INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

O1 What are the distinctive features of your institutional culture?

The distinctive features of Illinois Valley Community College (IVCC) include its role as the primary institution of higher education in its district; its core values, mission, vision, and goals; and recent, significant changes in its governance and administration.

Situated in the heart of the Illinois River Valley in North-Central Illinois, IVCC is a comprehensive rural community college that has served the residents of its 2000-square mile district for over 80 years (see Figure 0.1). Centrally located in the ninth largest geographical community college district in the state, IVCC is the only institution of higher education within a 50-mile radius and provides the only access to college for many area residents.

In addition to the main campus, IVCC operates an educational center in the city of Ottawa (about 20 miles from the main campus) and offers day and evening classes at extension centers throughout the district, as well as the Sheridan Correctional Center. The College provides additional access through self-paced courses; blended courses; online courses, degrees and certificates; and telecourses.

The College’s core values, vision, and mission reflect its commitment to the students and communities in the district, and its institutional goals reinforce this commitment (see Figure 0.2).

Figure 0.1 IVCC District
One of the means through which IVCC achieves its goals is continuous quality improvement. This culture of continuous quality improvement (CQI) is best summed up in the College’s Principles of Work: “Illinois Valley Community College is a system of programs, services, and people—the entire system committed to continuous improvement. Nothing stays the same; everything is in a constant process of discovery, creating, and accomplishment. The people of IVCC daily strive to improve the organization’s work systems and processes toward higher levels of satisfaction, achievement, and excellence among students and other stakeholders.”

Because of its commitment to the principles and practices of CQI, IVCC continually strives to respond to the needs of local employers and residents. Since 1996, IVCC has started eight new Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree programs and 14 new certificates in response to these needs. In addition, the College is a cultural center for the district and provides students and other district residents with a variety of opportunities to broaden life experiences. These include intercollegiate athletics, an arts and letters lecture and performance series, an active theater program that collaborates with local schools, and programs focusing on diversity and global awareness. The College also provides opportunities to local schools through a variety of academic competitions, operates an honors program, and has an active Phi Theta Kappa chapter.

To enhance its ability to respond to stakeholder needs, an action project team designed a new Strategic Planning Process, which the College began to implement in the fall of 2004. Established through collaborative processes, the Strategic Plan includes both a Technology Plan and a Master Plan for facilities. In addition, implementing this process included a comprehensive environmental scan, which served as the foundation for a revision of the mission, vision, and strategic goals. The College has identified measurable objectives to achieve those strategic goals. Finally, the faculty is engaged in the development of an Academic Blueprint for Teaching and Learning, which has been integrated into the Strategic Plan. Each of these planning processes is being aligned with the Strategic Plan, as are the College’s Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Along with these developments, the College has seen significant change in its governance and administration in recent years, including a nearly complete turnover of the seven-member Board of Trustees in the last four years (six new members elected or appointed to fill vacancies since April 2003).

In the fall of 2006, IVCC entered a new era with the hiring of Dr. Larry Huffman as its ninth president, following the ten-year tenure of Dr. Jean Goodnow and a one-year tenure of an interim president. Dr. Huffman was hired after an extensive, nationwide search that included...
collaboration between the IVCC Board of Trustees and a Presidential Search Advisory Committee that consisted of IVCC faculty, administration, staff, and students, as well as community members. Dr. Huffman brings over 30 years of experience in higher education and economic development to IVCC, including three years as IVCC’s Dean of Student Development from 1974-77 and 14 years as president of Kankakee Community College from 1987-2001.

The College relies on diverse sources of revenue, which are illustrated in Figure 0.3.

**Figure 0.3 FY 2007 Revenues by Source**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Property tax</td>
<td>10,792,195</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State appropriations</td>
<td>5,868,993</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal grants and contracts</td>
<td>4,165,037</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auxiliary enterprises</td>
<td>3,087,256</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition and fees</td>
<td>2,657,937</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment income</td>
<td>1,041,407</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1,124,236</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$28,792,061</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**O2 What is the scope of your educational offerings?**

The scope of the College’s academic offerings includes three transfer degrees (Associate of Arts, Associate in Science, and Associate in Engineering Science), an Associate in General Studies; 23 A.A.S. degree programs and 47 certificate programs; extensive offerings in developmental and adult education and continuing education; and customized training for business and industry. In addition to academic enrichment services designed to ensure student success and improve retention, IVCC has operated a Dislocated Workers Center since 1983; houses the Illinois Small Business Development Center; and is the recipient of TRIO funds for Project Success, a federally-funded program focusing on increasing the retention and success of first generation, low-income students. A number of the College’s occupational programs are nationally accredited, including Nursing, Dental Assisting, Automotive Technology, and Early Childhood Education. IVCC offers on-location courses for local high school students through its Early Entry College Program (E²C). The College also offers a variety of classes, licenses, certificates, and degrees at the Sheridan Correctional Center, a medium-security facility located in the College’s district. In 2006-07, inmates took over 7000 credit hours in remedial classes, as well as in areas such as food service, warehousing, welding, and A+ certification.

