



HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION

230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500
Chicago, IL 60604-1411
312.263.0456 | 800.621.7440
Fax: 312.263.7462 | hlcommission.org

December 11, 2019

Dr. Lenny Klaver
President
North Central Missouri College
1301 Main St.
Trenton, MO 64683

Dear President Klaver:

Attached is a copy of the Multi-Location Visit Report completed following the visit to North Central Missouri College. As detailed in the report, the pattern of operations at the locations appears to be adequate and no further review or monitoring is necessary.

Within the Multi-Location Visit Report, you will find brief comments on the instructional oversight, academic services, student services, facilities, marketing and recruitment information and adequacy of assessment of student performance. Please consider these comments as advice for continued improvement of the additional locations.

Per HLC policy, completion of these visits and fulfillment of the requirement will be noted in your institution's history record and the completed report will be included in your institution's permanent file.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the Multi-Location Visit or the attached report, please contact Pat Newton-Curran (pnewton@hlcommission.org).

Sincerely,

Higher Learning Commission



Multi-Location Visit Peer Review Report

Institution: Northwest Central Missouri College

Additional Locations Visited:

| Location Name | Location Address (<i>street, city, state and ZIP code</i>) | Date Reviewed |
|----------------------------|--|-----------------|
| North Belt Center | 6503 North Belt Highway, Country Club, MO. 64506 | 17 October 2019 |
| Northwest Technical Center | 1515 S Munn, Maryville, MO 64468 | 17 October 2019 |
| | | |

Peer Reviewer

Name: James B. Martin

Institution: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College Title: Dean of Academics

Instructions

In order to document effective administrative systems for managing multiple additional locations, please complete the following. For each item, check **adequate** or **attention needed**, and indicate in Comments the institution's strengths and/or opportunities for improvement in controlling and delivering degree programs off-campus. If comments pertain to a specific location, they should be included along with the identity of that location.

Submit the completed report as a PDF file at hlcommission.org/upload. Select "Final Reports" from the list of submission options to ensure the institution's materials are sent to the correct HLC staff member. The report is due within 30 days after the last additional location is visited.

Overview Statement

Provide information about current additional locations and the institution's general approach to off-campus instruction. Describe the growth pattern at the institution since the last review of off-campus instruction. Provide information about the involvement of external organizations or other higher education institutions.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box:

☒ Adequate

☐ Attention Needed

Comments:

North Central Missouri College (NCMC) offers many of its courses and programs online to serve students who cannot attend classes at the main campus in Trenton. On the other hand, certain coursework is not appropriate for online delivery, and they recently committed to expand access to on ground classes in the western portion of their service area.

NCMC currently offers programs at four locations other than its main campus in Trenton, Missouri. The Barton Farm campus at 96 SE 8th Ave, Trenton MO 64683 is a learning environment tailored to agriculture programming (an A.A.S. degree and four certificates) and industrial technology programs (one A.A.S. and three certificates).

The North Central Career Center at 3400 Bulldog Avenue in Bethany, Missouri 64424 provides space for evening-weekend practical nursing (PN) certificate program.

They rent space at the Northwest Technical School at 1515 S Munn Ave in Maryville, Missouri 64468 where they offer the Associate Degree in Nursing and the Practical Nursing certificate.

The North Belt Center in Andrew County is their fourth location at 6503 North Belt Hwy, Country Club MO 64506. At North Belt, they offer the Associate in Arts and four A.A.S. degrees (Behavioral Health Support, Business, Early Childhood, and Industrial Technology) as well as four certificates: Agriculture Business, Manufacturing Skills, Industrial Maintenance Skills, and Industrial Technology.

Institutional Planning

What evidence demonstrates that the institution effectively plans for growth and maintenance of additional locations? Identify whether the institution has adequate controls in place to ensure that information presented to students is adequate. Describe whether the financial planning and budgeting process has proven effective at additional locations.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box:

☒ Adequate

☐ Attention Needed

Comments:

All the institution's current locations were either custom-built or remodeled for their use, ensuring that they meet the needs of students and curriculum. They project expected class sizes and work with faculty and advisory boards to anticipate laboratory or other special facility needs. During my conversation with the VPAA, he shared an example where they had examined taking over an unused portion of the Andrew County facility for a specific program, but after a thorough analysis determined that it was not in the best interests of the institution or its student body and chose to take a different path.

When planning a new location, NCMC leadership has a set of questions they require to be answered, focused on which services will be offered in which modality (online, main campus, or at a satellite location). They require that planning process to address funding and staffing for the academic programming and any other needed support services. They recently moved to projecting budgets out three years, with a requirement to review all budgets annually. They monitor performance against budget on a monthly basis and make necessary adjustments in the year of execution. The VPAA noted to the reviewer that they recently began to estimate resources needed on the high side, to allow a buffer for surprises. Funding and staffing at all locations has remained relatively stable over the last several years, other than the opening of the Andrew County location in 2018.

