4.1

Student achievement

The institution evaluates success with respect to student achievement consistent with its mission. Criteria may include enrollment data; retention, graduation, course completion, and job placement rates; state licensing examinations; student portfolios; or other means of demonstrating achievement of goals.

Judgment

☑ Compliance  ☐ Partial Compliance  ☐ Non-Compliance  ☐ Not Applicable

Narrative

Piedmont Technical College (PTC) evaluates success with respect to student achievement consistent with its Mission and Mission Goals and is compliant with this federal requirement. Specifically the following Mission Goals address the relationship of student achievement data to the College's Mission.

Mission Goal 1:
"The college will play a critical role in improving the lives of its stakeholders by ensuring widespread access to our educational services; by promoting excellence in teaching and learning; and by providing responsive enrollment and student services to ensure that our students are well-positioned for success in associate degrees, diplomas, and certificates in career and technical fields; and in university transfer."

Mission Goal 3:
"Use data and assessment results to make well-informed academic and operational decisions and to provide professional development opportunities regarding the continuous improvement of the College's financial and physical resources."

Identification of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Student Achievement

During the development of the PTC 2015-2018 Strategic Plan, Pathways to Success, the college leadership supported the development of key performance indicators (KPIs) to track student achievement and other institutional priorities related to mission. At the same time, an institutional scorecard was developed as the vehicle to communicate these KPIs and to document institution progress toward their achievement. The KPIs are organized on the scorecard with the categories specific to student achievement being Student Success and Workforce Development. Between the two categories, six KPIs were identified to be strategically addressed and monitored. Each of the following KPIs is measured at both the college and program level:

Student Success

- Fall to Fall Retention
- Fall to Spring Persistence
- Graduate Awards
- Graduates (unduplicated)

Workforce Development

- Licensure Pass Rate
- Placement Rate

Benchmarks, Targets, and Peer Comparisons

Benchmarks for each KPI were established by averaging the most recent three years of college performance data available in 2015. Additionally, the colleges within the South Carolina Technical College System (SCTCS) were chosen as peers for further bench-marking and comparison. The SCTCS identified five Academic Success and Performance measures that are tied to annual performance funding allocations. Three of the above Student Achievement KPIs are also an annual performance measure and are noted as a SCTCS Academic Success and Performance Funding Measure on the applicable KPI. PTC establishes annual targets utilizing the PTC benchmark data, trend data from peers and state performance targets when applicable. This process assures the appropriateness of the established targets.
Institutional Scorecard
The scorecard initially presents the latest KPI outcome and a trend line showing the outcomes for several years. Each outcome is compared against the target with progress reflected in color coded symbols. The following examples are of the student achievement KPIs under Student Success.

Figure 1. Student Success KPIs

- Fall to Fall Retention Rate 49%
- Fall to Spring Persistence Rate 74.5%
- Graduate Awards 1,119
- Graduates Unduplicated 944

From each KPI, the user can drill into the historical achievement of targets, the ranking among peer institutions, and the performance trend data. It is also possible to view notes on how the KPI is measured and if the KPI is one of the SCTCS Academic Success and Performance measurements. Following is the drill down for the Fall to Fall Retention KPI:

Figure 2. Fall to Fall Retention Drill Down
The benchmarks, annual targets, and peer comparisons discussed above are shown in Figure 2. In addition, notes are provided to further explain the data presented. Further, the scorecard provides drill down capabilities into dashboards and reports. These dashboards and reports are noted at the bottom of the figure. This provides deans, department heads, and academic program directors the data needed to measure KPIs at the program level. Each KPI is updated annually as data is released. The PTC Institutional Scorecard is available to all PTC employees.

To provide more intentional focus on improvement of student achievement at the program level, an Annual Program Performance Review (APPR) was established in summer 2016 (piloted as the Interim Program Review). For this annual review, five of the college-level KPIs were identified: annual enrollment, fall to spring persistence, fall to fall retention, unduplicated graduates, and placement rates. Four of the five are student achievement KPIs. For the APPR, there were seven thresholds established to include annual and three-year rolling averages for persistence and retention measures. Each program's achievement data on these KPIs were shared with the deans, department heads, and academic program directors. Programs that did not meet at least four of the seven thresholds were required to go through an in-depth data analysis and create action plans for improvement. Licensure rates were addressed when applicable. An example action plan is provided for the General Engineering Associate Degree Program.