**O3 What is your student base? What are your students’ needs and requirements?**

In terms of ethnicity, IVCC’s student base consists primarily of Caucasian students, although the Hispanic and African-American populations are growing. For instance, in LaSalle County, which represents 72 percent of the district’s population, the Hispanic population is expected to increase significantly through 2010, by as much as 19 percent. IVCC’s student population is consistent with national data. Below are additional statistics about IVCC’s student base, as of end-of-term, spring 2007:

- 73 percent attended part-time/27 percent full-time
- 56 percent were female/44 percent male
• average age was 27.33
• headcount enrollment was 4,527, with a full-time equivalent (FTE) of 2,187
• 65 percent were working while attending school

In spring 2007, 29 percent of IVCC’s students intended to transfer and 48 percent indicated that their goal was to prepare for a future job or increase skills.

The needs of IVCC’s students include flexible, readily accessible course offerings that fit into their busy lives (e.g. online courses, blended courses, evening classes, and multiple daytime offerings). Many students also need help in basic skills development in areas such as math, English, and reading. Because many students have families, some need available child care, which is available for 3-5 year olds through IVCC’s Early Childhood Education Center.

Enrollment has been stable since 2000, with some years seeing higher enrollment and other years lower. The district’s rates of unemployment, divorce, and alcoholism are higher than the state, and less than 13 percent of the adult population has a four-year degree, according to recent census data, compared to 26.1 percent for the state of Illinois and 24.4 percent for the nation. IVCC typically enrolls one-third of the high school graduates in the district.

O4 What collaborations exist between your institution and other organizations?

IVCC collaborates with numerous other organizations. This collaboration enhances the ability of the College to serve the needs of its students and other stakeholders. Below is a sampling of these collaborations:

• Approximately 17 district high schools serve as extension sites for IVCC classes, as do four district hospitals and various other local sites.
• IVCC has established a partnership with Franklin University to offer district students an opportunity to earn a baccalaureate degree through IVCC bridge courses and Franklin online courses—all without leaving the district.
• IVCC awards an A.A.S. degree in Electrical Construction Technology to electrician apprentices through a contractual/cooperative agreement with the Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (JATC) of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), Local 176.
• IVCC is a member of Illinois Community Colleges Online (ILCCO), a consortium of colleges that share online courses and programs.
• IVCC partnered with six area hospitals to expand the IVCC Nursing Program in 2003 and has established a new 3 ½-year partnership with these hospitals to begin in January 2008.
• IVCC collaborates with six local chambers of commerce, including the Illinois Valley Area Chamber of Commerce (serving 24 different communities), Mendota, Streator, Princeton, Ottawa, and the Illinois River Area (Seneca and Marseilles).
• Through its A.A.S. in Corrections, IVCC grants credit hours toward the Illinois Department of Corrections Training Academy.

In addition to those listed above, IVCC also partners with North Central Illinois Works, a local workforce investment board; the Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center, a statewide
organization that assists manufacturers with improvement initiatives; and the LaSalle County Development Connection, an economic development organization for LaSalle County.

**O5 What is your faculty and staff base?**

The College’s faculty and staff base as of fall 2006 consisted of 233 faculty (90 full-time, 143 part-time), 204 support staff (127 full-time, 77 part-time), 19 administrators, and 73 student workers. These numbers have remained relatively consistent over the past five years. The highest degrees earned by members of the administration, full-time faculty, and full-time support staff as of fall 2006 are indicated in Figure 0.4.

The full-time faculty at IVCC and at Sheridan Correctional Center are represented by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT)/Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT). The maintenance staff at IVCC is represented by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU).

**Figure 0.4 Highest Degrees Earned**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degrees Earned</th>
<th>Administration</th>
<th>FT Faculty</th>
<th>FT Support Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D./Ed.D.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate’s</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**O6 What are the critical and distinctive facilities, equipment, and technologies upon which your institution depends and the regulatory environment within which you operate?**

The College provides excellent facilities, equipment, and technologies for teaching and learning, including laboratories and studios, a fully networked campus, and the latest in instructional technology, including numerous smart classrooms and a new electronics lab.

The main campus includes seven buildings that house the majority of the academic programs and administrative offices, as well as the gymnasium, fitness center, and the IVCC Cultural Centre.

