

***HEALTH SCIENCES DIVISION***

STRATEGIC PLAN

2022/23 – 2026/27

Technical College of the Lowcountry

# Technical College of the Lowcountry

## **Mission**

The TCL provides quality, affordable academic and technical programs leading to Associate Degrees, Diplomas, and Certificates in an environment fostering excellence in teaching and learning.

## **Vision**

Our vision is to elevate each student and every community we serve through transformative technology and exceptional teaching.

## **Values**

### *Excellence*

We value continuous quality improvement leading to true excellence in all areas of the college.

### *Innovation*

We value expansion and enhancement of the college's services and educational offerings to meet the increasing and changing needs of students, employers and the communities we serve.

### *Integrity*

We value responsibility, accountability, ethical behavior in an atmosphere of honesty, open communication, and with mutual respect.

### *Respect*

We value an education environment that attracts and supports a diverse student and staff community, and fosters awareness.

### *Stewardship*

We value the responsible use of resources to achieve balance among social, economic, and environmental practices.

## **Institutional Goals**

1. Enhance and sustain student success from application to completion.
2. Advance academic quality.
3. Improve operational effectiveness and promote resource stewardship.
4. Cultivate an environment of accountability, communication and teamwork.

## UNIT OVERVIEW

### Unit Level Mission Statement

The mission of the Health Sciences Division at the Technical College of the Lowcountry is to provide quality, affordable Health Sciences programs that prepare technically competent graduates who will provide quality care within a rapidly changing healthcare environment.

### Unit Level Summary

The Health Sciences Division at the Technical College of the Lowcountry aims to provide quality, affordable Health Sciences Programs that prepare technically competent graduates who will provide quality care within a rapidly changing healthcare environment. The TCL Health Sciences Division consists of 18 full-time employees, as well as several adjunct instructors, that oversee six programs leading to associate degrees, diplomas, and certificates. These programs include Nursing, Physical Therapist Assistant, Radiologic Technology, Surgical Technology, Massage Therapy, and Medical Assisting.

As the need for health care continues to grow in the lowcountry, TCL seeks to serve this need by providing quality, affordable health sciences programs. The division was formed due to local workforce needs, and our division continues to focus on serving these surrounding areas. Each program gives preference to students who apply from local areas, and our clinical education takes place within a 60-mile radius of the Beaufort campus. These practices allow us to focus on recruiting local students and strengthening the workforce in the surrounding counties. As the need for health care services is constantly changing, the Health Sciences division will work with local employers to assess the local trends, so we can adapt and grow to meet workforce demands.

### CORE VALUES

Health care professionals hold the public trust; therefore, the TCL Health Sciences Division has set core values that aim to uphold this trust and act as a cornerstone to guide our actions.

These core values are modeled after the values of the college, but they are shaped in the light of health-care specific needs:

1. Excellence
2. Integrity
3. Professionalism
4. Altruism
5. Respect (Compassion/Caring)
6. Stewardship
7. Social Responsibility

	Enhance and sustain student success from application to completion	Advance academic quality	Improve operational effectiveness and promote resource stewardship	Cultivate an environment of accountability, communication and teamwork
Provide quality, affordable health sciences programs	X	X	X	
Prepare technically competent Health Sciences graduates	X	X		X
Provide quality education within a rapidly changing healthcare environment <i>(By developing faculty who are specialists in their field and constantly pursuing professional development)</i>		X	X	X

## STRATEGIC SCAN

### The External Environment

Opportunities – The health care needs in the lowcountry continue to increase across all areas. Since COVID-19, many people are moving south, and many of our surrounding counties are seeing an influx of new residents. Many of whom are “Baby Boomers”, who are choosing to retire to the lowcountry. As the population increases and the “Baby Boomer” generation ages, the demand for qualified health care professionals will continue to increase.

TCL provides multiple health sciences programs that allow for competitive salaries when compared to the low-cost of the education. In addition, the college works with local employers to determine which health care related fields could most benefit from the addition of new health sciences programs at TCL.

Threats – Each individual program has its own unique threats, which are mentioned in their specific strategic plans. However, as we mentioned earlier, health care is a rapidly changing field. Due to the ever-changing nature of health care and reimbursement, the demand for certain professions may change. Therefore, our division continues to monitor employer needs and placement rates for each program.

