that increasing demand, annual call volumes exceeding 19,000 contacts, and growing in-person traffic require additional staffing resources to sustain performance and prevent declines in service quality.

Similarly, Financial Aid Program Advancement data combine student satisfaction results, service delivery measures, and stakeholder feedback to identify operational challenges and improvement opportunities. Survey feedback highlighted concerns related to access, responsiveness, communication, and workload capacity, while the Program Advancement process requires departments to identify future strategies and college support needed to improve services and achieve Student Affairs goals. This expanded review process strengthens the College’s ability to align budgeting and resource allocation decisions with institutional priorities, student needs, and long-term strategic goals.

Sources

- 4.B.a Allocation Model
- 4.B.aa evaluations data
- 4.B.aa MinnState Policy Evaluations
- 4.B.aa Workday Pilot
- 4.B.b FY27 Allocation
- 4.B.bb CFP
- 4.B.bb Construction Electrician
- 4.B.bb facilities planning FY24-26
- 4.B.bb facilities planning
- 4.B.c Budget Requests
- 4.B.cc Simple Syllabus Contract
- 4.B.cc Technology Plan
- 4.B.d Student Consultation

- 4.B.dd OneStop PA
- 4.B.e Strategic Plan
- 4.B.ee FA PA
- 4.B.f CFI Trend Data
- 4.B.f MinnState audit
- 4.B.ff Program Health Analysis
- 4.B.g fall 2027 enrollment
- 4.B.g HTC Enrollment
- 4.B.gg department meeting minutes
- 4.B.h NextGen
- 4.B.i Workday Costs Higher
- 4.B.j MinnState audit supplement
- 4.B.j MinnState Staffing data
- 4.B.j Workshop Day March 26
- 4.B.j Workshop Day Nov 25
- 4.B.k FHIs HTC FY25
- 4.B.k response Letter to MinnState
- 4.B.l FY27 Town Hall
- 4.B.l MinnState Hiring Policies
- 4.B.l Workplace Culture
- 4.B.ll staff PD
- 4.B.m CBA
- 4.B.n AffAc Plan
- 4.B.o HR Eval policies
- 4.B.o PACE 2017
- 4.B.o PACE 2024
- 4.B.p HR Position-Management
- 4.B.q Cabinet Minutes
- 4.B.r PeopleAdmin Search
- 4.B.s HR Rating Grid
- 4.B.t Faculty Internship awards 2025
- 4.B.u Sabbatical GenEd
- 4.B.u Sabbatical Tech
- 4.B.uu Program Analysisi
- 4.B.v PD funding
- 4.B.v PD plan
- 4.B.w HTC PD policy 4htc1
- 4.B.ww Web Redesign RFP
- 4.B.x Discretionary Tuition Waiver
- 4.B.x MAPE tuition waiver
- 4.B.x MN statute eval
- 4.B.x MSCF PD Article 17
- 4.B.y staff PD
- 4.B.z Division Chair mentoring
- 4B19 faculty credentialing policies
- 4B28 Exec Team Sample Meeting Agenda
- 4B33 sample program advancemet report
- 4B34 Program Advancement Cycle

4.C Planning for Quality Improvement

The institution engages in systematic strategic planning for quality improvement. It relies on data, integrating its insights from enrollment forecasts, financial capacity, student learning assessment, institutional operations and the external environment.

Argument

Resource Alignment with Mission

HTC aligns resource allocation with its mission and strategic priorities through a structured planning and budgeting process that guides institutional decision-making. As a comprehensive, two-year public institution, HTC prioritizes instruction and student support as central to its mission. In FY2026, 44% of HTC's budget was allocated to instruction, 13% to academic support, and 14% to student support services—a total of 71% of employees serve in instructional or student support roles.

Strategic priorities are operationalized through the Academic and Student Affairs (ASA) plan and the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan, which identify program, staffing, equipment, and student support needs. These priorities are advanced through the annual budgeting process where all resource requests are evaluated based on their contribution to student success, closing equity gaps, workforce demand, and financial sustainability. Not all requests are funded; proposals are prioritized through a structured review process based on alignment with strategic goals, demonstrated need, and available institutional capacity, ensuring that resources are directed to initiatives with the greatest impact.

