



**Illinois Valley Community College
National Community College Benchmarking Project
Strengths & Opportunities for Improvement Report
Executive Summary
Spring, 2020**

*Office of Institutional Research
April, 2021*

Abstract

The National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP) has been conducted annually at Illinois Valley Community College since 2007. The NCCBP permits the College to analyze and compare Illinois Valley's performance on 150 collegiate benchmarks, including student demographics, measures of student success, faculty and staff characteristics, workforce and community outreach, institutional characteristics, and effectiveness metrics. This summary details the Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement identified in the 2020 National Report

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The National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP) has been conducted annually at Illinois Valley Community College (IVCC) since 2007. The spring 2020 NCCBP national administration includes 180 participating community colleges from across the country, down from 218 in 2019 (a -23 percent drop most likely due to COVID-19 campus shutdowns which may have compromised institutions' ability to participate). Participation in the NCCBP is voluntary, so the number of participating colleges fluctuates yearly as colleges self-select whether or not to participate. According to NCCBP, "Each college has the opportunity to compare its performance to other community colleges on over 150 collegiate benchmarks, including student demographics, measures of student success, faculty and staff characteristics, workforce and community outreach, institutional characteristics, and effectiveness metrics." In the State of Illinois, 21 community colleges participated in the spring 2020 administration, up one from 20 in spring 2019. The 2020 report includes nine rural (including IVCC), ten suburban and two urban college campuses from throughout Illinois (see *Appendix D* for participating institutions). This report provides a brief overview of the most recent findings and will focus on selected items in the *Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement Report* identified for Illinois Valley by *The National Community College Benchmarking Project's National Aggregate Report* as part of its broader statistical analysis.

Strengths

The National Community College Benchmarking Project considers a college's strengths as any benchmark metric above the 75th percentile on the *Report of National Aggregate Data* report. Each benchmark's score is converted to a percentile rank for each institution. In spring 2020, 13 benchmarks were identified as strengths at Illinois Valley, a decrease from 17 in the spring 2019. This year, as with the last several years, Illinois Valley's strengths were concentrated in three general areas: Academic Course Completion/Higher Education Persistence Rates, Institutional Finances, and Rankings on National Student Satisfaction Inventory surveys. The five highest ranked benchmarks start with academic success indicators such as percent of passing grades received and academic term persistence rates, and one national student satisfaction survey ranking.

Illinois Valley's highest ranked metric, in the 97th Percentile, includes a course success indicator, "*% of Students that Received a Passing Grade of those that Completed Speech,*" moving up from second place in the spring 2019 survey when it ranked in the 94th Percentile. Illinois Valley consistently ranks high in NCCBP's speech category. The second highest strength, "*Percent Academic Year (AY) Continuing Students,*" ranked Illinois Valley in the 91st Percentile. This metric is defined as, "*Headcount of students from academic year (AY) 2018-2019 (unduplicated) who did not graduate, did not transfer to another institution but are continuing at your institution, enrolled in the next Summer or Fall Academic year divided by total Academic Year headcount.*" A related measure, "*Percent Academic Year (AY) Completers,*" defined as, "*Headcount of students (unduplicated) who earned a degree or certificate during the academic year (AY) 2018-2019 divided by academic year 2018-2019 unduplicated headcount,*" ranks 8th with an 83rd Percentile score. In spring 2019, IVCC scored in the 84th Percentile in this category.

Many of the benchmarks NCCBP calculates derive their value from nationally developed student satisfaction surveys administered by participating colleges. In Illinois Valley's case, the College utilizes the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory to measure students' satisfaction with their Illinois Valley educational experience. Noel-Levitz is a nationally normed student satisfaction survey that has been administered every three years at Illinois Valley since 2004 and most recently in spring 2017. The spring, 2020 administration was canceled due to the campus COVID-19 shutdown. The College is planning on administering Noel-Levitz in spring 2021 in hopes of gathering some insight through the data about the students' experience with a majority of online instruction. The NCCBP report benchmarks Noel-Levitz scores against participating institutions and utilizes Illinois Valley's results for its benchmarking purposes. Illinois Valley's third highest benchmark includes a satisfaction ranking on the national satisfaction survey. Accordingly, "*Noel Levitz: Satisfaction with Academic Services*" from the Noel-Levitz Satisfaction Inventory ranks third with a score in the 88th Percentile. A slight drop from 90th percentile in the spring 2019 survey.