**Student Success Key Performance Indicators**

The four student achievement KPIs under the category of Student Success on the institutional scorecard are outlined below. A
drill down for each of the scorecard KPIs is presented as follows:

**Fall to Fall Retention** measures the credential-seeking students (less graduates) who were enrolled in the fall and returned the following fall semester. The latest outcome of 49 percent for fall 2015 to fall 2016 did not meet the established target of 51 percent. The college has maintained a 49 percent retention rate for two consecutive years.

**Fall to Spring Persistence** measures the credential-seeking students (less graduates) who were enrolled in fall and returned in the following spring semester. This KPI is also a SCTCS Academic Success and Performance Funding measure with a target of 71 percent. The most recent outcome of 74.5 percent did not meet the College's established target of 76 percent for fall 2015 to spring 2016 but did exceed the SCTCS target of 71 percent.

To provide further insight to the declining retention and persistence rates, a College Retention Dashboard was developed to provide the deans, department heads, and academic program directors the ability to analyze student retention and persistence by program, students attributes, and location of instruction.

**Graduate Awards** is a count of all awards earned by students within the three-semester measurement period. Each award is counted for students who are awarded multiple awards within the measurement period. For the 2015-16 reporting period, the college established a target to increase awards by 10 percent. While that exact increase was not met, the number of awards did increase by 9.7 percent, which was a difference of just three awards.

**Number of Graduates** is an unduplicated count of graduates who earned a certificate, diploma, or associate degree within the three-semester measurement period. Regardless of the number of awards the graduate may earn during the measurement period, the graduate is counted only once. For 2015-16, the target was to increase the number who graduated by 50 over the 2014-15 year. That target was exceeded by 37 more graduates. In total, the number of students who graduated increased by 87 students.

**Workforce Development Key Performance Indicators**
The two student achievement KPIs under the category of Workforce Development on the institutional scorecard are outlined below. A drill down for each of the scorecard KPIs is presented as follows:

**Licensure Pass Rate** for first-time testers are monitored for the nursing programs, several health programs and the Funeral Service Associate Degree program. These rates are monitored and reviewed at the program level and as an overall rate for the college. This KPI is also a SCTCS Academic Success and Performance Funding measurement with a target of 80 percent. For the latest reporting period, the college's licensure rate was 88.3 percent, exceeding the target of 86 percent.

**Placement Rates** are calculated using a defined process and methodology established by SCTCS. This KPI is also a SCTCS Academic Success and Performance Funding measure with the state target set at 80 percent. For the 2016 reporting period, the college established a target of 88 percent and exceeded the target by 0.5 percent.

**Summary**
Based on mission goals, PTC identified measurements to assess student achievement in multiple ways. The institutional scorecard is the platform to assure widespread communication of these measures which have been established as KPIs. The college establishes annual targets and measures the extent to which the targets are achieved and communicates these outcomes. These Student Achievement KPI outcomes are provided at the academic program level for action. The focus on student achievement and use of results have been assimilated into the Institutional Effectiveness processes as demonstrated in Core Requirement 2.5 Institutional Effectiveness. This is further evidenced by the Annual Program Performance Review (APPR) process which assures that KPIs are reviewed at the program level. PTC shares with the public data related to student achievement on its web site.

**Sources** (In Order of Appearance)

- PTC Vision and Mission Statement, Mission Goals, and Values
- Scorecard
- Example SCTCS Performance Funding Measure
- Example Achievement of Annual Target
- Example Peer Data
Example Trend Data
Fall to Fall KPI Definition
Program Dashboard Example Criminal Justice
Graduates and Awards Report Business Division
Division Dashboard Example Business
Annual Academic Program Performance KPI Report
2016 Interim Program Review Report General Engineering
Fall to Fall Retention Target Achievement
Fall to Spring Persistence
Persistence and Retention Dashboard
Persistence and Retention of First Time Students Example
Persistence and Retention Campus Example
Awards of Graduates Target and Trend
Graduate Target Achievement
Licensure Target Achievement
Placement Rate KPI
Student Achievement Data Screen Capture