Applied consistently across the institution, this process ensures that resource allocation reflects strategic priorities across academic and operational units. Resource allocation decisions are made through cross-functional review involving cabinet-level leadership and divisional input, reinforcing alignment with institutional priorities.

The Construction Electrician diploma program illustrates this alignment in practice. Identified as a strategic priority through planning processes focused on managed program growth, the program advanced through coordinated operational and budget planning. A comprehensive proposal included staffing, equipment, enrollment projections, and student support needs, and funding was secured through a combination of institutional resources, system-supported equipment funds, and an attempted grant application. The program launched successfully in Fall 2025 and enrolled 24 students in its first cohort, filling the program with a waitlist. Early indicators show strong retention and a waitlist, as of May 2026, of 47 for the following year, demonstrating strong alignment between strategic priorities, resource investment, and workforce demand.

Institutional data informs key resource decisions. Enrollment trends, course success rates, retention and completion metrics, and program-level outcomes are reviewed through Institutional Research dashboards. When trend data identify areas of opportunity or constraint—such as enrollment shifts, equity gaps, or program capacity limitations—the college adjusts resource allocation, including reallocating funds, investing in updated

instructional equipment, and expanding student support services.

An additional collaborative example can be seen in the renovation of the Dental Assisting program. Sustained enrollment demand, program waitlists, and workforce shortages provided the rationale for HTC to secure a $1 million grant from Delta Dental to expand and modernize program facilities. This investment doubled program capacity, reducing waitlists and resulting in a 51% increase in enrollment over three years, illustrating how the college aligns external funding, institutional planning, and resource allocation to improve student access and respond to workforce needs.

Integrated Planning, Assessment, and Budgeting

HTC aligns strategic planning, assessment, and budgeting so that evidence of student learning, program performance, and institutional outcomes directly informs decision-making and resource allocation. This integrated process is applied consistently across the institution through defined annual and multi-year planning cycles, ensuring that all academic programs and operational units participate in assessment, planning, and resource allocation. Strategic priorities guide operational plans. Program review identifies needs and opportunities; and resource requests are evaluated through the budgeting process. Funded initiatives are implemented and assessed, forming a continuous cycle of improvement.

Program Advancement, the college's academic program review process, serves as the primary mechanism for integrating assessment, planning, and resource allocation. Operating on a structured three-year cycle, the process evaluates student learning outcomes, enrollment trends, retention and completion rates, financial sustainability, and alignment with institutional strategic goals. All academic programs complete Program Advancement on a structured three-year cycle, with annual updates (2024, 2025) that document assessment results, planned improvements, and resource needs. Faculty and academic leaders use these data to develop multi-year work plans that translate directly into resource requests through the budgeting process. This process is illustrated by Medium Heavy Truck Technology (MHTT). MHTT Program Advancement identified constraints related to equipment funding and supply budgets, which informed institutional prioritization and subsequent budget increases. These investments enabled the purchase of a new truck and mobile lifts, improving lab capacity and supporting student learning.

Assessment results drive improvements in curriculum, program design, and operational efficiency across programs. In Cabinetmaking, program data and advisory input informed curriculum updates and targeted professional development to address equity gaps. In Culinary Arts, program review findings led to schedule redesign, cost-reduction strategies, and equipment investments. In MHTT, analysis of enrollment, completion, and workforce trends informed strategies to improve program awards and resource utilization. As a result:

- Cabinetmaking retention improved from 33% in 2023 to 57.1% in 2024 among Students of Color
- Culinary A–C success rates increased from 80.5% in 2023 to 84.59% in 2025, while cost per FYE decreased by 43.44%.
- MHTT enrollment grew from 1339 credits in 2024 to 1641 in 2025.

Planning priorities identified through Program Advancement and operational planning are systematically incorporated into the college's budgeting process. Budget decisions reflect

core priorities through targeted allocation and reallocation of resources to support program development, instructional technology, equipment, and staffing. Examples include investments in equipment modernization for Automotive Technology and additional staffing to support student learning and program delivery in Landscaping. Students also engage in and provide feedback to the college's budgeting process. All resource requests are developed based on documented assessment findings and evaluated through structured review processes that consider alignment with strategic goals, student success outcomes, institutional capacity, and financial sustainability.