Next, a retention rate measure directly calculated from Illinois Valley's IPEDS retention data includes a "*Fall-to-Fall Persistence Rate,*" and ranks fourth in the 88th Percentile. Relatedly, fifth, is "*Next-term Persistence Rate,*" which ranks in the 87th Percentile. Having two persistence rates in the top-five strength categories is a good indicator of Illinois Valley's commitment to supporting students' successful retention and progression through college.

The first financial indicator, "*Institution Revenue per Student FTE,*" ranks 6th with an 86th Percentile score. Having one financial indicator in the top 10 Strengths category is a good sign for Illinois

Valley and speaks well of the College's financial stewardship in the face of continued enrollment pressures.

The importance of national student satisfaction ratings with respect to Illinois Valley are significant considering that five of the top 13 strengths come from either the Noel-Levitz Satisfaction Inventory or the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) surveys. Both surveys are administered on rotating three-year bases. Ranking seventh with an 83rd Percentile score is, "*CCSSE Support for Learners Benchmark Mean*." Coming in at number 10, "*Noel Levitz: Satisfaction with Admissions and Financial Aid*," achieves a 78th Percentile ranking. At number 11th is, "*Noel Levitz: Satisfaction with Safety and Security*," with a 76th Percentile ranking. Ranked 12th is, "*Noel Levitz: Satisfaction with Service Excellence*," with a 76th Percentile ranking as well.

The two remaining strength indicators are located in the 9th and 13th position, respectively. At number nine we find another course success measure, "*% of Students that Received a Passing Grade from those that Completed Credit Courses*," which has an 80th Percentile score. And finally, with the thirteenth rank, is "*% of Public Meeting Attendees (duplicated) from the Service Area Population*," with a 76th Percentile ranking. Due to current on-campus COVID-19 restrictions this metric will be virtually meaningless until the pandemic and its related campus closures abate in the coming year. Only then will the campus be safe enough to fully open to community members for meetings, plays, musicals, and sporting events.

Opportunities for Improvement

The National Community College Benchmarking Project considers *Opportunities for Improvement* as any benchmark falling below the 25th Percentile on the *Report of National Aggregate Data* report. In spring 2020, ten benchmarks were identified as *Opportunities for Improvement* at Illinois Valley, slightly higher than spring 2019 which had six identified *Opportunities for Improvement* indicators. According to the spring 2020 report, the index most in need of improvement, at the 99th Percentile, "*Student/Advising Staff Ratio*," ranked number one in need of improvement. A lower score is better in this case hence the poor percentile ranking. This category appears for the first time in the opportunities for improvement section. Previously, Advising was included with the *Counseling & Advising* section, but in the spring 2020 report, discrete categories of counseling and advising were reviewed. This may account for the poor showing. In the spring 2021 report, more attention will be paid to accurately placing counselors and advisors into their proper categories so as not to shortchange one

at the benefit of the other. The second ranked opportunity in need of improvement with a seven percentile score, is the *“Ratio of Minority Employees of the Minority Population of the Service Area.”* This represents a drop from spring, 2019 when Illinois Valley ranked in the 9th Percentile. Although compared unfavorably to national benchmarks, Illinois Valley’s annual demographic report notes that Illinois Valley’s student and employee demographics are consistent with area minority demographics. Another employee related issue, *“% of Harassment Claims of Total Employees,”* appears for the first time in the report. This employment related issue ranks 3rd with an 88th Percentile. Once again a lower percentile indicates better performance. In Illinois Valley’s case a small number of harassment complaints (n=3) can seem large when analyzed through percentile ranking methodology which takes into account total employees.

Three academically related metrics appear in the *Opportunities for Improvement* section. At number four, *“% of Student that Received a Passing Grade in Reading Development/Remedial Courses of those that Completed the Course,”* ranks in the 12th Percentile. Next at number eight, *“% of Distance Learning Credit Hours of Total Credit Hours,”* ranks in the 15th Percentile followed by *“% of Students that Received a Passing Grade in their First College-Level Writing Course of those that Completed a Development/Remedial Writing Course,”* ranks 10th with a 20th Percentile score.

As discussed in the *Strengths’* section, in addition to utilizing Illinois Valleys’ Noel-Levitz satisfaction survey results as benchmarks, the NCCBP Report also utilizes the *Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)* scores as one of its benchmark categories. CCSSE indicators appear twice in the *Opportunities for Improvement* section. As the 7th ranked challenge, *“CCSSE Active & Collaborative Learning Benchmark Means,”* scores in the 14th Percentile. In 2019, it ranked in the 15th Percentile. This is the second time it has ranked this low. The second CCSSE benchmark appearing in this section, *“CCSSE Academic Challenge Benchmark Mean,”* improved upon its 2019 standing. In the spring, 2019 Report it ranked fourth with a 19th Percentile. In the spring, 2020 Report it ranks 9th with a 19th Percentile score.