At the two locations visited, the institution had an adequate level of senior supervision in place to ensure students were getting accurate information and receiving the necessary support services. The Northwest Technical Center location has a program director who reports to the Dean of Instruction on the main campus and the Dean of Extended Campus offices at the North Belt Center for oversight purposes,.

Facilities

What evidence demonstrates that the facilities at the additional locations meet the needs of the students and the curriculum? Consider, in particular, classrooms and laboratories (size, maintenance, temperature, etc.); faculty and administrative offices (site, visibility, privacy for meetings, etc.); parking or access to public transit; bookstore or text purchasing services; security; handicapped access; and other (food or snack services, study and meeting areas, etc.)

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box:

☒ Adequate

☐ Attention Needed

Comments:

Both sites were well lit and obviously well maintained. Environment considerations at both sides were being well monitored by the institution, with temperature and humidity levels appropriate for their purpose.

The Northwest Technical Center (3600 square feet of instruction area) is a component of larger high school technical teaching center, providing classrooms and adequate break areas for the students in the nursing programs. Classroom facilities here were large with adequate seating and desk space for the class the reviewer visited. Computer support for instruction was available in each classroom. The laboratory facilities were clean and well lit, with what appeared to be new and up to date beds and medical dummies for students to practice upon. Other equipment was in the process of being replaced with newer versions to improve student performance and provide the best possible environment. Faculty noted that the Dean had been specifically working to provide them improved equipment. Office space for preparation and counseling with students was appropriate for its purposes.

The North Belt Center (1800 square feet of instruction area) had two classrooms and a computer lab for student use. The classrooms were of adequate size and the layout was appropriate to their purpose. All areas of the facility were adequately lit and well maintained. Computer support for instruction was available in each classroom. The only thing missing was some sort of break area or food/drink machine for the students. A discussion with the Dean of Extended Campus indicated that space was an issue for

the break room and that they had previously had food/drink machines, but the vendor removed them because they were not used enough to break even. The reviewer noted this as an issue that they should reexamine. The facility is clean and neat, but it is quite small for its purpose. It lacks the space at the Northwest Technical Center and everything feels a bit tight. It only supports 93 students, so some things such as the food/drink will continue to be a challenge for institution to adequately address just based on volume.

Instructional Oversight

What evidence demonstrates that the institution effectively oversees instruction at the additional locations? Consider, in particular, consistency of curricular expectations and policies, availability of courses needed for program and graduation requirements, faculty qualifications, performance of instructional duties, availability of faculty to students, orientation of faculty/professional development, attention to student concerns.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box:

☒ Adequate

☐ Attention Needed

Comments:

Discussions with the faculty and administrators indicated that students at these two sites had their program offerings available to them and most students finished their general education requirements in the online modality. Some did travel to the main campus to complete occasional general education courses. The reviewer's interview with students revealed students who were satisfied with the curricular offerings and glad they did not have to travel to main campus to complete the programs. They seemed very happy with the availability of courses and the facilities. The students interviewed indicated that curricular expectations and policies were consistent with what they expected and had been promised. One student had some questions about financial aid policies, but her classmates did not see this as an overall problem at the institution. The students were satisfied with the availability of faculty at both sites, though the North Belt Center did not have any faculty housed there. In spite of that, students indicated they had access to their faculty and were appreciative of the overall quality of the instruction and their faculty's qualifications. The Northwest Technical Center had adequate faculty housed there, with the reviewer having the opportunity to interview four of them. Student at both sites were complimentary about the attention to student concerns paid by the administrators and faculty at their locations.

Institutional Staffing and Faculty Support

What evidence demonstrates that the institution has appropriately qualified and sufficient staff and faculty in place for the location, and that the institution supports and evaluates personnel at off-campus locations? Consider the processes in place for selecting, training, and orienting faculty at the location.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box:

☒ Adequate

☐ Attention Needed

Comments:

Faculty that teach at these two locations are selected by the main campus departments to which they are aligned. The Dean of instruction was repeatedly mentioned at the Northwest Technical Center by the full time faculty and he is obviously deeply involved in the instruction there. All faculty at this location meet HLC requirements for faculty qualifications. While their instructional location is away from the main campus, it is obvious there is strong connection back to their home department. The North Belt Center lacks full time faculty housed there, but the instructional needs are met by either full time faculty coming from main campus or adjuncts hired to teach locally. This center had a detailed Adjunct Instructor Orientation handbook intended to provide adjunct instructors, once hired by the main campus departments, the necessary information about instructional policies and support requirements. The Dean of Extended Campus, housed at North Belt Center, bears responsibility for orienting faculty at that location and appears to have a solid program in place.

Student Support

What evidence demonstrates that the institution delivers, supports, and manages necessary student services at the additional locations? Consider, in particular, the level of student access (in person, by computer, by phone, etc.) to academic advising/placement, remedial/tutorial services, and library materials/services. Also, consider the level of access to admissions, registration/student records, financial aid, and job placement services, as well as attention to student concerns.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box:

☒ Adequate

☐ Attention Needed

Comments:

While neither location has all the support services onsite, students indicated that the online and phone services provided by College meet their needs. One student had a recurring issue with financial aid, but her classmates did not support the idea that this was a systemic problem. All students were satisfied with their library access to the main campus and their access to advising/placement. Both locations had full time administrators onsite to deal with student concerns and the interviews confirmed that students were comfortable with how any concerns were handled if they were raised.