The east campus includes two buildings that house various occupational programs, including Truck Driving, Automotive, Horticulture, Massage Therapy, Manufacturing, CNC (Computer Numerical Control), Machining, HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning), Welding, and Industrial Maintenance, as well as the Early Childhood Education Center. These buildings were originally meant to be temporary until more permanent structures could be built. Thirty-five years later, these “temporary” buildings remain, are clearly outdated, and present unique challenges for technology upgrades and housing new and expanding programs. The College continues to seek funding to construct permanent buildings. At this time, IVCC is thought to be near the top of the list for state funding to replace these temporary buildings with a new Technology and Workforce Development Center.
The College is also on a waiting list for state funding to begin construction of a Community Instructional Center, which will serve as an administrative and student services building. IVCC has also applied for state funding to improve its athletic center.

Major improvement initiatives during the past ten years include:

- **AQIP**: Accepted into AQIP in fall 2002.
- **Continuous Quality Improvement**: The College began the move to a CQI culture and data-driven strategic planning in January 2003.
- **Staff Development**: Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (CETLA); Leadership and Core Values Retreat; Leadership Certificate; Supervisor Training; the Chair Academy for division chairs/deans; and the creation of a Faculty Facilitator position (administrative and instructional).
- **Technology**: All lecture rooms and instructional computer labs have presentation technologies, and the College offers 37 online courses and 13 blended courses as of spring 2007.
- **Strategic Planning Process**: Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), Academic Blueprint, Master Plan for Facilities and Information Technology
- **Interest-based Bargaining and Collaborative Decision making**: The College and the unions representing faculty and staff have negotiated three multi-year contracts using interest-based bargaining.

The College’s regulatory environment includes accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and membership in AQIP. Its programs and services are recognized and authorized by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) and the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE). The College also is a member of the American Association of Community Colleges, the Council of North Central Two Year Colleges, and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. A locally elected Board of Trustees governs the College; this seven-member board includes a student-elected, advisory-voting student trustee.

**07 Which institutions and/or organizations are competing with your institution?**

Like most community colleges, IVCC continues to face increasing competition for its students:

- Neighboring community colleges are increasing offerings of online courses and courses at satellite locations. For example, Joliet Junior College has a satellite location in Morris (less than 20 miles from IVCC’s district border) and Waubonsee Community College is planning a new extension site in Plano (less than 40 miles from the district border).
- IVCC and its fellow member institutions in the ILCCO offered over 600 online classes in spring 2007.
- Four-year institutions continue to compete for district students (e.g. Illinois State in Normal, Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, and the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign).
- Demand will continue to increase for short-term training and personal use courses offered by corporations, professional organizations, and non-profit groups.
More students may take advantage of cooperative agreements to enroll in other community colleges, especially in culinary arts, agriculture, and various medical specialization programs.

**Q8 What are your key opportunities and vulnerabilities as an institution?**

Despite various socio-economic vulnerabilities, IVCC welcomes numerous opportunities to expand and improve its services to the district. The district’s economy—based primarily on small manufacturing, agriculture, small businesses, and logistics—fluctuates, which creates new opportunities for education and training, but also has a direct impact on enrollment. Because such a small percentage of the adult population has a four-year degree, the College sometimes faces a lack of understanding of the value and the protocols of higher education.

Other challenges include declining state funding and loss of property tax and revenue income from, particularly Commonwealth Edison’s local plant, where the equalized assessed valuation has dropped by $89 million. This drop in assessed valuation of the plant equates to at least a reduction of $222,500 to the College’s operating fund in the first year of the agreement (2005). Further, during the same period, the value of the plant will remain fixed for four years, rather than allowing for natural inflationary growth to occur.

IVCC approximately $166,000 per year in local government revenue due to Tax Increment Finance (TIF) districts. Currently, there are approximately 40 TIF districts in the College’s district, with more anticipated. The College also faces revenue challenges through the creation of enterprise zones, which can abate taxes for up to ten years. The College is seeking to find a balanced position on enterprise zones, one that maximizes its tax revenues while supporting economic development and growth in the district.

In terms of opportunities, the College sits at the intersection of two major interstates (I-80 and I-39), creating an increased demand for trained truck drivers and warehouse/logistics workers. The area also expects growth in job opportunities in healthcare and tourism. The latter area also represents a challenge to IVCC to develop programs to train workers for the tourism field.

Currently, the College serves only 8.2 percent of the district population compared to 12.2% for its peer college group and 7.5 percent for the state average, this level of service creates opportunities to expand the College’s influence and the number of students it serves, including the Hispanic population, the fastest growing population in the district. In addition, the Board of Trustees contracted with two professors from Northern Illinois University who conducted a customer segmentation analysis that is providing the foundation for a strategically-focused marketing plan. Results of this study will help the College better understand its current position in the market, as well as identify and strategically focus on segments that offer the best potential for expansion.