



Open Pathway Quality Initiative Proposal

Institutional Template

The enclosed Quality Initiative Proposal represents the work that the institution will undertake to fulfill the quality improvement requirements of the Open Pathway.

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May 22, 2020

Signature of Institution's President or Chancellor

Date

Dr. Brent M. Knight, President

Printed/Typed Name and Title

Lansing Community College

Name of Institution

Lansing, MI

City and State

The institution completes the Quality Initiative Proposal by responding to the questions in each category of the template. Proposals should be no more than 4,500 words. The institution may choose to submit a brief implementation plan or supplemental charts or graphs as appendices to the template. The Quality Initiative Proposal will be accepted beginning September 1 of Year 5. It is due no later than June 1 of Year 7.

Submit the proposal as a PDF file to hlcommission.org/upload. Select "Pathways/Quality Initiative" from the list of submission options to ensure the institution's materials are sent to the correct HLC staff member. Submission file names should utilize the following format: QIProposal[InstitutionName][State].pdf (e.g., QIProposalNoNameUniversityMN.pdf). The file name must include the institution's name (or an identifiable portion thereof) and state.

Overview of the Quality Initiative

1. Provide a title and brief description of the Quality Initiative. Explain whether the initiative will begin and be completed during the Quality Initiative period or if it is part of work already in progress or will achieve a key milestone in the work of a longer initiative.

Co-Curricular Assessment and Development

Since 2013, Lansing Community College (LCC) has been working to integrate a variety of assessment procedures into a single, collegewide assessment plan. We began with an overall assessment plan (2016), which was followed by a general education assessment plan (2018). This proposed initiative will integrate the assessment of co-curricular programs into LCC's formal assessment plan. In addition, the initiative includes a series of stages focused on continuous quality improvement, which will lead to the enhancement of the co-curricular programs.

Initially, we will develop a formal co-curricular assessment plan and communicate that plan to all stakeholders. We will then develop a co-curricular assessment template, which will be adapted into individual co-curricular assessment tools for a preliminary set of five selected programs. Following the implementation of the actual assessment and collection of appropriate data by our Center for Data Science, we will review both the tools and the co-curricular programs themselves with an eye toward making improvements. We will then conduct a second phase of assessment, and establish an ongoing cycle for continued assessment.

Based on the results of our work, we will prepare a Co-Curricular Assessment Handbook to aid other programs which want to be recognized as formal co-curricular programs (as opposed to extracurricular), and a Co-Curricular Student Catalog to advertise these programs to our students. Finally, we will begin utilizing an existing non-credit transcript to provide a record for students to show the co-curricular skills, behaviors, and habits they have developed in addition to studying the more traditional curriculum at LCC.

Our Committee for Assessing Student Learning (CASL) has been working on a co-curricular assessment template to pilot co-curricular assessment tools, processes, and structure. Entering into our Quality Initiative period, we intend to design and integrate a co-curricular assessment component to complete our comprehensive assessment plan. Not only will this initiative help us to more clearly meet Criteria for Accreditation 3.E.1. and, particularly, 4.B.2., it will also help close the loop on our overall assessment initiative and raise the college's level of maturity regarding a culture of assessment.

In addition, in the spirit of participatory governance, CASL and the Academic Senate have defined co-curricular programs as those which "...enhance and complement the educational experience at LCC..." Based on this, CASL and the Academic Senate have been working to determine which activities can be considered co-curricular as opposed to extracurricular. This initiative will help the college not only categorize different types of co-curricular activities, but also create a framework, methodology and plan for assessment of those activities. The assessment activities will allow the college to look for gaps and areas of improvement to assist in providing students with well-rounded academic experiences.

Sufficiency of the Initiative's Scope and Significance

2. Explain why the proposed initiative is relevant and significant for the institution.

LCC has a long history of assessing academic programs and student learning outcomes. More recently, we sought to merge these processes into a single, collegewide assessment plan. In 2013 the college established an Academic Senate, and the former assessment committee became the Committee for Assessing Student Learning (CASL), a standing committee of the senate. In the fall of 2015 the college established the new position of Director of Assessment within the Center for Data Science, who works

closely with CASL. In 2016, CASL developed and the Academic Senate approved a collegewide assessment plan. In 2018 we implemented a collegewide general education assessment plan.

This proposed initiative is relevant because a formal plan for assessment of co-curricular programs is the final step in formalizing LCC's overall assessment plan. This will aid in raising a culture of assessment throughout everything we do here at our college by unifying and aligning all of our collegewide assessment efforts. In addition, the process of developing assessment tools for co-curricular programs will coincide with re-evaluating those programs, as well as future programs that wish to be viewed as co-curricular rather than extracurricular. Overall, this will lead to a significant enhancement of the value of co-curricular programs for students at LCC.

Evidence collected following our initial, formal assessment plan (2015-2018) showed that we steadily improved and ultimately exceeded nearly all of our internal targets for assessment indicators such as: programs have program-level student learning outcomes (93% vs target of 87%), program learning outcomes align with the institutional learning outcomes (97% vs target of 85%), and selected assessment methods align with the stated student learning outcomes (95% vs target of 80%). Thus, the establishment of our formal, collegewide assessment plan has resulted in both improved awareness of the need for formal assessment and corresponding actions within programs to attend to that academic need. Consequently, as stated above, we anticipate significant enhancement of the quality of co-curricular programs, as well as providing guidance for coordinated development of both academic and corresponding co-curricular programs.

Quality Initiative Connection to Our Mission

At LCC our Mission is clear:

Lansing Community College provides high-quality education ensuring that all students successfully complete their educational goals while developing life skills necessary for them to enrich and support themselves, their families, and their community as engaged global citizens.

Co-curricular programs provide opportunities for students to enhance the educational opportunities afforded in the classrooms and laboratories, as well as enrich themselves through opportunities that transcend traditional academic subjects. They will then be able to carry those skills forward, whether their immediate goals are further education, employment, or serving our community as engaged global citizens. Ongoing assessment of LCC's co-curricular programs is essential to ensuring their quality.

Quality Initiative Connection to Our Strategic Plan

In order to provide a framework for all we do at LCC, we have both a strategic plan and guiding principles (the latter serving primarily to support the vision and mission). The strategic plan consists of five focus areas, and two of them have specific items which relate to co-curricular programs and their assessment. Under Engaged Learning & Student Success, Goal B includes the outcome "Foster a culture of student engagement and responsibility," with a corresponding key performance indicator (KPI) that "Students participate in Registered Student Organizations."

Also under Engaged Learning & Student Success, Goal D states that “LCC will ensure continuous quality improvement of programs of study and courses.” The first outcome associated with this goal is to “Improve state of collegewide assessment,” and the corresponding KPI is “Program of study alignment from program level student learning outcomes to institution level student learning outcomes.” This initiative will include our co-curricular programs in the collegewide assessment plans and tie the goals of the co-curricular programs to our Essential Learning Outcomes.

Similarly, our guiding principles support the value of our co-curricular programs. The guiding principles call for LCC to be a comprehensive community college, with one of its four areas of focus being personal enrichment. LCC is also committed to continuous improvement of its programs, and doing so by means of assessing measurable outcomes. Finally, one of the guiding principles emphasizes the value of the diverse world we live in and our commitment to follow through on that value with intentional planning. One of the key co-curricular areas chosen for examination and development in this quality initiative is a digital badge program dedicated to the study and appreciation of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

One final area of potential significant impact for this initiative lies within the Community Engagement area of our strategic plan. Goal A states that LCC will build and enhance relationships with community partners to support the needs of both. There are outcomes and KPIs focused on increasing the number of opportunities in the areas of service learning, internships, and apprenticeships. Although these programs are typically curricular, for students in other areas of study these programs might still be of significant value as co-curricular programs.

3. Explain the intended impact of the initiative on the institution and its academic quality.

Since the assessment focus of this initiative will help programs to evaluate and improve themselves, in a continuous fashion, the evaluation of both co-curricular programs and potential co-curricular activities (service learning, internships, or others) will help to improve the overall quality of academic programs in which those opportunities reside. In other words, we will integrate co-curricular assessment into the curricular assessment, in order to enhance students’ overall educational experience. Hopefully, this will lead to intentional and focused development of co-curricular programs across the college.

Co-curricular programs are an important component of the overall educational experience for students, but it’s not always clear which programs are actually co-curricular (as opposed to extra-curricular). Recently, LCC’s Academic Senate agreed upon a definition of co-curricular as:

Co-curricular refers to activities and events that enhance and complement the educational experience at LCC, relate to the Essential Learning Outcomes, and connect students to the college and community.