Evaluation and Assessment

What evidence demonstrates that the institution measures, documents, and analyzes student academic performance sufficiently to maintain academic quality at the additional locations? How are measures and techniques employed at a location equivalent to those for assessment and evaluation on the main campus? Consider, in particular, the setting of measurable learning objectives, the actual measurement of performance, and the analysis and use of assessment data to maintain/improve quality.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box:

☒ Adequate

☐ Attention Needed

Comments:

The assessment and evaluation systems used at these two locations were the same as used in the similar courses offered on main campus. The system is a mixture of direct measures examining student learning against learning outcomes and indirect survey measurement asking for student opinions on their academic programs. The close oversight of the two deans appears to provide strong continuity with the academic processes on main campus. Programs at these locations are subject to the same recurring program review as their main campus counterparts. The reviewer specifically discussed measures of performance with the nursing faculty at the Northwest Technical Center, who proudly provided data that shows their first time National Examinations pass rate is at 92% for the RN and ADN programs. The direct assessment measures used at the Northwest Technical Center displayed an excellent assessment structure and obviously was providing students with effective measures of their performance and a confidence that they were learning what was needed for the professional aspects of their future careers.

Continuous Improvement

What evidence demonstrates that the institution encourages and ensures continuous quality improvement at its additional locations? Consider in particular the institution's planning and evaluation processes that ensure regular review and improvement of additional locations and ensure alignment of additional locations with the mission and goals of the institution as a whole.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box:

☒ Adequate

☐ Attention Needed

Comments:

Relative to its size, the institution appears to have a number of programs intended to provide continuous improvement opportunities on main campus and the locations specific to this review. The regular program review processes include the off campus locations and, along with the College's strategic planning processes and strategic enrollment plan, provide ample evidence that the institution is continuing to strive for quality improvement. A specific example was the College's analysis of an opportunity to expand the Andrews County site, though the analysis revealed that it was not the right move at the time, the institution was looking for ways to improve their offerings to students.

Marketing and Recruiting Information

What evidence confirms that the information presented to students in advertising, brochures, and other communications is accurate?

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box:

☒ Adequate

☐ Attention Needed

Comments:

The institution appears to be consistent in its offerings in comparison to its marketing and recruiting literature. Discussions with students indicated their confidence in the advertising and communication they experienced with the College and were unanimously supportive of the accuracy of materials provided to the public. Much of this institution’s recruitment occurs through word of mouth, as the VPAA shared that the entire advertising budget for the institution was \$40,000 annually. In spite of this restriction, the North Belt Center was operating at nearly 100 students, which was a slight decline, but the Northwest Technical Center nursing programs were operating at full capacity with a total of 69 nursing students enrolled.

Summary Recommendation

Select one of the following statements. Include, as appropriate, a summary of findings.

- ☒ Overall, the pattern of this institution’s operations at its additional locations appears to be adequate, and no further review or monitoring by the Higher Learning Commission is necessary.
- ☐ Overall, the pattern of this institution’s operations at its additional locations needs some attention as defined in this report. The institution can be expected to follow up on these matters without monitoring by the Higher Learning Commission. The next scheduled comprehensive review can serve to document that the matters identified have been addressed. **[Identify specific areas needing organizational attention.]**
- ☐ The overall pattern of this institution’s operations at its additional locations is inadequate and requires attention from the Higher Learning Commission. **[Identify the specific concerns and provide a recommendation for HLC follow-up monitoring.]**

Summary of Findings:

While these two locations were both relatively small, they appear to be well run and provide a quality education to the students enrolled. Interviews with students at both locations revealed a content group of undergraduates who believed the institution was meeting their education needs and generally just had smiles on their faces. This was a refreshing visit with happy students and faculty and no discernible problems beyond food/drink machines at the North Belt Center. With that being the biggest problem the reviewer found, the institution should be commended for the support they provide their students.

Notification Program for Additional Locations Approval Form

Complete this form **only** if an institution has been granted access to the Notification Program for Additional Locations. The Institutional Status and Requirements Report for the institution will indicate whether the institution has access to the Program under “Location Stipulation.”

| | |
|--|---|
| The institution has been accredited by HLC for at least 10 consecutive years with no record of any action during that period for sanction or show-cause. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|--|---|

| | |
|---|---|
| HLC has not required monitoring of issues related to the quality of instruction or to the oversight of existing additional locations or campuses in the past 10 years. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| The institution has demonstrated success in overseeing at least three locations. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| The institution has no other HLC or other legal restrictions on additional locations and/or programs offered off campus. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| The institution has appropriate systems to ensure quality control of locations that include clearly identified academic controls; regular evaluation by the institution of its locations; a pattern of adequate faculty, facilities, resources and academic/support systems; financial stability; and long-range planning for future expansion. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |