

3 - Teaching and Learning for Student Success

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program is consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.

3.A. Educational Programs

The institution maintains learning goals and outcomes that reflect a level of rigor commensurate with college-level work, including by program level and the content of each of its educational programs.

Argument

New Mexico Junior College (NMJC) ensures that its academic programs meet the standards of rigor and appropriateness required for higher education. Learning goals and outcomes are designed to reflect the level and content of each program, aligning with both academic and industry expectations. These learning goals are developed by faculty as part of the program development process. Internally, all degrees and certificates offered at NMJC are approved by the Academic Standards/Curriculum Committee and the NMJC Board of Directors. Externally, new degrees and certificates are approved by the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED), the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), and applicable industry-specific accrediting bodies (e.g., ACEN, NATEF, etc.) ensuring compliance with state and national accreditation standards.

Curriculum Development and Oversight

NMJC utilizes a robust curriculum committee process through the Academic Standards/Curriculum Committee, whose members include representatives from each instructional division as well as athletics, student services, and administration, to maintain consistent academic rigor across all programs. The process follows guidelines from NMHED ensuring all academic offerings meet established NMHED standards. In addition, labor market analyses, industry partnerships, and advisory boards provide an opportunity for faculty to demonstrate how the curriculum aligns with workforce needs. Several NMJC programs, such as Nursing, Automotive, and Law Enforcement, hold specialized accreditations from professional organizations. These accreditations confirm that program-level learning outcomes meet discipline-specific standards, further ensuring the appropriateness and rigor of NMJC's academic offerings. Forming the second layer of oversight, the Faculty Coordinator of Assessment, leading the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (SLOAC), ensure assessment of the curricula yields results that, in turn, drive revision and relevancy. By attending department and program data reviews, the Faculty Coordinator is able to assist faculty and instructional deans in making curricular and instructional connections. Finally, the third layer of oversight rests with the Program Review

Committee, which provides recommendations to campus administration regarding the financial, instructional, and personnel resources.

These efforts guarantee that learning outcomes reflect the appropriate level of performance required for the credentials awarded. Learning outcomes are outlined in the college catalog and, regardless of modality, all courses must meet the same learning outcomes. Transitional (formerly known as Developmental) courses are excluded from degree requirements, ensuring that all applied courses are college-level.

Common Course Numbering and Transferability

NMJC complies with the New Mexico Common Course Numbering System, which is designed to enhance the transferability and articulation of courses among the state's public and tribal higher education institutions (HEIs). Under this system, when students complete courses with common numbering at one New Mexico public or tribal HEI and transfer to another, the receiving institution is required to accept the course as equivalent to its identically numbered offering. When a commonly numbered course aligns with the degree requirements at the receiving institution, it will fulfill those requirements. However, students who transfer commonly numbered courses that do not align with their chosen degree requirements must still complete the necessary courses for their program of study.

The system encompasses all lower-division general education courses offered by New Mexico's public and tribal HEIs. Additionally, the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) has extended common course numbering to select career technical education (CTE) courses, such as Welding. This initiative ensures that students across the state can receive consistent transfer credit for CTE courses, promoting greater accessibility and flexibility in pursuing academic and career pathways. NMJC maintains memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with four-year institutions both within and outside the state, enabling the transferability of courses from its applied science degrees and certificates. In 2021, New Mexico Senate Bill 77 introduced a six-year pilot project aimed at creating seamless transitions from community colleges to universities within the southeastern region of the state.

Associate Degrees

NMJC offers three associate degree types: Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), and Associate of Applied Science (AAS). Each degree requires a minimum of 60 semester hours, with core general education requirements (NMHED prescribed content areas: communication, mathematics, science, social and behavioral science, humanities, and creative and fine arts). In accordance with NMHED requirements, students enrolled in an AA or AS degree must meet the required credit hours in each of the six content areas to complete the 31 credit hours of the general education core. The AA in General Studies and AS in General Studies degrees serve as transfer pathways to baccalaureate programs. The AA in Early Childhood Education has more specific course requirements tailored to New Mexico state early childhood education competencies.

NMJC offers fifteen AAS degree programs. These programs require between sixty and eighty-eight (Ford ASSET) credit hours for completion depending upon the nature of the program and the external agency requirements for content. The AAS degree programs are tailored for career and technical education. In accordance with NMHED requirements,

students enrolled in an AAS program must complete twelve credit hours from four of the six general education content areas (communication, mathematics, science, social and behavioral science, humanities, and creative and fine arts) with an additional “flexible” course from any of the six general education content areas for a total of at least fifteen credit hours in general education. Advisory boards for AAS programs ensure alignment with industry standards and provide input on student learning outcomes in the form of essential workplace and industry skills.

Certificate Programs

NMJC's 20 certificate programs, ranging from 16 (Manicurist/Pedicurist) to 58 (Practical Nursing) credit hours, are designed to prepare students for specific occupational fields or enhance their current employment credentials. These programs are developed with labor market analyses and industry input to ensure alignment with workforce needs. This alignment ensures that the required levels of student performance are appropriate to the credentials awarded. The Curriculum Committee employs the use of a standardized flow chart and processes to document degree or certificate changes, expected outcomes, and justifications to ensure that each program's rigor is consistent with the level of credential.

Embedded Certifications

Some courses and/or programs at NMJC include embedded industry certifications as a result of successful completion. Such certifications add value and help to confirm that curricula are relevant and meet industry standards.

Ford ASSET – Ford Motor Company

The Ford ASSET (Automotive Student Service Educational Training) program is a cooperative technical training initiative designed for entry-level automotive technicians. This program represents a partnership between Ford Motor Company, participating college campuses, and sponsoring dealerships. Over the course of two years, the ASSET program provides students with a comprehensive education that combines technical training in both classroom and laboratory settings, on-the-job training through cooperative work experience, and the general education courses required to earn an AAS degree in Automotive Technology.

Throughout the program, students have the opportunity to earn Ford Technician Certifications in 11 distinct technical areas by successfully completing final examinations for each certification. Achieving certification in a specialty area requires passing both a written exam and a hands-on evaluation. For certification, students must achieve a minimum score of 80% on the written exam and demonstrate 100% proficiency during the hands-on evaluation. This rigorous approach ensures graduates are well-prepared to meet the high standards of the automotive industry.

Computer Information Systems – TestOut Pro

The Computer Information Systems (CIS) AAS degree and a certificate program, which are available either face-to-face or entirely online. The department integrates industry-recognized certifications through the use of TestOut Pro exam software, providing students with valuable credentials alongside their academic achievements. TestOut Pro certifications are aligned with ten CIS courses offered within the program, including courses such as

Introduction to CIS, Network Security, and Computer Repair and Upgrade.

Eligibility for some TestOut Pro exams requires the successful completion of a two-course sequence, such as Computer Repair and Upgrade I and Computer Repair and Upgrade II. These exams utilize advanced simulation technology to assess an individual's ability to perform real-world IT tasks, ensuring students gain practical, hands-on experience. All TestOut Pro exams are scientifically analyzed and validated to maintain high standards of accuracy and reliability, further enhancing the professional readiness of CIS graduates.

Farm and Ranch Management – iCEV

The Farm and Ranch Management program offers an AAS degree. The department currently embeds six optional certification opportunities through the iCEV Testing Platform. Each certification offered is validated by a different organization to meet industry standards. Some examples include the American Meat Science Association Meat Evaluation Certification, Elanco Fundamentals of Animal Science Certification, and the National Collegiate Livestock Coaches Association Principles of Livestock Selection and Evaluation.

Automation and Industrial Systems – NC3

The Automation and Industrial Systems department offers non-credit training programs including Electrical Maintenance Technician, Mechanical Maintenance Technician, and Programmable Logic Controllers that each culminate in a NMJC Workforce Development certificate of completion. As part of the curriculum, the department partners with the National Coalition of Certification Centers (NC3) to provide Festo automation-based certifications. Examples of embedded certifications are Fundamentals of Fluid Power – Pneumatic/Hydraulic, Fundamentals of Electricity – AC/DC, and Programmable Logic Controllers (PLCs) - Allen Bradley/Siemens.

Dual Credit Opportunities

In accordance with NMSA 1978 § 21-1-1.2 (2015) and 6.30.7 NMAC, NMJC has provided dual credit opportunities for high school students in Lea County, allowing students to earn tuition-free college credits while still in high school. Dual credit courses meet NMJC's academic standards and are regularly evaluated to ensure alignment with college-level rigor. High school faculty teaching dual credit courses on-site meet the same educational and/or experiential standards as those who teach on-campus at NMJC. Rigor is calibrated during annual meetings between NMJC faculty and high school dual credit faculty.

Each high school offering dual credit courses must submit a signed uniform master agreement with NMJC to the Public Education Department (PED) every three years. The agreement must specify eligible courses, academic quality of dual credit courses, course approval and course requirements. College courses eligible for dual credit must meet the rigor for NMJC credit and be congruent with the NMJC's academic standards. Dual credit courses offered at high schools must conform to college academic standards. Course requirements for high school students enrolled in dual credit courses are equal to those of regular college students. The NMJC dual credit policy guide provides guidance on all dual credit expectations for the college and associated high schools under the uniform master agreement.

In 2022, the Career and Technical Education Center of Hobbs (CTECH) opened its doors to

provide a range of focused, industry training opportunities for its high school students. NMJC has partnered with CTECH to offer dual credit learning opportunities in areas such as Transportation, Manufacturing, Energy, Information Technology and Welding. Some examples of courses approved for dual credit include Introduction Welding, Introduction to Oil and Gas, Introduction to Computer Information Systems, and Networking Basics. This educational partnership provides basic to advanced training as part of a career/industry pipeline and a K-14 pathway for the local area.

Online Education

With the approval of the Higher Learning Commission, NMJC has established a robust portfolio of online courses. Over the last decade, online courses routinely account for approximately 27% of NMJC's enrollment. NMJC is an approved participant in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) via the New Mexico Higher Education Department and the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA).

To support course quality, faculty effectiveness, and positive student outcomes, the professional staff supporting online courses have developed a series of tools to support faculty and students. All NMJC faculty who teach online courses are required to take NMJC-developed online training delivered through the college's Canvas LMS. In addition to the formal course in online teaching, faculty are offered guidance in best practices for engagement of students in online environments and mentoring from their respective department chairs, program directors, and divisional deans. Finally, while online courses are included in course-level assessment and in all areas' program review process, they are also evaluated as a separate area in NMJC's recently revised Program Review process. By consistently reviewing online courses, NMJC recognizes the dichotomy of online courses being ubiquitous while also requiring different learning skills and levels of engagement for successful student outcomes.

Through its adherence to NMHED requirements, curriculum processes, articulation agreements, and program-level accreditations, NMJC demonstrates its commitment to maintaining the appropriateness, rigor, and quality of its educational programs. These efforts exemplify the institution's dedication to fostering student success and aligning its offerings with higher education standards and workforce demands.

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3.B. Exercise of Intellectual Inquiry

The institution's educational programs engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in practicing modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

Argument

New Mexico General Education Common Core

NMJC participates in the New Mexico General Education Common Core, ensuring transferability of general education credits across state institutions. As such, all general education courses must fall into one of six content areas: communication, mathematics, science, social and behavioral science, humanities, and creative and fine arts. Within each content area are three of six essential skills: communication, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, information and digital literacy, and personal and social responsibility. The required assessment of these essential skills, detailed in 3.E, ensures NMJC students are engaged in the collection, analysis, and communication of information, the exploration modes of intellectual inquiry and creative work, and the development of the necessary skills to adapt to a global and ever-changing environment.

In FY16, the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) updated its model of general education to focus on the essential skills that are needed by today's college graduates to be successful as they pursue advanced degrees and/or careers. The state adopted two models: one for applied associate degrees and a second for bachelor and all other associate degrees. For Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degrees, there are a minimum of 31 general education hours required from six content areas. Twenty-two of these credits are from all six content areas with nine additional credits from the same content areas or those the institution deems appropriate.

For Associate of Applied Science degrees, a minimum of 15 general education hours are required. A minimum of 12 hours is required from four of the six content approved areas. The remaining three credit hours can be chosen from any of the six content areas or "other" content areas an institution deems appropriate.

Institutional Learning Outcomes

Curricular development and outcomes at NMJC are guided by three institutional learning outcomes (ILOs) established to reflect the college's mission, vision, and values. In addition, the ILOs align directly to the institution's strategic goals while meeting the demands of external stakeholders and agencies. NMJC outlines these ILOs and aligns the statewide general education outcomes used to evaluate student achievement of recognized competencies. The ILOs are published on NMJC's website and are a central component of all credit-bearing students' education. These ILOs are assessed annually and are compiled by the Faculty Coordinator of Assessment and Quality, reviewed by the members of the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (SLOAC), and published on the college's Institutional Effectiveness webpage.

In addition, NMJC integrates ILOs into all credit-bearing courses, requiring components of communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving in course syllabi. The following learning outcomes represent the knowledge and abilities developed by students attending NMJC. These learning outcomes are also connected to NMHED's essential skills needed by today's college graduates and are woven throughout the institution down to the programmatic, discipline area, and course level assessment.

Communication

- Comprehend information to summarize, analyze, evaluate, and apply to a specific situation.
- Communicate in an accurate, correct, and understandable manner.

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

- Define a problem and arrive at a logical solution.
- Use appropriate technology and information systems to collect, analyze, and organize information.
- Apply critical thinking, analysis, and problem solving to data.

Self and Community

- Analyze and reflect on the ethical dimensions of legal, social, and / or scientific issues.
- Communicate an awareness of a variety of perspectives of ethical issues.
- Interact with individuals and within groups with integrity and awareness of others' opinions, feelings and values.

Courses, such as Psychology, may integrate the learning outcome of Communication through conflict resolution activities, where various real-world scenarios are provided for active role-play engagement and practice. In Spanish courses, students collaborate with other NMJC departments, such as theater, to translate performance scripts, which showcases ILO integration at the course level.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs continue to work specifically on the Self and Community outcome through their emphasis on professionalism within each field. Automotive, Cosmetology, Nursing, and Welding all have an ongoing focus on safety and professionalism as defined by the particular industry. The Cosmetology department provides an example of Self and Community focus by hosting student events such as hair shows and barber battles that are open to the public.

Continuous Improvement in Addressing Institutional Learning Outcomes

In addition to various department, program, and course-level initiatives at NMJC, the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (SLOAC) began exploring ways to unify and support faculty in enhancing student learning at the institutional level. Recognizing widespread concerns about poor student communication skills, the committee-initiated efforts to address this challenge.

In the spring of 2018, a subcommittee composed of faculty members was formed to develop a minimum campus-wide standard for communication that all faculty could implement and enforce. The subcommittee established a four-point standard and hosted a workshop to

encourage faculty adoption. The standard focused on the following principles:

- Avoidance of text language (e.g., refraining from using abbreviations such as "i," "BTW," "LOL," "IDK").
- Correct spelling and proper capitalization.
- Use of complete sentences (e.g., beginning with a capital letter and ending with appropriate punctuation).
- Logical organization of ideas.

The feedback from faculty was overwhelmingly positive. Building on this success, in the spring of 2023, SLOAC began defining similar minimum standards for Critical Thinking and Self and Community learning outcomes. These discussions on measurable and teachable standards evolved into the broader concept of establishing a clear list of expectations for NMJC students. This initiative, aimed at emphasizing NMJC's institutional learning goals in a student-friendly manner, was presented to the Faculty Senate in the fall of 2023 and received strong support.

Beginning in October 2023, regular meetings and reviews with stakeholders further refined the initiative. These discussions centered on defining "what it means to be an NMJC student," resulting in the development of well-defined and embedded standards within course syllabi. To further assist students in understanding their role as NMJC students, the college's public relations and outreach team recorded a short video demonstrating these standards. This effort represents a significant step toward ensuring NMJC students are equipped with the skills to collect, analyze, and communicate information effectively, master intellectual inquiry, and adapt to changing environments.

Implementation of Nuventive

Nuventive is a robust assessment and accreditation management platform that supports NMJC in systematically collecting, analyzing, and reporting on student learning outcomes and institutional effectiveness. The platform provides structured frameworks that facilitate the documentation of how core academic requirements engage students in information gathering, analysis, and communication across the curriculum, directly supporting intellectual inquiry within academic programs.

For institutional learning outcomes, Nuventive enables NMJC to map program-level assessments to overarching institutional goals, track achievement data over time, and demonstrate how students develop transferable intellectual skills and inquiry methods that prepare them for evolving professional environments. At the student learning outcome level, the platform streamlines the tracking of course-level and program-level outcomes, allowing faculty to document specific competencies in areas such as analytical thinking, creative problem-solving, and information literacy. It also supports the collection of evidence of student mastery through tools such as rubrics, assignments, and assessment measures.

Through its advanced reporting and analytics capabilities, Nuventive empowers NMJC to showcase to accrediting bodies how its core curricula systematically foster intellectual inquiry and adaptive skills. Additionally, the platform provides the necessary documentation and longitudinal data to validate that NMJC's educational programs effectively cultivate these critical competencies.

NMJC is dedicated to fostering student learning skills that are adaptable to rapidly changing environments. The integration of AI in higher education presents both opportunities and challenges, and NMJC is proactively addressing this evolving landscape. As faculty and students encounter AI-embedded learning systems and generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT), the institution is capitalizing on these advancements by implementing instructional policies and course modules that emphasize ethical use and effective management of AI technologies. For example, faculty-developed AI policy, approved through the Academic Standards/Curriculum Committee, is now included in syllabi, and embedded course learning modules, such as those in Sociology, provide students with hands-on guidance in navigating AI responsibly.

In 2024, faculty within the Communications content area submitted a campus-wide internal grant proposal for institutional approval to adopt the Classroom Companion AI-powered program for instructional purposes. The program's features align with Goals 1 and 4 of NMJC's Academic Master Plan, which directly support the college's mission. The program integrates seamlessly with Canvas and provides real-time feedback through an AI chatbot. While these capabilities align with NMJC's mission to provide adaptable and future-ready learning experiences, the start-up company was unable to provide the level of ongoing technical support needed to address the technical glitches encountered by the college's faculty and student users. The Communications area faculty subsequently sought another product to address the identified needs. The product, Brisk, has been adopted and is being piloted during FY26 with faculty-wide training scheduled for spring 2026 and greater implementation in FY27.

In 2025, NMJC formed an ad hoc committee to develop a comprehensive campus-wide AI policy. This committee, composed of internal stakeholders from across the institution, is actively working to finalize the policy draft. In addition, the committee is designing professional development training to help faculty and staff effectively integrate AI into their workplace duties. Efforts are also underway to streamline software, application, and learning tool interoperability (LTIs) to reduce redundancy and enhance efficiency.

Through these initiatives, NMJC demonstrates a forward-thinking approach to integrating AI into the academic environment. By providing students with structured guidance and equipping faculty with advanced instructional technologies, the institution is fostering the development of skills that are not only relevant in today's AI-driven world but also adaptable to future challenges.

Through its participation in the New Mexico General Education Common Core, NMJC ensures that general education courses emphasize essential skills such as communication, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, and digital literacy. These skills are integrated into its ILOs, which guide curricular development and assess student achievement in areas such as communication, problem-solving, and self and community. NMJC embeds these outcomes into course syllabi and programmatic assessments, with examples ranging from conflict resolution role-plays in Psychology to professionalism-focused activities in CTE programs. Additionally, the college fosters adaptability through initiatives like minimum communication standards for students, the integration of AI technologies, and the development of ethical AI usage policies. These efforts, combined with faculty collaboration and continuous improvement processes, ensure that NMJC students are prepared for academic, professional, and personal success in an ever-changing environment.

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3.C. Sufficiency of Faculty and Staff

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

Argument

NMJC employs 260 full-time and 87 part-time personnel. Fifty-eight full-time faculty and 50 adjunct/part-time faculty instruct the college's 2,387 students who are equally supported by a staff of 202 full-time and 37 part-time student services personnel, administrative team members, technical professionals, and custodial and maintenance staff.

Full-time faculty members are contracted to teach 30 load hours per year (15 load hours per semester). Faculty load is calculated using a combination of credit hours, contact hours, and course headcount. The average class size is 23 students in any given semester, and the student-to-faculty ratio is 18:1. At NMJC, full-time faculty teach approximately 80% of the credit hours. Because NMJC is a community college and operates in a student-centered culture, faculty members' primary responsibilities are in teaching and mentoring students as opposed to conducting research and publishing. Full-time faculty members have sufficient time for instruction, course preparation, contact with students outside of scheduled class meetings (office hours), and participation in the shared governance committee structure (Employee Handbook Policy 6.6 Committees). Likewise, full-time staff members, contracted to work 40 hours each week, are afforded time to participate in the college's shared governance committee structure as a part of their workplace duties.

Qualifications of Faculty and Staff

The college evaluates and credentials all instructional staff – full-time, adjunct/part-time, and dual credit – at time of hire. College faculty members are hired according to assumed practices of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), the NMJC Board Policy 5.1, and Faculty Selection and Qualifications Criteria (Faculty Handbook p. 10). All faculty have at least a master's degree within their discipline, a master's degree with a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in their discipline, or have the industry-specific certifications and/or verified field experience to meet NMJC's definition of "tested experience" as set forth in the Faculty Handbook (p.10). New faculty hires are required to have the appropriate credentials in-hand at the time of hire. All degrees accepted by the college for hiring purposes must be from a regionally accredited institution, and the applicant must provide official transcripts verifying degrees claimed on their employment application. Part-time/adjunct faculty and faculty approved to teach dual credit courses are considered contract staff and not as full benefits-eligible employees. Individuals hired as limited-term contract faculty meet or exceed the minimum qualifications described. Faculty teaching in programs with third-party accreditation (e.g., Nursing, Automotive) or state/regional board oversight (e.g., Ford ASSET, Nursing, Public Safety, Cosmetology) meet the appropriate credentials required by those agencies. Likewise, NMJC professional and support staff who provide student services are appropriately qualified for their positions as detailed in their position descriptions.

Professional Development

NMJC is committed to supporting ongoing professional development opportunities for both faculty and staff. Professional development opportunities allow employees to acquire new skills, update existing ones, and stay current with industry trends making them more valuable in their service to the college, its mission and its students. The Faculty and Staff Development Committee is one of the college's standing committees within its shared governance structure charged with identifying training and professional development needs and opportunities as well as coordinating such activities on and off campus. As such, the college provides a variety of internal and external opportunities for employee professional development annually.

Campus-wide Professional Development

At the beginning of each semester, all employees gather for a campus-wide convocation where the President provides a state-of-the-college report, and updates are provided from various campus departments. At this time, all employees are assigned professional development modules within the NeoEd and KnowBe4 systems located in the T-bird Web Portal. NeoEd offers courses on topics such as Title IX and sexual misconduct, Clery Act, active shooter response, defensive driving, FERPA, etc. KnowBe4 provides training specific to online safety and security awareness with topics such as social media, password security, AI voice cloning, and phishing. Both platforms allow individualized assignment of topics based upon employee duties and responsibilities. Each November, NMJC participates in the annual county-wide in-service held through the Moran Lecture Series, bringing various public speakers covering topics such as The Future of Artificial Intelligence in Public Education, Leading and Thriving in a Multigenerational Environment, Tune Up Your Life, A Baker's Dozen of Lessons Learned from Teaching in the Trenches. In addition, full-time employees of NMJC as well as their eligible dependents have access to tuition and fee waivers for a total of nine hours of credit courses per semester and one non-credit community education course offering at no cost (Employee Handbook Policy 3.7, p. 22).

The NMJC Leadership Institute

In fall 2023, NMJC launched its two-year Leadership Institute to provide professional development opportunities and support succession planning for current and future campus leaders. The Leadership Institute aligned its targeted competencies with the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) Leadership Suite and the John E. Roueche Future Leaders Institute. The program's overarching goal was to cultivate leadership skills, foster professional networks, and promote succession planning.

The inaugural cohort of 20 participants was selected by divisional vice presidents and approved by the Executive Cabinet and included a cross-sectional representation of full-time faculty and staff. The program's first year (2023-2024) focused on workshop-based modules addressing topics such as crucial conversations, team building, community engagement, and leveraging individual leadership strengths. The second year (2024-2025) emphasized group projects that aligned with NMJC's core values of excellence, effectiveness, community involvement, access, and responsiveness. These projects, developed and implemented over a nine-month period, culminated in final presentations and discussions on actionable steps for institutional improvement.

The Leadership Institute's structure integrates action research, enabling participants to address institutionally relevant topics and needs. This approach reflects NMJC's commitment to fostering long-term employee growth and professional development. By equipping its leaders with the skills, knowledge, and vision necessary to navigate the evolving higher education landscape, NMJC ensures its capacity to sustain institutional excellence and fulfill its mission.

Faculty Professional Development

The college offers a variety of professional development activities for faculty, including training in online facilitation, support for attendance at professional conferences, and in-service workshops aimed at improving teaching practices and student engagement.

On campus, academic deans facilitate internal professional development during in-service weeks. In spring 2022, the college launched its HLC Quality Initiative Project (QIP), Valuing Student Voice: Reimagining Engagement, an intentional, structured faculty development series focused on improving student engagement and academic success. This initiative included the Faculty Engagement Summit, which delivers workshops on topics such as gamification, interactive technology, facilitating group discussions, and rubric development. Examples of workshop titles include Making Connections, Multiple Learning Styles, Teaching Styles versus Learning Styles, Checking for Understanding, and Creating Rubrics. These efforts reflect NMJC's commitment to instructional excellence by equipping faculty with innovative tools and strategies that directly enhance student learning. NMJC prioritizes student-informed, faculty-focused professional development to improve the student learning experience. The academic deans have continued these efforts by offering regular pedagogy and teaching support training during the fall and spring semesters, building upon the success of the QIP initiative.

NMJC also ensures quality in online education through required training for all adjunct and full-time faculty teaching online courses. Developed by the distance learning staff, the "best practices" course equips faculty with essential skills for online instruction, supporting the institution's high standards for digital learning environments.

The annual Teaching Professor Conference provides faculty with national-level professional development on effective teaching, navigating the evolving higher education landscape, and enhancing student learning. Both new full-time and adjunct faculty are invited to participate, fostering instructional development and professional camaraderie. Additionally, NMJC faculty actively participate in the New Mexico Higher Education Assessment and Retention (NMHEAR) Conference, which focuses on outcomes assessment and improving higher education practices. Faculty attendees submit summaries of their learning experiences and how these insights enhance their roles, ensuring alignment with institutional goals. Attendees are supported by the Faculty and Staff Development Committee and are encouraged to implement relevant practices within their disciplines.

Staff Professional Development

Beyond faculty development, NMJC also supports professional development for professional and support staff. For example, library personnel participate in professional development through the New Mexico and Texas Library Associations. Similarly, further evidence of the college's commitment to supporting continued staff development can be found in the

professional training attended by financial aid staff, including conferences and webinars. Title IX Coordinator and Investigator trainings by the Association of Title IX Administrators (ATIXA) attended by student services personnel, and SEVIS to maintain federal compliance for international students.

Professional Development Funding and Support

New Mexico Junior College is dedicated to life-long learning and demonstrates this commitment through various avenues of funding support for continued professional development. The NMJC Foundation maintains a fund which is matched by the state to support faculty and professional staff development. The funds are available through an application process to the Faculty and Staff Development Committee and require documentation of how participation in the activity will lead to improvement in student learning or services to students. In addition, the Vice President for Instruction has an account to support professional development for staff and a second fund to support student travel. In April 2025, the Board approved the FY26 budget which included a \$100,000 professional development fund to be used at the President's discretion in support of professional development activities for employees of NMJC. Other funds are available departmentally to support professional development as needed or requested.

Faculty and Staff Evaluation Processes

In accordance with Policy 2.5 of the *NMJC Employee Handbook*, all full-time employees participate in an annual performance evaluation process. Prior to FY26, the campus utilized a goal setting and feedback process developed by the college.

The Faculty Evaluation Process (FEP) consists of multiple components. Key elements of the evaluation process include end-of-course evaluations by students, direct classroom observation of teaching practices, and monitoring of student success/risk rates. In 2022, the faculty process was updated to include a classroom observation form developed by the Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCSSE). NMJC uses SmartEvals as a common end-of-course evaluation for all courses.

In AY26, NMJC began migrating its performance evaluation processes from paper-and-pencil to the NeoEd online system which houses the college's recruiting, onboarding, training, and, now, performance processes. In the NeoEd system, any new hire (with a start date of August 15, 2025 or later) will have a 90-day probation period with goals and feedback on performance followed by an annual review in the first year of employment. All full-time faculty and staff will participate in a performance evaluation on an annual basis via the NeoEd system.

New Mexico Junior College demonstrates its commitment to the sufficiency and quality of faculty and staff by maintaining a well-qualified workforce and fostering continuous professional development. Faculty and staff meet rigorous credentialing standards aligned with institutional, accreditation, and industry requirements, ensuring high-quality programs and services. NMJC supports professional growth through initiatives like the Leadership Institute, Faculty Engagement Summit, and participation in national and regional conferences, complemented by dedicated funding for development activities. These efforts, along with an annual evaluation process and strategic investments in employee development, ensure the institution's capacity to deliver effective programs, student

services, and sustained institutional excellence.

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3.D. Support for Student Learning and Resources for Teaching

The institution provides student support services that address the needs of its student populations, as well as the teaching resources and infrastructure necessary for student success.

Argument

Comprehensive Student Support Services

New Mexico Junior College (NMJC) offers an extensive array of student support services designed to address the diverse needs of its student population and promote academic and personal success. These services include financial aid, disability resources, veterans' services, academic coaching, counseling, tutoring, food pantry, and health clinic. In response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, NMJC adapted its traditional service model to a wrap-around services model to ensure continuity of support during a period of significant disruption. Post-pandemic, the college embraced the wrap-around services model with refinements to better serve the campus community.

The Department of Student Success is composed of a dedicated team that includes the Dean of Student Success, the Director of Student Support Services (TRIO), five Academic Success Coaches, two mental health counselors, the Coordinator of the Academic Success Center, a Student Resource Coordinator, tutoring specialists, and a dedicated STEM tutor. Academic Success Coaches, formerly known as student advisors, play a critical role in guiding students through their academic journey. They ensure students complete necessary placement tests, address transitional education needs, enroll in appropriate programs, and track their progress toward completion. Success Coaches also conduct degree audits using Degree Works to verify that students meet the requirements for their chosen programs. Valuable student resources, such as course schedules, registration procedures, admission policies, tuition and fees, semester calendars, and transfer opportunities, are readily accessible via the NMJC website and the Self-Service Banner portal. Success Coaches utilize tools like Dropout Detective to monitor early alert data and proactively address barriers to student success. Additionally, they collaborate with the Marketing Department to promote transfer opportunities with partner institutions, including Texas Tech University, Eastern New Mexico University, Lubbock Christian University, and the University of Texas Permian Basin.

Incoming students are required to meet with an assigned Academic Success Coach before class registration. During these meetings, Academic Success Coaches discuss career goals, help students develop academic plans, and recommend courses tailored to their individual schedules. All enrolled students are assigned an Academic Success Coach who meets with them periodically throughout the semester either face-to-face, via telephone, or virtually, providing ongoing support and monitoring their progress. Students approaching graduation are contacted and guided through the graduation application process, with coaches answering any questions to ensure a smooth transition to their next life goal.

The Student Success staff collaborates with existing services, such as financial aid, the NMJC Foundation, and the testing center, while also developing new support initiatives, including English Language Learner (ELL) programs and writing workshops. The department is committed to connecting NMJC students with comprehensive resources both on campus and within the Lea County community.

Academic Success Center

The Academic Success Center (ASC), staffed by professional tutoring specialists, offers free tutoring for all students enrolled at NMJC. Tutors offer in-person, Zoom, and virtual reality tutoring. Online tutoring is also available through Brainfuse, a third-party tutoring solution platform available 24/7 offering NMJC students academic assistance with schedule flexibility. During FY23 the ASC served 4,171 students. That number increased by 12% in FY24 to 4,752 students. In FY25, the ASC saw another increase of 10% serving 5,298 students. Staffed with a Coordinator, three full-time tutoring specialists, and two part-time tutors, students are able to access tutors via the online scheduling system or by simply walking in. The ASC recently added its Study Studio where students can experience math ESL, biology, and anatomy via virtual reality in a distraction-free environment.

Support for Veterans

NMJC is committed to supporting veteran students through the services of a Veterans Administration School Certifying Official. The institution is approved by the New Mexico Department of Veterans' Services State Approving Agency under the Montgomery G.I. Bill®. Most course offerings at NMJC meet federal and state requirements for veterans' educational assistance. Additionally, tuition waivers are available to qualifying students under various federal military-based programs and state legislative actions. Academic Success Coaches also provide programmatic and scheduling support to veterans to help them achieve their educational goals.

TRIO/Student Support Services

The TRIO/Student Support Services (SSS) program, funded by federal grants, creates a highly supportive environment for 185 eligible students, including first-generation, low-income, and students with learning or physical disabilities. The program effectively identifies the needs of its target population, highlighting that 44% of the total undergraduate enrollment (737 of 1,644 students) meet SSS eligibility criteria. This includes 29% (478 students) who are first-generation college students, 14% (237 students) who are low-income, and 1% (24 students) who are disabled. The applicant further illustrates critical academic barriers faced by these students. For instance, 40.1% of SSS-eligible students are placed in transitional courses, compared to only 7.2% of non-eligible students, and 28.4% of SSS-eligible students are on academic probation, compared to 16.8% of non-eligible students. Beyond academic challenges, the program identifies widespread basic needs insecurity, with 56% of students reporting food insecurity in the previous 30 days, 53% experiencing housing insecurity in the past year, and 19% experiencing homelessness in the same timeframe. These metrics underscore the critical need for targeted support.

In July 2025, NMJC received notice that its TRIO/Student Support Services application was approved. The college secured continued funding through August 31, 2030. According to the ratings and feedback on the review rubric, the program excels in its clear identification of

student needs, ambitious yet achievable objectives, personalized and evidence-based services, institutional commitment, and strong evaluation framework. These strengths position NMJC's SSS project as a comprehensive and impactful initiative to support underserved students.

Faculty Advisement and Collaboration

Faculty members at NMJC play a vital role in student success through informal advising and scheduled conferences during designated office hours. Regardless of delivery method, all full-time instructors are required to be available to students through a combination of in-person and virtual office hours. Contact information for faculty is included in all course syllabi. Faculty members clearly communicate their availability to students and provide guidance on course requirements and progression within their academic programs. In collaboration with Academic Success Coaches, faculty also provide referrals for more in-depth advisement, ensuring students receive the support they need.

High School Outreach

NMJC maintains strong connections with local high schools in Lea County through regular visits to host advisement sessions for dual credit students. Additionally, the college arranges annual visits with high school seniors in smaller, more personalized settings. These sessions offer students the opportunity to ask questions about Foundation scholarships, FAFSA, student loans, vocational and academic programs, and the enrollment process. This approach fosters early connections with prospective students and ensures they are well-informed about NMJC's resources and opportunities.

Testing Center

The Testing Center offers a variety of services that are available to students, faculty and the community, including Accuplacer, Pearson, PRAXIS, TEAS, HISET, CLEP, and test proctoring services in addition to scheduled make-up tests and ADA accommodations. The secure testing venue requires photo identification to ensure test security and offers an alternative to online proctoring. In the 2023 calendar year, the Testing Center served 3,597 clients, an average of 300 per month. In 2024, that number increased by 3.5% to 3,742. In the first nine months of 2025, the Testing Center served 3,042 clients. At the current rate, the Testing Center forecasts that the number of clients served will be more than 4,000, representing an increase of more than 8% from 2024.