Inclusive and Institution-Wide Planning

HTC engages faculty, staff, administrators, students, and external partners in planning processes to ensure that institutional priorities reflect diverse perspectives and workforce needs. These engagement processes occur systematically during strategic planning cycles and ongoing operational planning, ensuring that input from internal and external stakeholders consistently informs institutional decision-making.

The development of the 2025–2030 strategic plan demonstrates this inclusive approach. Stakeholders participated through structured engagement processes, including college-wide in-service sessions and campus-wide forums and feedback opportunities. Feedback was collected, analyzed, and incorporated into the development of strategic priorities, goals, and performance measures, resulting in a plan that reflects institutional priorities and regional workforce needs.

Embedded in ongoing institutional processes, inclusive planning at HTC extends beyond strategic plan development. Faculty, staff, and administrators participate in planning and decision-making through shared governance structures, committees, and leadership teams (see Core Component 4.A), contributing to accreditation planning and accreditation alignment, program development, assessment review, and resource prioritization. These structures ensure that planning is collaborative and continuously informed by institutional expertise.

External stakeholders are engaged through program-level advisory committees, which include industry representatives, employers, faculty, and students. These committees meet regularly to review program performance, provide input on curriculum and equipment needs, identify emerging workforce trends, and support internship opportunities, ensuring that programs remain aligned with industry expectations.

HTC reinforces accountability by using stakeholder input to inform decisions and actions. During the annual Advisory Dinner, the college reports on program improvements and institutional changes resulting from advisory input, strengthening ongoing engagement and ensuring that stakeholder participation results in meaningful institutional outcomes.

Planning Informed by Institutional Capacity

HTC grounds its planning and resource allocation decisions in a comprehensive analysis of institutional capacity, including enrollment trends, financial resources, staffing, and facilities. Enrollment projections developed by our institutional research office inform growth, scheduling, and revenue expectations. Financial analysis, including multi-year budget projections and ongoing monitoring of expenditures, supports sustainable decision-making and alignment between institutional priorities and available resources.

External funding from the HTC Foundation plays a critical role in advancing the college's strategic mission of providing accessible, career-focused education that leads to employment and economic mobility. As documented in the 2025 Foundation Annual Report, donor support directly reduces financial barriers and strengthens student success through targeted investments. For students facing unexpected hardships, $383,500 in scholarships was awarded to 341 students, including $30,000 in emergency crisis grants. In addition,

Beyond direct student aid, external funding also enhances program quality and workforce alignment. Over $1.4 million of in-kind donations provide industry-standard equipment and technology to prepare students for high-demand careers. Together, these investments demonstrate how Foundation support not only increases access and completion but also strengthens the college's ability to meet regional workforce needs, fully aligning philanthropic contributions with the institution's mission and strategic priorities.

HTC also monitors cost efficiency as part of its planning process, including instructional staffing ratios (FYE/FTE) to ensure that resources are used effectively and aligned with program demand. From 2022 to 2024, FYE/FTE increased from15.1 to 17.4, reflecting ongoing efforts to improve instructional efficiency while maintaining program quality. Programs are expanded only when staffing, space, and equipment are sufficient to support projected enrollment, ensuring that growth is intentional and sustainable.

The HVAC program provides an example of capacity-informed planning in practice. Analysis of enrollment trends identified sustained demand, with the program consistently operating at capacity and maintaining waitlists. Data revealed constraints related to lab space, equipment availability, and instructional staffing. In response, HTC aligned resource allocation to address the constraints before expanding enrollment. Through external funding, the college expanded lab space, upgraded equipment, and adjusted staffing and scheduling to support program growth. Informed by SEM projections, institutional research data, and program-level analysis, alignment between demand and capacity enhances student success. Since 2022, HVAC enrollment has increased from 245 to 360 (32%), waitlists have decreased, and student success rates have been maintained.

Responsiveness to External Conditions

HTC incorporates environmental scanning into planning processes to ensure that institutional priorities and program development reflect evolving workforce needs, economic conditions, and student demand. Since 2022, HTC has added 34 new awards in high-demand fields, including some new programs such as Construction Electrician Diploma, Human Resource Management AAS Degree, and Data Center Administration AAS Degree—based on labor market data, advisory input, and regional workforce needs. Enrollment has also increased in existing high-demand programs , reflecting alignment between program offerings and workforce demand. Labor market data, regional economic trends, demographic analysis, and input from industry advisory committees are systematically reviewed and integrated into program planning and Program Advancement processes, ensuring that external conditions consistently inform institutional decision-making.