In order to determine which activities are, indeed, co-curricular, we will develop an assessment tool that ensures a given program can be assessed in accordance with this definition and specified criteria for inclusion.

We believe this approach will have several benefits. Co-curricular programs are part of the educational experience, in that participating in co-curricular programs augments traditional classroom learning. Thus, students are afforded the opportunity to develop and enhance our shared institutional learning outcomes, better preparing them for 21st century workforce needs and in fulfilling requirements for successful

transfer into 4-year institutions. Assessment leads to program development and to the question, “Who are we?” Such reflection inevitably leads to clarity of purpose and program improvement. Hopefully this will result in a stronger connection to academic programs. In addition, in situations in which it is not clear whether a program is co-curricular as opposed to extra-curricular, the individuals coordinating said program can then begin an evaluation of what it would take to confirm that it is, and can accordingly be assessed as, one of the co-curricular programs.

We intend to begin with five programs that are clearly co-curricular: our new Diversity/Equity/Inclusion (DEI) Digital Badge program, TRiO, LUCERO, the Leadership Academy, and the library programs. Once we develop clear assessment plans for these programs, based on a standardized template, other programs will be able to examine themselves within the context of the assessment template. This will not only provide a basis for the development of those programs, but may also provide a basis for new programs. For example, we have considered the development of a civic engagement digital badge. The assessment plan for our DEI digital badge program will provide insight into the design and continuous improvement of the effectiveness of this program, as well as potential future programs of a similar nature.

It's one thing for students to have these co-curricular opportunities, but how then do they show transfer schools, potential employers, or other interested parties that they have achieved additional skills and experiences that are of value? LCC has a non-credit transcript that is essentially unused. We will pursue making it a standard procedure to structure the co-curricular programs such that they can be entered into our system, thereby making it possible to generate the non-credit transcript. An essential component of that process will be to create co-curricular program learning outcomes that both align with our Essential Learning Outcomes and which can be assessed, the latter point being essential for determining successful completion of the program (though not necessarily a “grade”) and being the overall focus of this Quality Initiative.

Clarity of the Initiative’s Purpose

4. Describe the purposes and goals for the initiative.

The overall purpose of this initiative is to provide an assessment framework for our co-curricular programs that will support ongoing program improvement and guide the development and improvement of additional programs that may be identified, or hope to be identified, as co-curricular (as opposed to extra-curricular). In addition, we will begin using a non-credit transcript to record achievement in co-curricular programs. The initiative will include a combination of short-term and long-term goals.

Our initial activities will include the following:

- Design, implement, and communicate a collegewide, co-curricular assessment plan – this will involve collaborative efforts between the Co-Curricular Team, CASL, the Academic Senate, and LCC’s communications director
- Develop specific assessment tools for the selected co-curricular programs – this will involve a collaborative effort between the Co-Curricular Team and individual co-curricular programs
- Work with co-curricular programs to ensure the applicability of the assessment tool – same as above; may influence both the assessment tool and the program itself (program development/improvement)

- Collaborate with academic programs to enhance the student learning experience at LCC – important for co-curricular programs that focus on student support (e.g., LUCERO, TRiO)
- Establishing baselines for persistence, retention, and completion for students involved in co-curricular programs – data to be collected by LCC’s Center for Data Science

Long-term activities/goals will include the following:

- Reviewing the implementation of the assessment process – this will be a practical review of how the assessment process worked and how it might be improved; this will be a collaborative effort based on our well-established program review process
- Implementing changes in the co-curricular programs based on the data collected – to be done by the programs in a collaborative manner with advice and support from the Co-Curricular Team
- Re-assessing the co-curricular programs – following any changes/improvements the assessments will be given again (to be ongoing); data to be collected by the Center for Data Science
- Working with potential new co-curricular programs to develop assessment tools – as new programs express interest the Co-Curricular Team will work with them while keeping an eye on the development of an appropriate assessment tool for each new program
- Establishing the non-credit transcript for record keeping – initiating/encouraging the use of this existing but under-utilized transcript system

To further ensure that we are doing our best to enhance the student learning experience through engagement with co-curricular programs, we will develop both a Co-Curricular Assessment Handbook, to aid in co-curricular program development, and a Co-Curricular Student Catalog advertising the various co-curricular programs available and the educational enhancement focus of each program.