Thunderbird Pantry

The pantry offers food items, hygiene products, and clothing free of charge for all registered NMJC students. In December 2022, the Thunderbird Pantry received a \$50,000 College Food Security Grant from the New Mexico Higher Education Department, supplemented by generous donations from NMJC staff and faculty, the NMJC Foundation, area churches, the City of Hobbs, area businesses, and the local Salvation Army. In addition, the pantry's Student Resource Coordinator, helps to connect students with vital community resources like childcare, housing, and clothing. The Thunderbird Pantry first opened its doors in October 2022 through February 2024, more than 1,650 students were served. Recognizing the need to keep more accurate records, the pantry adopted Pantry Software, which increases the type and accuracy of the data collected. In calendar year 2024, the Thunderbird Pantry served 1,994 students. In the first nine months of 2025, the pantry has

served 1,909 students. At the current rate, NMJC forecasts that more than 2,500 students will be served, which will represent an increase of more than 27% over the 2024 calendar year.

Thunderbird Health Center

In partnership with the Nor-Lea Hospital District, the Thunderbird Health Center is located on NMJC's campus. The clinic serves enrolled NMJC students and college employees needing care for minor illnesses, minor wounds, and minor injuries. Appointments are free of charge, with any additional services (e.g., imaging, lab testing) billed to the patient. Nor-Lea Hospital District also provides Financial Counseling Services to connect patients with resources associated with their healthcare, including healthcare insurance enrollment, prescription assistance, and medical transportation. In a report to the NMJC Board of Directors in February 2025, the clinic staff reported serving 18 patients per day, with the ability to see an additional 10-12 patients per day.

Support for Underprepared Students

As an open-access institution, NMJC provides learning support and transitional curriculum for students who may not be ready for college-level coursework. Learning support and transitional curricula are essential tools for helping underprepared students succeed in college by bridging gaps in academic skills and building confidence. These programs provide structured academic support in areas such as English and math. The goal is to bring students up to college-level proficiency so they can successfully complete college-level coursework.

Adult Education

The Adult Education program offers educational services to qualified adults seeking basic education skills. Having served an average of 350 students from fiscal year 22-25, the Adult Education program offers morning and evening classes, free of charge and at a variety of locations. The Adult Education program focuses on the following areas of service: English as a Second Language (ESL), Citizenship, Basic reading, writing, and math, HSE:GED®/HiSET® exam preparation. The Adult Education program assists participants in becoming literate, attaining a secondary school diploma, transitioning to post-secondary education, and obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency. It also serves as a pipeline and foundation for workforce programs at the college.

Placement

Currently, NMJC utilizes the multiple measures placement method to ensure students are set up for success. Academic Success Coaches use transcripts (high school and/or college), ACT, SAT, and/or Accuplacer scores to discuss with students the starting point for math and English courses. The college catalog outlines the process and prerequisite information students need to determine placement.

The math and English departments are currently undergoing a year-long project (CORECHO2) to eliminate transitional courses and incorporate corequisite instruction into gateway math and English courses. Beginning in fall 2026, students will enter directly into the gateway math and English corequisite courses without formal placement measures.

Transitional Courses

NMJC has continually refined its transitional education programs to better address the needs of its students. Guided by the Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee (SLOAC) and departmental evaluations of English coursework success, the institution has explored and implemented academic alternatives aimed at improving student learning outcomes and facilitating progress toward degree or certificate completion.

In AY18, NMJC introduced the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) within its gateway English courses to provide enhanced support for students who would traditionally begin in transitional (developmental) English classes. The ALP model utilized a corequisite approach, pairing a college-level course with a developmental course that offers additional academic support. Both courses are taken concurrently within the same semester, allowing students requiring remediation to engage with college-level material while receiving targeted assistance. The ALP courses were offered through AY24. Upon review, the design of the ALP process inhibited enrollment, which negatively impacted the results.

Recognizing the need to transform its transitional course offerings in both English and math, in AY26, the English and math departments joined the CORECHO2 program in collaboration with the University of New Mexico and Complete College America. The program supports colleges as they adopt corequisite instructional models to teach introductory, college-level math and English. Additionally, the New Mexico Independent Community Colleges (NMICC) in collaboration with the Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin began participation in the New Mexico Launch (NMLaunch) initiative in 2025. NMLaunch supports the scaling of mathematics pathways from high school through post-secondary education and into the workforce. This initiative combined with participation in CORECHO2 will help the English and math departments re-envision their transitional to college credit pipelines to better support and serve students.

Academic Infrastructure and Teaching Resources

Academic infrastructure serves as the backbone of a thriving educational environment, directly supporting the quality, resources, and support systems integral to the NMJC mission of *promoting success through learning*. NMJC has embarked on an ambitious initiative to upgrade and expand instructional spaces to support program growth and accommodate increasing enrollment. Since 2020, the college has undertaken significant renovations of key facilities, including Heidel Hall, which houses the Departments of Math and Sciences; McLean Hall, home to the Department of Cosmetology; and Watson Hall, which supports the Theater and Music departments. Additionally, improvements have been made to campus parking to better serve the growing student population.

In the summer of 2025, NMJC opened a state-of-the-art, 35,000-square-foot Industrial Training Center. This facility was specifically designed to support both credit and non-credit programs in Automation and Industrial Technology, Welding, and Oil and Gas, further advancing the college's commitment to workforce development. Renovation and construction projects are ongoing and include a re-envisioned Agricultural District to house the rapidly expanding Equine, Animal Science, and Farm and Ranch Management programs as well as supporting the men's and women's Rodeo Teams; renovation of Mansur and Mary Hagelstein Halls.

Classrooms across the campus are outfitted with cutting-edge technology, including smart podiums, projectors, and interactive television screens, to enrich the learning experience. Faculty utilize LTIs integrated with the Canvas LMS to enrich the student learning experience. Common spaces, like the study lounge in Caster Activity Center, grant students access to educational technology tools outside of the classroom.

Pannell Library

Pannell Library provides a diverse collection of print and electronic resources designed to meet the information resource requirements of New Mexico Junior College students, faculty, staff, and community patrons in support of curriculum and the College mission. Examples include a database collection of over 190 unique resources, 22 public access computers, and study rooms. Students of NMJC are also offered guidance in the ethical and effective use of information resources by the staff of Pannell Library. The library provides valuable resources such as laptops, calculators, and digital cameras, which are available to students to support them in achieving their academic goals.

Modern classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and digital platforms collectively equip faculty and students with the resources needed for high-quality teaching and learning. Smart classrooms with interactive technologies foster dynamic and engaging instruction, while well-maintained laboratories provide opportunities for hands-on, experiential learning and research. These advanced educational environments not only encourage innovation in pedagogy but also underscore NMJC's dedication to meeting the diverse and evolving needs of its students.

Institutional Quality Initiative Project (QIP)

From 2022-2024, New Mexico Junior College embarked on a journey to improve student success by way of faculty professional development. The project developed by the QIP subcommittee was titled Valuing Student Voice: Reimagining Engagement. The goal of increasing the percentage of students who receive A, B, and C grades over D, F, and W grades by 5 points was ambitious. NMJC sought to achieve this goal by way of the comprehensive planning and implementation of various workshops and resources to improve instruction. In the Quality Initiative report, the review panel confirmed the college put forth an effort to systematically advance professional development among faculty as a means of improving student outcomes.

The project, which spanned from Spring 2022 through Summer 2024, was a collaborative effort involving faculty, students, and administration. The primary goals of the Quality Initiative (QI) were to develop targeted professional development opportunities for faculty to enhance student engagement, support faculty in incorporating new teaching strategies, and monitor and assess the impact of these strategies on student success. As part of the initiative, a structured faculty development series was established. The initial phase involved administering the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and conducting surveys to gather insights into faculty and student perceptions of engagement. These findings informed the QI proposal, which received approval from the Higher Learning Commission in Summer 2022.

A significant outcome of the QIP was the improvement in student success rates, defined as the percentage of students achieving grades A, B, or C. The success rate increased from

71.9% in 2021-22 to 75.5% in 2023-24, marking a 3.6% improvement. The QIP also positively impacted student attainment of essential skills across various content areas:

- Communication: Increased by an average of 7.5%.
- Science: Improved by 3.8%.
- Social and Behavioral Sciences: Achieved the highest improvement at 15.25%.
- Humanities: Recorded an increase of 5.75%.
- Creative and Fine Arts: Showed an increase of 6.67%.
- Math: Unfortunately, saw a decrease of 9% on average, indicating a need for targeted interventions in this area (see transitional course discussion in 3.D)

To address these concerns, the decision was made to transition to using the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) Content Area Outcomes assessment data as the measure of general education achievement. This change was considered more consistent in terms of design and analysis, ensuring greater reliability in evaluating student learning outcomes. The QI efforts resulted in a measurable increase in student success, as defined by the initiative, by 3.6%. While challenges remain in fully aligning faculty development with this outcome, the improvement in student success demonstrates the QI's effectiveness in elevating the priority of quality teaching across campus. This focus on instructional excellence contributed to positive student outcomes.