HTC aligns facilities, technology, and instructional practices to evolving industry standards and student needs. The college supports faculty participation in industry-based internships to increase current technical knowledge and instructional relevance. Programs

have expanded blended and hybrid course delivery options in response to changing student preferences, increasing enrollment in these modalities from 9,592 in 2022 to 14,126 in 2026. HTC has also expanded dual enrollment opportunities, increasing participation from 307 FYE in 2023 to 367 FYE in 2026. In addition, programs leverage federal Carl Perkins funding to support technology innovation, increasing investment from $96,774 in 2024 to $179,133 in 2025.

The Construction Electrician program provides a clear example of institutional responsiveness. Electrician labor market analysis identified electricians as a high-demand occupation, and advisory input informed program design and curriculum development. The program was aligned with state regulatory requirements and industry standards and supported through coordinated operational planning and resource allocation, described above.

Using labor market analysis, HTC modifies or discontinues programs when external conditions indicate limited sustainability. After declining enrollment and reduced industry demand, the Plastics program was evaluated through Program Advancement and ultimately closed following efforts to improve viability. This decision demonstrates the college's commitment to aligning program offerings with workforce demand and institutional capacity.

Continuous Improvement and Implementation

HTC implements its planning processes to drive continuous improvement in student learning, program quality, and institutional effectiveness. Improvement efforts are embedded across the institution through structured assessment, program review, and institutional effectiveness processes that operate on defined annual and multi-year cycles.

At the instructional level, faculty engage in a systematic closing the loop process that connects assessment, curriculum, and pedagogy. Faculty evaluate student achievement of learning outcomes, assess the effectiveness of instructional strategies, and implement changes to course design and program outcomes. Supported through classroom observations, self-evaluation, and professional development, these efforts ensure that instructional improvement is ongoing and evidence-based.

At the program level, Program Advancement serves as the primary mechanism for continuous improvement. Programs analyze enrollment, retention, completion, cost, and labor market data to identify strengths and areas for improvement and develop multi-year work plans with measurable goals. Annual updates and administrative review ensure that progress is monitored and aligned with institutional priorities.

The Medium Heavy Truck Technology (MHTT) program demonstrates sustained improvement through this process. 2021 MHTT program advancement identified inconsistent retention rates, including a low of 41.2%. In response, faculty implemented enhanced advising strategies and strengthened student support systems. Subsequent analysis in 2024 shows retention improving to 79%, demonstrating the effectiveness of the intervention. Assessment of student learning outcomes in the MHTT program showed improvement from 73% to 100% in student mastery of key competencies following instructional changes. The program updated curriculum to include advanced diagnostics, electric vehicle training, and industry-recognized certifications, while continuing to monitor award completion trends.

Across multiple program advancement cycles (2021 and 2024), the MHTT program has used both course-level and program-level outcomes data to drive improvements. For example, faculty identified that several electrical courses—specifically MHTT 1011, 1015, and 1501—consistently had the highest failure rates, largely due to the math skills required in those courses. In response to this outcomes data, the program implemented targeted changes, including revising course content, modifying instructional methods, reassessing learning objectives, and exploring the addition of prerequisites to better prepare students.

A second, program-level example appears in the MHTT work plan: faculty identified that students were not completing general education requirements, negatively impacting graduation rates. As a result, the program committed to assessing and modifying general education requirements for the diploma pathways to better align with student needs and improve completion outcomes.

Institutional process improvements further demonstrate HTC's commitment to continuous improvement. Analysis of institutional data identified students at risk of being dropped for non-payment. In response, the college implemented a coordinated, multi-channel outreach strategy supported by daily data monitoring and cross-functional collaboration. This intervention reduced final drops from approximately 800 at-risk students to fewer than 50 per term, representing a reduction of over 90 percent. Systematic improvements monitored closely through this collaboration resulted in student retention.