5. Select up to three main topics that will be addressed by the initiative.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Advising | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership | <input type="checkbox"/> Retention |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assessment | <input type="checkbox"/> Learning Environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Civic Engagement | <input type="checkbox"/> Online Learning | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Learning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum | <input type="checkbox"/> Persistence and Completion | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Success |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diversity | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching/Pedagogy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Engagement | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Program Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Underserved Populations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Program Evaluation | <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First-Year Programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Improvement | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Education | | |

6. Describe how the institution will evaluate progress, make adjustments and determine what has been accomplished.

Throughout the conduct of this initiative, the Co-Curricular Team will provide oversight and review of the ongoing activities. The Director of Assessment and the Accreditation Liaison Officer will both be actively involved in this work, in an ongoing capacity.

Evaluating the initial activities of this initiative are quite straightforward. The Co-Curricular Team has already been assembled, the five co-curricular programs that will serve as the initial group to be assessed have representatives on that team, and a draft template of the co-curricular assessment tool has been created. Working collaboratively, the team will continue to improve the assessment tool so that it is flexible enough to accommodate the differences between types of co-curricular programs. Some co-curricular programs are academic in nature, such as library programs, whereas others are more supportive of students, such as LUCERO and TRiO. The assessment tool will be flexible, yet it will require the alignment of all programs with appropriate aspects of LCC's Essential Learning Outcomes.

The creation of the assessment tool will be the measure of evaluating progress in this regard, and any room for improvement will be discussed following the first round of data collection, utilizing the PDSA model as we have in the past. In addition, in the spirit of continuous quality improvement, this evaluation will occur routinely following each period of data collection in the future (anticipated annually). Utilizing the template, an assessment tool will be prepared for each individual co-curricular program, aligning their program goals with appropriate Essential Learning Outcomes. Throughout this process, we will utilize best practices in accordance with experience gained from our well-established program review process and the development and implementation of our general education assessment plan.

The determination of what is accomplished within the assessment itself will be based on data to be collected by the Center for Data Science. This will take place over a number of semesters, and then continue in ongoing fashion. Initially, the data will arise in a series of phases, which represent introducing the assessment process (leading to program awareness), then reinforcing the process (hopefully enhancing engagement), and finally mastering the process (making a solid connection between the programs and assessment). Corresponding data will exist in the form of, for example, the persistence and retention of students in both their academic and co-curricular programs, and ultimately in completing those programs.

As a complement to the assessment process itself, we will be working to enhance the overall co-curricular experience at LCC. We will develop a Co-Curricular Assessment Handbook to guide program development and participation in the co-curricular process, as well as a Co-Curricular Student Catalog to advertise the co-curricular programs to our students. Finally, we will make readily available to our students the non-credit transcript option to track their accomplishments, so our students will be able to pass those accomplishments on to prospective employers or transfer schools. The measure of progress/success in these regards will simply be their creation.

Evidence of Commitment to and Capacity for Accomplishing the Initiative

7. Describe the level of support for the initiative by internal or external stakeholders.

For a number of years now, LCC has focused on improving its level of maturity with regard to a culture of assessment across the college. This Quality Initiative is being led by a Co-Curricular Team that derives from the membership of CASL, a standing committee of the Academic Senate, and the college's Director of Assessment. Both CASL and the Academic Senate consist of a majority of faculty, demonstrating the

commitment of the faculty to this goal. On the administrative side, top leadership has expressed its support for this initiative, which was initiated at the behest of the Provost.

The Chief Diversity Officer has been actively involved in pursuing the non-credit transcript, and the Registrar is pleased that we are considering the use of that un-utilized resource for this initiative. In addition, the Diversity/Equity/Inclusion Digital Badge program developed by the Chief Diversity Officer is one of the co-curricular programs chosen for inclusion in our first group of co-curricular programs to be assessed.

The Co-Curricular Team itself consists of faculty and administrators, representing the teaching faculty, the library, student life, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and our eLearning department (which routinely serves faculty and students).

Thus, there is a broad range of support within the college for this initiative, which aligns well with LCC's mission and guiding principles.