NMJC's commitment to student learning and teaching excellence is evident in its comprehensive support services, innovative academic infrastructure, and vibrant campus life. By integrating personalized student support, transitional education, cutting-edge facilities, and opportunities for engagement, the institution ensures that students are equipped to thrive academically and personally. These efforts exemplify NMJC's mission of ***promoting success through learning*** and its dedication to fostering a supportive, dynamic educational environment.

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3.E. Assessment of Student Learning

The institution improves the quality of educational programs based on its assessment of student learning.

Argument

Assessment of student learning delivers evidence of value in courses, programs of study and degrees earned. It also helps identify opportunities for improvement. NMJC uses assessment to track the progression of learning from specific areas of study through broad, widely applicable learning goals. *Success through learning* is measured in how well students communicate, critically think, problem solve, and interact within their communities as they pursue education and career goals with NMJC and beyond.

As documented in the Assessment of Student Learning Guide, NMJC's methods of assessment should be understood from three distinct levels:

- Institutional- NMJC's institutional outcomes define broad student learning goals for all students regardless of selected program of study: Communication, Critical Thinking, and Self and Community.
- Area/Program – Each area or program defines student learning goals for the overall area of study.
- Course- All courses have learning outcomes leading directly to area/program outcomes which map to ILOs. Institutional and departmental Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are assessed within the context of individual courses.

These three levels of assessment are presented in each course syllabus, through the Simple Syllabus software program, to provide a clear vision of all student learning goals. General education courses use the General Education Outcomes defined by the New Mexico Higher Education Department. Non-general education departments and training programs each have a set of 3-6 accepted student learning outcomes previously defined by professors. Outcome statements are communicated in class and documented through course syllabi.

Curricular Assessment

NMJC has a comprehensive assessment process, starting at the course level and aggregating data departmentally and institutionally. The college uses the ETS Proficiency Profile (now known as the EPP) for external benchmarking of ILOs. Area SLOs are defined by NMHED whereas program SLOs are developed with input from industry partners and advisory boards. SLOAC is composed of a cross-sectional group of faculty and administrators who work collaboratively to support and enhance student learning and achievement by reviewing assessment reports, suggesting changes to the process, and mentoring faculty through the assessment process. Faculty are actively engaged in the assessment process through their courses and subsequent area/program meetings to discuss insights and plans for improvement. Their responsibilities include reviewing guidelines and requirements from HLC and state agencies related to student achievement

and learning, ensuring institutional alignment with these standards. Additionally, SLOAC is responsible for reviewing, updating, and disseminating the college's assessment plan to maintain its relevance and effectiveness.

General Education

In accordance with the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED), all general education courses must fall into one of six content areas: communication, mathematics, science, social and behavioral science, humanities, and creative and fine arts. Within each content area are three of six essential skills: communication, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, information and digital literacy, and personal and social responsibility. Each semester faculty provide assessment results targeting the assigned essential skills. These results are aggregated and discussed by each department in an effort to identify areas for improvement and strategies to address those identified areas. The data become a part of the program review process (described in component 3.F) to document continuous improvement.

Career and Technical Education

The CTE programs have developed their own course-level and program-level SLOs with input from industry partners and advisory boards. Each program follows a structured assessment process based on their learning outcomes. Within CTE programs, common learning outcomes are utilized to ensure students achieve essential skills aligned with industry standards. Program directors work with their faculty and the Faculty Assessment Coordinator to review course-level data and identify changes need for programmatic improvement. Course-level assessment is mapped to program-level assessment, which then leads to ILOs.

Implementation of Nuventive

Nuventive is a comprehensive assessment management platform that enables NMJC to efficiently collect, analyze, and report on SLOs and institutional effectiveness. By removing the need for manual data collation and aggregation, the platform streamlines reporting processes and supports the transformation of assessment data into clear, actionable insights. Its structured frameworks help document how core academic requirements engage students in information gathering, analysis, and communication across the curriculum, thereby reinforcing intellectual inquiry within academic programs.

For ILOs, Nuventive allows NMJC to align program-level assessments with broader institutional goals, track achievement trends over time, and demonstrate how students develop transferable intellectual skills and inquiry-based methods that prepare them for evolving professional environments. At the SLO level, the platform facilitates consistent tracking of course- and program-level outcomes, enabling faculty to efficiently document competencies in analytical thinking, creative problem-solving, and information literacy. It also supports the collection of evidence of student mastery through integrated tools such as rubrics, assignments, and assessment measures.

With its robust reporting and analytics features, Nuventive enables the development of detailed reports that clearly illustrate how NMJC's core curricula advance intellectual inquiry and the cultivation of adaptive skills. The platform provides the documentation and longitudinal data needed to confirm that NMJC's educational programs effectively build

these essential competencies, while reducing the administrative workload associated with manual reporting.

Course-Level Assessment and Improvement

NMJC employs data-driven approaches to improve educational programs and support services. Guided by assessments conducted by area and program faculty, NMJC has explored academic alternatives to improve student learning outcomes and facilitate progress toward degree and certificate completion in support of continuous improvement.

Enhancements in English Curriculum

English faculty engaged in assessment data review to refine instructional practices. Outcomes from these discussions included the development of a list of major errors shared among English courses, the standardization of rubrics for these courses, and the publication of recommended writing tools for students. Adjustments to curricula are implemented based on these assessments, with success measured by course-level and program-level outcomes.

Innovations in Math Curriculum

The math faculty also undertook significant measures to enhance its curriculum. In Fall 2024, the department renamed its transitional studies courses to better reflect their purpose and content. Basic Math was updated to Developmental Math I, and Elementary Algebra was renamed Developmental Math II. This change aimed to address student perceptions that the previous titles implied minimal rigor and effort, while aligning the course sequence with transitional English courses for consistency. Additionally, the department explored the creation of a practical, non-algebra course tailored for career training certificates and Associate of Applied Science (AAS) programs. Rather than developing a new course, the department redesigned the existing, transferable Survey of Math course to better meet diverse program needs while maintaining its alignment with New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) general education standards. To support this pathway, the Introduction to Statistics course prerequisite language was updated in AY26, providing a clear non-algebraic pathway.

Career and Technical Education Improvements

Departments CTE division have implemented robust measures to assess and improve student learning outcomes at the course level. These efforts are informed by course-level assessments, advisory board feedback, and state licensure or pass rates, where applicable. Programs such as Automotive, Cosmetology, and Law Enforcement align their curricula with Institutional Learning Outcomes, CTE common learning outcomes, and industry standards. For instance, advisory board feedback and state board pass rates for the Barbering and Cosmetology departments identified a need to emphasize theoretical practices, such as color mixing percentages, and increase hands-on engagement with live models before graduation. In response, curricula updates now include expanded opportunities for student shadowing at local salons.

Cocurricular Assessment Embedded Report

During its mid-cycle review in 2020, cocurricular assessment was identified as an area of

focus. As a result, NMJC was tasked with developing, documenting, and executing a plan to accomplish sustain and meaningful assessment for its cocurricular program, including definitions, outcomes, methodology, data collection, data analysis, and recommendations for improvement. In fall 2021, a team of administrators and staff convened to address HLC's directive.

After reviewing cocurricular models from peer institutions and examining the academic assessment processes in place, the team developed an operational definition of and goal for cocurricular programming at NMJC. The team then discussed which programming options met the newly developed definition of cocurricular and which were extracurricular. The team then determined assessment methodology and data collection processes. The team determined that assessing cocurricular programming using the established ILOs would best serve the students and the institution while meshing with pre-established outcomes. A review of pre-existing survey efforts was conducted to determine next steps. Generic question stems were developed and served as the initial data gathering tool.

Formal data collection began in fall 2024 with pre- and post-assessments where applicable. Review of data collected occurs after completed events or programming to determine what, if any changes are merited to improve the experience for students.

Institutional Overview

Since the last Assurance Argument, internal data across ILOs (from 2020 – 2023) indicate that NMJC's students are demonstrating proficiency. Our students seem to be meeting expected standards across disciplines. Simply stated, instructors consider approximately 8 out of 10 students successful with subject area or program goals that correlate to broader institutional goals. These results are indicative of the stability of our student learning.

The ETS Proficiency Profile (ETS PP) test serves the purpose of assessing the college's ILOs. External comparison to 43 Associate's colleges from 2017-2022 shows NMJC slightly below the national average. NMJC has altered our testing sample to include only students who have completed 30 hours or more to determine the impact on our results.

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3.F. Program Review

The institution improves its curriculum based on periodic program review.

Argument

The program review process is designed to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of academic programs, ensuring they align with the institution's mission and contribute meaningfully to student learning and success. This process combines self-assessment and external evaluation to identify program strengths and areas for improvement, ultimately driving program enhancement and strategic planning.