Conclusions

This report is meant to give a brief overview of the spring 2020 administration of the National Community College Benchmark Project with a review of Academic Year 2018-2019 data (*Appendix A*). Encouragingly, like previous years, the College’s *Strengths* surpass its *Opportunities for Improvement* but by a smaller ratio (13 to 10). The diminished number of strength benchmarks cover important areas in

financial stability, term-to-term persistence, students' satisfaction with Illinois Valley services, and academic course completion. In most areas, Illinois Valley compares favorably with the national cohort.

The *Opportunities for Improvement* benchmarks, while slightly more in number in spring, 2020, represent challenges that the College can overcome with continued effort that directly addresses problem areas. Continued improvement in state financial support along with institutional efforts in each of these areas should provide sufficient resources to generate the needed improvements.

Finally, a word of caution is in order with regards to the value of the percentile rank metric used in this report: A high ranking as well as a low percentile ranking does not necessarily reflect the true value of the underlying statistic. A college may rank high on any particular benchmark but that is only relative to all other colleges in any given year. And for this particular year, filled with pandemic closures which may have limited the number of participating institutions, the importance of noting this caveat is paramount. For instance, community colleges historically have low retention and graduation rates. Therefore, no college should feel complacent by a high percentile rank when their actual rates may only be in the mid-thirties.

Low percentile rankings should also be reviewed with caution because they can be affected by local conditions beyond the institution's control. Illinois Valley Community College should use these benchmark metrics as a guide when comparing its success and shortcomings to the national cohort, but it should always strive to improve the underlying numbers and rather than its rankings which are subject to random variations inherent in the local outcomes of hundreds of reporting institutions that fluctuate yearly.

Appendix A

National Community College Benchmark Project Academic Year 2019 - Strengths & Opportunities for Improvement Illinois Valley Specific Percentile Rankings

Your institution (IVCC) reported values for the benchmarks below that are above the 75th percentile.

STRENGTHS – 13

1. % of Students that Received a Passing Grade of those that Completed Speech

[Your Rank - 97th Percentile](#)

2. Percent AY Continuing Students

[Your Rank - 91st Percentile](#)

3. **Noel Levitz**: Satisfaction with Academic Services

[Your Rank - 88th Percentile](#)

4. Fall-fall Persistence Rate

[Your Rank - 88th Percentile](#)

5. Next-term Persistence Rate

[Your Rank - 87th Percentile](#)

6. Institution Revenue per Student FTE - *Financial*

[Your Rank - 86th Percentile](#)

7. **CCSSE** Support for Learners Benchmark Mean

[Your Rank - 83rd Percentile](#)

8. Percent AY Completers

[Your Rank - 83rd Percentile](#)

9. % of Students that Received a Passing Grade from those that Completed Credit Courses

[Your Rank - 80th Percentile](#)

10. **Noel Levitz:** Satisfaction with Admissions and Financial Aid

Your Rank - 78th Percentile

11. **Noel Levitz:** Satisfaction with Safety and Security

Your Rank - 76th Percentile

12. **Noel Levitz:** Satisfaction with Service Excellence

Your Rank - 76th Percentile

13. % of Public Meeting Attendees (duplicated) from the Service Area Population

Your Rank - 76th Percentile

Appendix A (Cont.)

Your institution (IVCC) reported values for the benchmarks below that are below the 25th percentile.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT - 10

1. Student/Advising Staff Ratio

Your Rank - >99th Percentile (Low is better)

2. Ratio of Minority Employees of the Minority Population of the Service Area

Your Rank - 7th Percentile

3. % of Harassment Claims of Total Employees

Your Rank - 88th Percentile (Low is better)

4. % of Students that Received a Passing Grade in Reading Developmental/Remedial Courses of those that Completed the Course

Your Rank - 12th Percentile

5. Instructional Cost per Credit Hour - *Financial*

Your Rank - 87th Percentile (Low is better)

6. Instructional Cost per FTE Student - *Financial*

Your Rank - 87th Percentile (Low is better)

7. **CCSSE** Active & Collaborative Learning Benchmark Means

Your Rank - 14th Percentile

8. % of Distance Learning Credit Hours of Total Credit Hours

Your Rank - 15th Percentile

9. **CCSSE** Academic Challenge Benchmark Mean

Your Rank - 19th Percentile

10. % of Students that Received a Passing Grade in their First College-Level Writing Course of those that Completed a Developmental/Remedial Writing Course

Your Rank - 20th Percentile

Appendix B

National Community College Benchmark Project Academic Year 2018 - Strengths & Opportunities for Improvement Illinois Valley Specific Percentile Rankings

Your institution (IVCC) reported values for the benchmarks below that are above the 75th percentile.