Sources

- 4.C.a student input on budgets
- 4.C.aa LNDC watering assistant
- 4.C.aaa CELE job data
- 4.C.b budget allocation
- 4.C.b org chart allocation
- 4.C.bb Strategic Planning Process
- 4.C.bbb CELE advisory
- 4.C.c Academic and Student Affairs Plan 2025-2030_Final 4
- 4.C.ccc MN DLI CELE
- 4.C.d SEM & Persitence 2025-2030
- 4.C.dd strategic plan sessions
- 4.C.e Budget Request Form
- 4.C.ee Campus Input Matrix
- 4.C.ee Results of Faculty HLC Activity
- 4.C.ee Strategic Plan Feedback
- 4.C.eee Plastics program adv
- 4.C.ff advisory equipment
- 4.C.fff plastics closure
- 4.C.g Allocation
- 4.C.gg Auto Body Advisory Meeting
- 4.C.ggg Closing the Loop slide
- 4.C.hh ATEC Advisory internships
- 4.C.hhh monintoring
- 4.C.i Electrician program launch plan
- 4.C.ii advisory dinner

- 4.C.iii MHTT 2021 gen ed
- 4.C.iii MHTT 2021
- 4.C.j CELE budget
- 4.C.j Lowe's Foundation Gable Grants Final Submission 2025
- 4.C.jj enrollment projections
- 4.C.k CELE wait list FY27
- 4.C.kkk MHTT assessment
- 4.C.l Power BI
- 4.C.ll Foundation Report
- 4.C.lll tuition drop improvements
- 4.C.m budget adjustment FY26
- 4.C.n Delta Dental news
- 4.C.o Dental Assisting data
- 4.C.oo HVAC PA
- 4.C.p integrated planning
- 4.C.pp CNP grant agreement
- 4.C.pp HVAC CenterPoint
- 4.C.q Program Advancement Cycle 2026-2028
- 4.C.q program advancement reports
- 4.C.qq HVAC success rates
- 4.C.r PA 100 2024
- 4.C.r PA 100 2025
- 4.C.s MHTT Curricular changes
- 4.C.s MHTT PA
- 4.C.ss new programs
- 4.C.t MHTT Budgets FY24 26
- 4.C.tt Enrollment increase in High demand programs
- 4.C.u CBTG retention equity
- 4.C.v CULA cost per FYE
- 4.C.vv Faculty summer internships
- 4.C.w MHTT data from DA
- 4.C.ww blended hybrid
- 4.C.xx PSEO increases 23-26
- 4.C.z ATEC EV Prgram Adv
- 4.C.zz Perkins Equip funding

Criterion 4 - Summary

The institution’s resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Argument

The Criterion 4 narrative demonstrates that Hennepin Technical College has established an integrated framework of governance, planning, assessment, and resource stewardship that enables the institution to fulfill its mission, sustain educational quality, and respond effectively to changing internal and external conditions. Administrative structures support transparent decision-making, shared governance, and meaningful engagement with faculty, staff, students, and community partners. Throughout the institution, data-informed planning and collaborative processes ensure

that strategic priorities are translated into operational decisions, resource allocation, and measurable improvements.

HTC systematically aligns financial, human, technological, and physical resources with its mission and strategic goals through comprehensive planning and continuous evaluation. Institutional data—including enrollment trends, student success outcomes, labor market information, financial indicators, and program performance—are routinely analyzed to guide budgeting, staffing, facilities development, technology investments, and academic program expansion. The college has also demonstrated the capacity to respond proactively to emerging challenges by using evidence to strengthen financial practices, improve operational efficiency, diversify revenue sources, and preserve student access and educational quality during periods of organizational change.

Continuous improvement is embedded throughout institutional operations. Strategic planning, Program Advancement, assessment, and annual operational planning create an integrated cycle in which evidence informs decisions, resources support identified priorities, and outcomes are evaluated to guide future action. This systematic approach has enabled HTC to expand high-demand academic programs, strengthen student support services, modernize facilities and technology, improve workforce responsiveness, and enhance organizational effectiveness while maintaining a strong commitment to accountability and transparency.

Collectively, the evidence demonstrates that HTC's governance structures, planning processes, and resource management practices are intentionally integrated to promote institutional effectiveness and long-term sustainability. By aligning assessment, planning, and responsible stewardship, the college is well positioned to respond to future opportunities and challenges while continuing to advance student success, workforce development, and fulfillment of its mission.

Sources

There are no sources.