8. Identify the groups and individuals that will lead or be directly involved in implementing the initiative.

Timothy Deines, Professor (English), Chair of CASL

Michelle Curtin, Professor (Nursing), Academic Senate President, *Ex Officio* Member of CASL

Karen Hicks, Director of Assessment; *Ex Officio* Member of CASL

Mark Kelland, Professor (Psychology), Accreditation Liaison Officer

CASL Co-Curricular Team: **Patti Ayers**, Ombudsperson, Student Affairs; **Alejandro Gradilla**, Cesar Chavez Learning Center Coordinator, Office of Diversity and Inclusion; **Chuck Page**, Online Learning Librarian, Academic Affairs; **Kara Wiedman**, CMS Instructional Design Specialist, eLearning

9. List the human, financial, technological and other resources that the institution has committed to this initiative.

The individuals identified as leading and implementing this initiative are serving in those roles in an ongoing basis. The Chair of CASL must be a faculty member of the Academic Senate, and the senate President is an ex officio member (as well as, in this case, the former Chair of CASL). The members of the CASL Co-Curricular Team are committee members who, among other duties, are leaders in the co-curricular areas we have chosen for this initiative. As for the remaining two members, the Director of Assessment and the ALO, this duty is a routine part of their current assignments for LCC. Since the Director of Assessment and CASL are responsible for the ongoing oversight of assessment activities at the college, no new financial resources will be necessary for this work to continue.

At present, the non-credit transcript exists, so no new technological resources would be needed. However, adding courses to it would be a new process, since it is not currently being utilized. The Registrar has indicated her support for this initiative, in the hope of finally making use of the non-credit transcript. There may need to be new processes approved for co-curricular programs to be entered into the system that would record them on the non-credit transcript, and these processes would likely involve the

Curriculum Committee of the Academic Senate. The Curriculum Committee has given its approval in anticipation of developing these new processes.

The college will dedicate financial resources to this project as is appropriate. The CASL director and ALO receive reassigned time to work on this committee and project. The Provost will reassign budget dollars to the initiative as appropriate. Finally, the Center for Data Science will provide within their budget an external reviewer for the project if necessary.

As demonstrated above, the college is committed to this initiative by providing the necessary resources to see the project through to completion. This includes staff, financial resources, technology assistance, and priority as this initiative aligns with the college's strategic plan.

Appropriateness of the Timeline for the Initiative

(The institution may include a brief implementation or action plan.)

10. Describe the primary activities of the initiative and timeline for implementing them.

CASL and the Co-Curricular Team will develop a **formal co-curricular assessment plan**. As with our current assessment plans, the finalized plan will be presented to the Academic Senate for review and from there to the Provost for final approval. At the same time, we will work with LCC's internal communications director to develop and implement **collegewide communications** to inform everyone of this activity. These will both be completed in **spring, 2021**.

In coordination with the development of the assessment plan, the Co-Curricular Team will finalize the **co-curricular assessment template**, and work with the initial five programs to customize their **co-curricular tools** (using the template as appropriate for each individual program and developing methods of assessment, as necessary). This work will also be completed in **spring, 2021**.

With the assessment plan and assessment tools in place, we will **implement co-curricular assessment in fall, 2021**.

During the **2021-2022 academic year** we will continue to conduct assessment of the initial programs, while **collecting and analyzing data** (e.g., persistence, retention, completion). We will also **review the utility of the assessment tools** as implemented by **summer, 2022**, and **revise them as necessary**.

Thus, by **fall, 2022** we will be able to enter the **second phase of co-curricular assessment** with any necessary changes/improvements to the assessment tools for the initial programs. Also in **fall, 2022**, those changes/improvements, as needed, will be incorporated **into the co-curricular assessment template**.

Also in **summer/fall, 2022**, as we review the success and/or challenges of implementing co-curricular assessment, and, if necessary, improve the co-curricular assessment template, we will develop a **Co-Curricular Assessment Handbook** to provide to additional programs that are considering entering into the formal co-curricular club. With the initial list of programs, and any new programs, in anticipation of academic year 2023-2024 we will make available a **Co-Curricular Student Catalog** (which may be an online resource; available **prior to fall, 2023**).

Finally, again **in anticipation of academic year 2022-2023**, we will begin recording successful completion of co-curricular activities on the **non-credit transcript**, and make those transcripts available to our students.

Institutional Contact for Quality Initiative Proposal

Include the name(s) of the primary contact(s) for the Quality Initiative.

Name and Title: Mark D. Kelland, Ph.D., Professor, Accreditation Liaison Officer

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