STRENGTHS - 17

1. Viability Ratio - *Financial*

Your Rank - 98th Percentile

2. % of Students that Received a Passing Grade of those that Completed Speech

Your Rank - 94th Percentile

3. Percent AY Continuing Students

Your Rank - 91st Percentile

4. **Noel Levitz**: Satisfaction with Academic Services

Your Rank - 90th Percentile

5. Fall-fall Persistence Rate

Your Rank - 90th Percentile

6. Next-term Persistence Rate

Your Rank - 88th Percentile

7. Net Operating Revenue Ratio - *Financial*

Your Rank - 87th Percentile

8. **Noel Levitz**: Satisfaction with Safety and Security

Your Rank - 85th Percentile

9. **Noel Levitz**: Satisfaction with Registration Effectiveness

Your Rank - 84th Percentile

10. Percent AY Completers

Your Rank - 84th Percentile

11. % of Students that Received a Passing Grade from those that Completed Credit Courses

Your Rank - 83rd Percentile

12. Composite Financial Indicator - *Financial*

Your Rank - 83rd Percentile

13. **Noel Levitz**: Satisfaction with Admissions and Financial Aid

Your Rank - 82nd Percentile

14. **Noel Levitz**: Satisfaction with Service Excellence

Your Rank - 81st Percentile

15. **CCSSE** Support for Learners Benchmark Mean

Your Rank - 79th Percentile

16. **Noel Levitz**: Satisfaction with Responsiveness to Diverse Populations

Your Rank - 78th Percentile

17. % of Students that Received a Passing Grade in Reading Developmental/Remedial Courses of those that Completed the Course

Your Rank - 77th Percentile

Appendix B (Cont.)

Your institution (IVCC) reported values for the benchmarks below that are below the 25th percentile.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT - 6

1. Ratio of Minority Employees of the Minority Population of the Service Area

[Your Rank - 7th Percentile](#)

2. **CCSSE** Active & Collaborative Learning Benchmark Means

[Your Rank - 15th Percentile](#)

3. % of Distance Learning Credit Hours of Total Credit Hours

[Your Rank - 16th Percentile](#)

4. **CCSSE** Academic Challenge Benchmark Mean

[Your Rank - 19th Percentile](#)

5. Instructional Cost per FTE Student - *Financial*

[Your Rank - 79th Percentile \(Low is better\)](#)

6. Instructional Cost per Credit Hour - *Financial*

[Your Rank - 79th Percentile \(Low is better\)](#)

Appendix C

National Community College Benchmark Project Academic Year 2017 - Strengths & Opportunities for Improvement Illinois Valley Specific Percentile Rankings

STRENGTHS – 26

Your institution (IVCC) reported values for the benchmarks below that are above the 75th percentile.

1. % of Students that Received a Passing Grade in their First College-Level Math Course of those that Completed a Developmental/Remedial Math Course

Your Rank - 98th Percentile

2. % of Students that Received a Passing Grade in their First College-Level Writing Course of those that Completed a Developmental/Remedial Writing Course

Your Rank - 96th Percentile

3. Next-term Persistence Rate

Your Rank - 96th Percentile

4. Fall-fall Persistence Rate

Your Rank - 96th Percentile

5. % of Students that Received a Passing Grade of those that Completed Speech – Course Completion

Your Rank - 95th Percentile

6. Viability Ratio – Ranked 1st in 2017 Report - *Financial*

Your Rank - 94th Percentile

7. Percent AY Completers

Your Rank - 94th Percentile

8. **Noel Levitz**: Satisfaction with Academic Services

Your Rank - 94th Percentile

9. **Noel Levitz:** Satisfaction with Safety and Security

Your Rank - 91st Percentile

10. % of Students that Received a Passing Grade in Reading Developmental/Remedial Courses of those that Completed the Course

Your Rank - 90th Percentile

11. **Noel Levitz:** Satisfaction with Admissions and Financial Aid

Your Rank - 89th Percentile

12. **Noel Levitz:** Satisfaction with Registration Effectiveness

Your Rank - 88th Percentile

13. **Noel Levitz:** Satisfaction with Service Excellence

Your Rank - 87th Percentile

14. % of Full-Time, First-Time Students that Completed OR Transferred in Two Years

Your Rank - 87th Percentile

15. Net Operating Revenue Ratio - *Financial*

Your Rank - 85th Percentile

16. % of Students that Received a Passing Grade from those that Completed Credit Courses

Your Rank - 82nd Percentile

17. % of Public Meeting Attendees (duplicated) from the Service Area Population

Your Rank - 82nd Percentile

18. % of Full-Time, First-Time Students that Transferred in Two Years

Your Rank - 82nd Percentile

19. **Noel Levitz:** Satisfaction with Responsiveness to Diverse Populations

Your Rank - 81st Percentile

20. **Noel Levitz:** Satisfaction with Academic Advising/Counseling

Your Rank - 80th Percentile

21. % of Students that Received a Passing Grade of those that Completed English Comp I

Your Rank - 80th Percentile

22. % of Full-Time, First-Time Students that Completed in Two Years

Your Rank - 79th Percentile

23. % of Students Receiving a Passing Grade from those Completing Distance Learning Classes

Your Rank - 77th Percentile

24. Primary Reserve Ratio - *Financial*

Your Rank - 75th Percentile

25. % of Students that Received a Passing Grade of those that Completed English Comp II

Your Rank - 75th Percentile

26. % of Students that Received a Passing Grade in College-Level Courses of those that Completed the Course

Your Rank - 75th Percentile

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT – 4

Your institution (IVCC) reported values for the benchmarks below that are below the 25th percentile.

1. Ratio of Minority Employees of the Minority Population of the Service Area

Your Rank - 9th Percentile – 14th Percentile in 2017

2. **CCSSE** Academic Challenge Benchmark Mean

Your Rank - 13th Percentile – 18th percentile in 2017

3. Return on Net Assets Ratio - *Financial*

Your Rank - 22nd Percentile – 20th Percentile in 2017

4. % of Distance Learning Credit Hours of Total Credit Hours

Your Rank - 25th Percentile

Appendix D

National Community College Benchmark Project Spring, 2020 Illinois Participating (21) Community Colleges

Institution	State	IPEDS Unit ID	Modules	Campus Environment	Institutional Type
Black Hawk College	IL	143279	Credit	Urban	Multi-campus
College of DuPage	IL	144865	Credit, Non-credit	Suburban	Multi-campus
Elgin Community College	IL	144944	Credit	Suburban	Single-campus
Heartland Community College	IL	384342	Credit, Non-credit	Suburban	Single-campus
Highland Community College	IL	145521	Credit	Rural	Single-campus
Illinois Central College	IL	145682	Credit	Urban	Single-campus
Illinois Valley Community College	IL	145831	Credit	Rural	Single-campus
Kankakee Community College	IL	146348	Credit	Rural	Single-campus
Kaskaskia College	IL	146366	Credit	Rural	Single-campus
Kishwaukee College	IL	146418	Credit, Non-credit	Rural	Single-campus
Lincoln Land Community College	IL	146685	Credit	Rural	Single-campus
McHenry County College	IL	147004	Credit	Suburban	Single-campus
Moraine Valley Community College	IL	147378	Credit	Suburban	Single-campus
Oakton Community College	IL	147800	Credit	Suburban	Multi-campus
Parkland College	IL	147916	Credit	Rural	Single-campus
Richland Community College	IL	148292	Credit	Rural	Single-campus
Sauk Valley Community College	IL	148672	Credit	Rural	Single-campus
Southwestern Illinois College	IL	143215	Credit	Suburban	Multi-campus
Triton College	IL	149532	Credit	Suburban	Single-campus
Waubonsee Community College	IL	149727	Credit, Non-credit	Suburban	Multi-campus
William Rainey Harper College	IL	149842	Credit	Suburban	Single-campus

Appendix E

NCCBP Spring, 2020 Executive Report for Dr. Jerry Corcoran Illinois Valley Community College

The attached *Key National Benchmarks Report* has been created for the chief executive officer at all participating institutions in spring 2020. The report illustrates how the college compared to national data, representing 180 community colleges (down from 218, -23 percent from spring, 2019). The full NCCBP report, available online or on request, contains more than 150 benchmarks, including new student success measures. The drop in participation is most likely due to COVID-19 pandemic-related campus closures which may have affected Illinois Valleys' results as colleges previously ranked below Illinois Valley are no longer considered.