## The Internal Environment

Success/Strengths – The Health Sciences division has a strong, qualified core faculty that is complimented by our adjunct faculty to fulfill loading demands and teach specific specialty areas for each program. This helps our division provide the “excellence in teaching” which is an integral part of our college mission. Almost all of our programs are held to high standards through their accrediting bodies, which ensure a continual process of assessment and evaluation. The programs that do not require accreditation are setting goals to become accredited. Meanwhile, they are still active in the assessment/evaluation process through division and college initiatives (guided pathways, strategic planning).

In addition, the Ins and Outs assessment showed that all 6 of our programs address “hard to fill” jobs in health care – below a bachelor’s degree.

Challenges – Each individual program has highlighted the internal challenges that are being addressed, but a few of these challenges are common throughout the division

- Clinical Education – As mentioned earlier, we focus our clinical education within a 60-mile radius from our Beaufort campus. While this does allow us to serve the local area, it also limits the number of clinical sites used for student placement. Each program continues to focus on increasing opportunities for student placement and building strategic partners in clinical education.
- Faculty Development – Health care related fields are competitive, and our division values professional membership and professional development. However, program budgets do not always reflect the value we place on these areas. The division continues to work to financially back the development of each individual faculty.
- Growth – TCL and the Health Sciences Division have a mutual goal to grow the division. However, this requires a continual process of assessing both workforce needs and student interest to determine the most beneficial programs to add, while also considering the college’s budget and available space.

## STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

A statement of the unit's strategic plan's primary strategic focus areas to be discussed in detail below. Focus areas are those areas of major emphasis that will allow the unit to maximize its opportunities and strengths and address the challenges discussed above. The focus areas should be aligned with the college's institutional goals.

### 1. Strategic Focus Area: A

#### A. Objective

The TCL Health Sciences Division will add Health Sciences programs to address the local needs:

Current programs – Human Services and Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA)

In process of considering - Pharm Tech, Dental Tech, and Respiratory Therapy

#### B. Describe alignment with institutional goals

This objective aligns perfectly with the institutional goals to advance academic quality, as well as improving operational effectiveness and promoting resource stewardship. Although quality and quantity are not synonymous, increasing the number of programs we offer will improve the overall quality of the department and the service to the community. In addition, the health sciences division emphasized inter-disciplinary activities. In the health care field, multiple professions work together in patient care. Adding these three programs will allow us to increase the quality our inter-disciplinary activities, improve operational effectiveness, and promote resource stewardship.

#### C. Success criteria

Ultimately, this is an easy focus area to assess, as we have a timeline in place to start Human Services and OTA. The most difficult part of expansion is the need to assess the benefit to operational effectiveness and resource stewardship. Therefore, we have collaborated with Ins and Outs to assess the needs and demands of the local workforce.

As a division, we will need to assess the strengths and challenges of each programs, once they are in place.

#### D. Implementation Plan and tactics (See sample template)

[Suggested implementation plans for each program.](#)

#### E. Resources

This focus area will require multiple resources, but many of these resources have already been discussed/budgeted. Future budgets will need adjusted to address yearly needs as faculty is hired and a program is developed. We will need funding for Program Directors (as well as other core and adjunct faculty as determined by accreditation), classroom and lab space, and funding for equipment.

## Faculty

OTA – Program Director, Clinical Coordinator, and needed adjunct faculty

Pharm Tech – Program Director and adjunct faculty

- Possible additional faculty based on class size/program demands

Human Services – Program Director and adjunct faculty

Faculty needs for other programs will be determined by accreditation standards, class size, and program demands.

## Space

OTA – lab/classroom space has been allocated in Building 2 and is in the planning phases of construction.

Human Services – this program should only need classroom space, which will be shared with other Health Sciences programs

Pharm Tech - lab/classroom space was originally allocated in Building 6; however, continuation will be determined by Ins and Outs assessment

Space for other programs may need discussed with other state colleges and or professional consultants in the field.