In support of NMJC's mission, *success through learning*, the college has refined and implemented a program review process aimed at aligning departmental needs and resources with the goal of enhancing the student learning experience. This process also reflects NMJC's institutional value of *responsiveness* by ensuring the delivery of relevant programs and support services that meet the needs of the college's diverse community.

Program review is a systematic and ongoing effort that spans the entire campus. It evaluates instructional programs, student and academic support services, administrative functions, and overall academic productivity. These evaluations consider factors such as program demand, cost efficiency, and quality, ensuring that all areas contribute effectively to the institution's mission and goals.

NMJC implemented a new instructional program review process following its participation in the Program Review Workshop in the summer of 2024. The college's prior program review process functioned on a five-year cycle and relied solely on the academic dean overseeing the area to compile and analyze the collected data. This siloed activity did not meet the needs of the areas under review, the administrative areas utilizing the data to inform decisions, nor did it fulfill the actual intent of program review.

In June 2024, the Academic Deans and VP of Institutional Planning, Research and Effectiveness attended the HLC Academic Review Workshop in Chicago. During this two-day, immersive session, a draft document of the program review process was refined to create the current Academic Program/Area Review (APAR) in place, which includes a three-year cycle for comprehensive review with interim annual progress reports. After completion of area/program review submissions, additional stakeholders such as the Program Review and Academic Standards/Curriculum committees review and discuss the data for additional feedback prior to reaching the Academic Deans, for the development of a final action plan. The data is then incorporated into the college's budget planning process for the following FY.

During fall in-service week, faculty, whose programs/areas are scheduled for comprehensive review, are provided on-boarding training – How to Program Review – to discuss the submission expectations and timelines. NMJC recently transitioned to the use of the Nuventive digital platform to document, analyze, store, and disseminate program review submissions and associated data. Nuventive provides a centralized location to enter

program review data and narratives. The platform also compiles standardized reports.

During the fall semester, faculty in areas under review meet and discuss the data, the report template is completed, and a report is compiled. The reports are then reviewed by the Program Review Committee. This committee is responsible for analyzing the annual APARs and providing programmatic recommendations to the appropriate Instructional Dean regarding the allocation of financial, instructional, and personnel resources. The committee also makes strategic recommendations for programs under review, considering institutional goals, existing and planned programs, and available resources. Additionally, the committee prepares and disseminates meeting minutes to ensure transparency and effective communication.

During the FY25 APAR process, the Public Safety program identified the need for updated simulators in both the Public Safety Telecommunicators and the Basic Police Officer Training Academies. This documented need supported by enrollment, completion, and waitlist numbers resulted in the purchase of updated simulators through Equipment Replacement and Renewal (ER&R) funds. Likewise, the Agriculture APAR documented a substantial increase in student enrollment. This coupled with the Agriculture Advisory Board's support for expansion led to the development of a three-phase construction plan for an Agriculture District. The Communication APAR highlighted the lack of expected results from implementing the ALP corequisite model for gateway English courses. As a result, the English faculty are participating in the CORECHO2 program to re-envision the college's corequisite model to improve student access, success, retention, and completion.

During FY26, Math, Communication, Agriculture, Automotive, and Public Safety completed their Annual Progress Reports to provide follow-up on the action plans detailed in the Comprehensive Reviews completed in FY25. Science, Social and Behavioral Science, Computer Information Systems, Business/Accounting, Entertainment and Music Technology, Creative and Fine Arts, and Welding completed their comprehensive APARs in FY26.

Sources

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- Program Review Annual Monitoring_Area II Mathematics
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- Program Review Annual Monitoring_Public Safety
- Program Review Committee Charges and Member Composition
- Program Review Meeting Minutes
- Business-Accounting Comprehensive Program Review
- CIS Comprehensive Program Review

- ENMT - Comprehensive Program Review
- Natural Sciences (Area III) Comprehensive Program Review
- Social & Behavioral Sciences (Area IV) Comprehensive Program Review
- Welding - Comprehensive Program Review

3.G. Student Success Outcomes

The institution's student success outcomes demonstrate continuous improvement, taking into account the student populations it serves and benchmarks that reference peer institutions.

Argument

NMJC's recent student success performance reflects the combined influence of its diverse student demographics, regional economic conditions, and significant institutional disruptions experienced during the HLC baseline period. The college serves a predominantly Hispanic, majority first-generation student population within the Permian Basin, a region where high-paying oil and gas employment frequently competes with educational attainment. These economic pressures, coupled with pandemic-related instructional disruptions and substantial leadership turnover, contributed to fluctuating retention and completion outcomes. Despite these challenges, NMJC has established clear goals to improve first-year retention, graduation, and long-term completion and transfer rates by 5%, supported by comprehensive student success initiatives. These include expanded wraparound services, enhanced academic advising through a case-management model, strengthened mental health resources, diversified instructional modalities, and targeted workforce and adult education programs. Critical institutional divisions—Student Services, Instruction, Outreach and Engagement, and IRPE—collaborate to advance these efforts through coordinated advising, early alert systems, professional development, data-informed planning, and community engagement. The institution has further aligned its Academic Master Plan with strategic objectives, identifying measurable action items focused on course optimization, pathway development, ESL support, student placement, and faculty development. Progress is monitored through predictive analytics, LMS-integrated early alert tools, and campus-wide assessment platforms such as Nuventive and Tableau. While NMJC has demonstrated notable improvements across key student success indicators, sustaining these gains will require careful navigation of economic fluctuations, demographic needs, and continued leadership transitions.

NMJC maintains a comprehensive system for tracking and reporting student success outcomes, with particular emphasis on retention, persistence, and completion rates. The college reports retention cohort data annually through the IPEDS reporting methodology, ensuring consistency and comparability with national standards. This institutional data is publicly accessible through the College's Institutional Effectiveness webpage, where stakeholders can review summarized retention and graduation rate reports. The information serves as a critical resource for institutional analysis, enabling the College to assess student progression patterns and identify opportunities for improvement. By making this data readily available, NMJC demonstrates its commitment to transparency and accountability in measuring student success across all academic programs.

The Student Success Committee is responsible for developing a comprehensive Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan that encompasses recruitment, student success, completion, graduation, and retention. This process involves identifying key metrics,

evaluating current enrollment, success, and retention trends at NMJC, setting measurable goals and strategies, and annually assessing and refining these objectives. The committee also develops strategies for implementing the SEM plan and ensures alignment with the strategic plan with coordination of various campus stakeholders, including faculty, advisors, recruiters, marketing teams, and student groups. Additionally, the committee prepares and distributes an annual report detailing goals and progress to the campus community, while also maintaining and disseminating meeting minutes to the President, Vice Presidents, and committee members to ensure transparency and accountability.

Having a Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan provides significant benefits for NMJC by aligning enrollment strategies with the institution's mission, resources, and long-term goals. It helps stabilize and grow enrollment by proactively identifying and attracting target student populations, including non-traditional learners and underrepresented groups. By integrating academic advising, support services, and curriculum planning, the SEM plan also improves student retention and success. It encourages data-driven decision-making through the use of institutional research and analytics. Additionally, it ensures that resources such as budget, staffing, and academic offerings are aligned with enrollment priorities.

The SEM planning process fostered cross-campus collaboration by bringing together departments like academics, student affairs, admissions, and financial aid into a unified strategy. It also seeks to strengthen partnerships with local schools, employers, and community organizations to align programs with regional workforce needs. Importantly, the SEM plan supports equity and access by identifying and addressing barriers for underserved populations. Overall, it positions a community college to be more student-centered, responsive, and sustainable.

The 2025-2026 Strategic Enrollment Management plan outlined a comprehensive framework for addressing the institution's target populations, enrollment trends, workforce needs, and institutional goals for the academic year 2025-2026. This plan focuses on increasing enrollment, improving retention, aligning academic programs with regional workforce demands, and supporting student success through strategic initiatives and continuous evaluation. As an institution committed to accessibility and equity, NMJC ensures its programs and services remain responsive to the needs of its community. Enrollment data is closely monitored through IRPE using the Banner Student Information System (SIS) and the National Student Clearinghouse to identify trends and demographic shifts. Early Alert systems and the IRPE Office track student performance and support service utilization to ensure students receive timely assistance. Workforce needs are identified through engagement with advisory boards, analysis of labor market data, and ongoing communication with community stakeholders.

Enrollment Trends and Goals

NMJC has experienced steady enrollment growth in recent years and has set an ambitious goal of increasing overall enrollment by 2% annually. This target is supported by data-driven strategies and targeted outreach efforts. Recent enrollment trends reveal notable growth in key areas, including an increase in Hispanic student representation, reflecting the institution's commitment to serving its diverse community.

Dual credit enrollment has emerged as a vital area of focus, with NMJC seeking to expand

its partnerships with local high schools to provide greater opportunities for high school students to earn college credit. Additionally, there has been a significant rise in first-time freshmen enrollment and out-of-state students, particularly from Texas. These trends align with NMJC's broader enrollment objectives and demonstrate the success of its recruitment strategies.

Strategies for Achieving Enrollment Targets

NMJC employs a range of strategies to enhance enrollment and improve student outcomes. Targeted recruitment campaigns have proven highly effective, resulting in an 11% increase in out-of-state enrollment and a 23% rise in first-time freshmen enrollment. To improve retention rates, the institution has implemented mandatory advising, which has been particularly beneficial for first-time freshmen and Career and Technical Education (CTE) students.

Wraparound services, including tutoring, mental health counseling, and technology lending, have been expanded, leading to increased student satisfaction and greater utilization of resources. Looking ahead, NMJC plans to strengthen community partnerships and expand scholarship opportunities to attract and retain a wider pool of students.

Supporting Students After Enrollment

NMJC is committed to supporting students throughout their academic journey by providing personalized assistance and fostering a supportive campus environment. Academic Success Coaches monitor student progress using Early Alert systems and provide individualized support to ensure students stay on track. Wraparound services, including tutoring, mental health counseling, and access to technology, address barriers to success and contribute to a positive student experience.

Faculty collaboration is a key component of NMJC's support strategy. Faculty members play an active role in identifying at-risk students and ensuring timely interventions through communication with Student Success staff.

Retention: Progress and Challenges

NMJC has made significant strides in improving retention rates, though challenges remain. Current retention rates show that 80% of full-time freshmen persist from the first to the second semester, while 63% persist to the second year. Tools such as DropOut Detective and Degree Works are utilized to monitor student engagement and academic progress, enabling early interventions for those at risk of leaving the institution.

Despite these successes, barriers such as financial hardship, family responsibilities, and housing insecurity continue to impact retention, particularly among part-time and non-traditional students. Academic under-preparedness and language barriers also present challenges, especially for Hispanic and international students.

Evaluation and Adaptation of Retention Strategies

Retention strategies at NMJC are continuously evaluated and refined based on data and feedback. Retention data is reviewed each semester and annually by the IRPE Office, with findings shared with the Student Success Committee. This process informs decisions on

resource allocation and updates to the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan.

Recent adaptations include expanding wraparound services to include a health clinic and multilingual support, refining the early alert system to increase faculty engagement, and adopting proactive outreach methods by Academic Success Coaches. These changes are guided by retention trends, student usage data, and input from advisory boards.

Transfer Pathways and Employment Success

NMJC has established systems to facilitate student transfers and improve employment outcomes. Articulation agreements with universities streamline the transfer process, while joint advising sessions and transfer fairs help students plan their next steps. Degree Works plays a critical role in tracking academic progress and ensuring students remain on track for transfer.

To support workforce readiness, NMJC provides career services such as resume assistance, job search tools, and annual career fairs. Programs are aligned with regional job demands, though challenges such as skill alignment and transportation barriers persist. Continued coordination with employers and receiving institutions is essential to improving both transfer and employment outcomes.

Enrollment Management Success Initiatives

Through a targeted series of active recruitment, student support, and targeted enrollment efforts in conjunction with a newly developed Strategic Enrollment Management plan, the college has shown evidence of Fall-to-Fall enrollment increases, even with a need for higher education to stabilize post-pandemic. Institutional research tracking from Fall 2020 – Fall 2024 enrollment headcounts have shown a 13.3% increase (1975 students to 2238). In a nationwide trend of college “enrollment cliffs”, NMJC stands poised to maintain and incrementally grow its student population.

NMJC has made great strides toward providing a data collection system sufficient to identify students at risk of discontinuing coursework for example. NMJC recognizes the downward enrollment trend in higher education institutions as well as the importance of supporting our students to success. As such, the college has implemented a more enhanced data collection system to include more robust analytics through Learning Management Systems (LMS) to enable faculty to play a more aggressive role in the retention, persistence, and completion efforts.

The software, Dropout Detective, provides a risk index based on the pattern of student engagement in class. Notification alerts are sent to instructors, Student Success staff, and other personnel with a legitimate educational interest in the student. Faculty and staff interacting with students have the opportunity to include notes or alerts. The Student Success team reviews early alerts daily to identify students deemed to be “at-risk” or falling behind. They contact the students, provide aid, and follow-up to ensure the students take advantage of the resources offered on campus. A dedicated office for Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness is fully staffed.

NMJC continues to strategically commit resources in order to support student success through to completion. The number of associate degrees and certificates awarded at NMJC shows that the number of students maintained during the Covid-19 academic years

(2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022) at an average of 346 students. Student completions overarchingingly increased to the highest number of completers in 2024 with 387.

Within that, the percentage of Hispanic students completing a certificate has increased from 10% of total completers in 2017-2018 to 19% in 2022-2023. The percentage of Hispanic students receiving associate degrees has fluctuated between 30% and 36% of total graduates. The percentage of white students graduating each year has fluctuated between 20% and 39%, and the percentage of Black student completers varied between 7% and 9% of total graduates. The completion rate for males is higher than seven years ago, increasing from 40% in 2017-2018 to a high of 45% in 2022-2023.

A contributing factor to the overall rise in graduation rates is a change that now requires all incoming freshmen students to meet with an Academic Success Coach prior to registration for classes. Academic Success Coaches discuss career goals, assist the student in developing an academic plan, and recommend appropriate courses that work best for the student's schedule. Students nearing completion are contacted directly and encouraged to apply for graduation.

Community College Survey of Student Engagement

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) aims to assess and improve the quality of community college education by measuring student engagement. It helps institutions identify areas where they can enhance their programs and services to support student learning and retention. NMJC supports the usage of this assessment as a data-driven tool to meet the institutional mission of ***success through learning*** and has been a consistent distributor of the CCSSE instrument (2010, 2013, 2022, and 2025). CCSSE data helps to inform decisions on retention, persistence, completions, and professional development (as noted in Core Component 3.C).

The 2022 CCSSE survey results showed the highest aspects of student engagement to be in the benchmarked areas of Student Effort (three items), Academic Challenge (one item), and Support for Learners (one item). The average percentage for the surveyed items was markedly higher than comparable two-year institutions in the CCSSE cohort. The results showed that NMJC is successful in encouraging student engagement efforts in terms of academic and career support. Students are also challenged to meet the institutional learning outcomes of communication, and critical thinking and problem solving by consistent engagement in written papers and/or reports. The 2022 survey results showed the lowest aspects of student engagement being found in student effort (three items), active and collaborative learning (one item) and academic challenge (one item).

The average percentage of surveyed items revealed a significant difference when compared to the corresponding cohort surveyed previously. As outlined in Core Components 3.C and 3.D, New Mexico Junior College (NMJC) undertook a multi-year Quality Initiative (QI) project aimed at enhancing student engagement outcomes through improved faculty practices and classroom strategies.

As NMJC serves a significant portion of part-time students, the data shows that the institution is also providing a comparable level of student satisfaction to this demographic in addition to full-time students. It is of note the positive differential of at least 3 points in the areas of Active and Collaborative Learning, Student Effort, and Support for Learners as

compared to the benchmarked Small Colleges cohort.

The college understands that there is always room for improvement, therefore a consistent distribution of the CCSSE to gauge student perspectives on engagement and analysis of results and best practices allows for a foundational continuous improvement process. NMJC recently distributed the 2025 CCSSE survey and plans to review the reported results for future goal setting and support structures to promote student success.

Sources

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- NMJC Performance Analysis Census Enrollment Trends Fall 2015_2025
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- Strategic Enrollment Management Plan 2024_2025
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- Student Success Committee Definitions and Rules
- QIRReportNewMexicoJuniorCollegeNM

Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program is consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.

Argument

NMJC demonstrates a clear and ongoing commitment to ensuring the quality, rigor, and effectiveness of its academic programs, learning environments, and support services. The college maintains well-defined learning goals and outcomes that align with program-level expectations, industry standards, and state and national accreditation requirements. Through structured curriculum oversight, systematic assessment processes, and regular program review, NMJC continuously evaluates its educational offerings to ensure they remain current, rigorous, and responsive to student and workforce needs. These processes are strengthened by faculty-driven assessment, integration of Institutional Learning Outcomes across all courses, and the use of tools such as Nuventive and ETS Proficiency Profile to track learning achievement and drive improvement.

NMJC supports its mission of ***promoting success through learning*** by providing robust resources that foster effective teaching and meaningful student engagement. Faculty and staff are well qualified and supported through comprehensive professional development programs, including the Leadership Institute, the Faculty Engagement Summit, and required training for online instruction. Teaching and learning are further enhanced by modernized facilities, technology-rich classrooms, expanded tutoring and mental health services, and individualized academic coaching. These resources are intentionally designed to meet the diverse needs of NMJC's student population and to create an environment conducive to high-quality instruction and student success.

The college's commitment to continuous improvement is evident in its data-informed decision-making, ongoing refinement of academic pathways, and proactive adoption of innovative practices such as corequisite models, AI-integrated instruction, and enhanced early-alert analytics. Regular program review cycles ensure that academic areas receive meaningful feedback and that recommendations translate to tangible improvements in curriculum, resources, and student supports. Through these integrated systems of quality assurance and strategic enhancement, NMJC demonstrates responsibility for the effectiveness of its academic programs and student services while fostering a culture dedicated to sustained institutional excellence and student achievement.

Sources

There are no sources.