## Other Equipment/Budget

The need for equipment will be determined once Program Directors have been hired and a tentative curriculum is in place. Some of the large items needed may be included in construction, while others will be requested through Perkins funding. Budgets will be set in line with other comparable programs based on division needs and accreditation requirements.

## Key performance indicators

Our initial indicator will be the start of all three programs. As cohorts are started, we will assess retention rates, exam pass rates, and placement rates.

2. Strategic Focus Area: B

A. Objective

The TCL Health Sciences Division will prioritize faculty’s professional development, including professional membership and continuing education.

B. Describe alignment with institutional goals

This area most aligns with the institutional goal of advancing academic quality, as prioritizing faculty development will lead to further qualifications and an increased quality of teaching. In addition, this should help to enhance student success and promote an environment of accountability and teamwork.

C. Success criteria

100% of faculty will be active in their professional organization and/or continuing education.

D. Implementation Plan and tactics (See sample template)

<b>The TCL Health Sciences Division will prioritize faculty’s professional development, including professional membership and continuing education.</b>					
Steps	Description	Timeline	Primary Actor	Resources	Assessment/Measure
1	Faculty will set goals with the Division Dean (either Fall or around Perkins requests)	Yearly	Faculty and Dean	None	Yearly review/meeting during FPMS evaluations (written goals)
2	Plan required actions for professional membership and/or continuing education	Yearly (Fall)	Faculty	Funding for membership or continuing education	Previous year evaluated during yearly review/meeting
3	Report back on progress and benefit to the division/program (to dean & Perkins)	Yearly After events	Faculty and Dean	None	None

E. Resources

The main resources needed will be funding for professional membership and profession meetings/continuing education. It will be recommended that the professional membership fees and/or licensure are included in program budget, while professional development (CEUs/professional meetings) will seek reimbursement through Perkins funding.

- F. Key performance indicators  
 Qualitative review will be performed yearly during faculty meetings/evaluations with Division Dean. Our division goal is 100% participation by the end of this 5 year plan.

3. Strategic Focus Area: C

- A. Objective  
 The TCL Health Sciences Division will increase graduation rates of accepted students to >75%
- B. Describe alignment with institutional goals  
 This area clearly aligns with the institutional goal of enhancing student success from application to completion. With focus on guided pathways, our individual strategic plans, and program/curriculum assessment, our division should be able to improve student retention/graduation rates.
- C. Success criteria  
 On average our programs will graduate >70-75% of health sciences students, excluding students who withdraw for personal/medical reasons.
- D. Implementation Plan and tactics (See sample template)

<b>The TCL Health Sciences Division will prioritize faculty’s professional development, including professional membership and continuing education.</b>					
Steps	Description	Timeline	Primary Actor	Resources	Assessment/Measure
1	Improve outreach and marketing to increase # of qualified applicants	Ongoing	All faculty	May need marketing funds as available	Qualitative Analysis and Number of Applicants/program
2	Faculty will assess program/curriculum to identify key areas leading to student dropout	Ongoing	Program Director and faculty	None	Qualitative Analysis Graduation Rates, Exit interviews for W/WF, Student/Graduate Surveys
3	Modifications made to address key areas	PRN	Dean, Program Director and faculty	Unknown	Depends on modifications
4	Evaluate graduation (retention) rates yearly	Yearly	Program Director and Division Dean	None	Calculate graduation rate (Excluding W for personal/medical reasons)

E. Resources

The resources for this focus area should be specific to each individual program (marketing, recruitment, etc.). No specific resources are needed for the health sciences division.

F. Key performance indicators

Graduation Rates – in comparison to the # of accepted students. (Accrediting bodies remove any students from the equation who withdraw for non-academic reasons – health, moving, etc.)

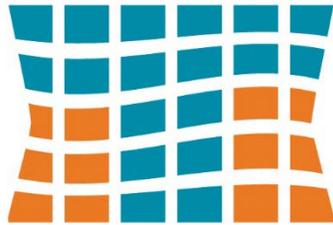
**FY 2022/23 to 2026/27 Enrollment and Retention Targets**

	FA 2022	FA 2023	FA 2024	FA 2025	FA 2026
Enrollment Target*	235	243	249	253	260
Retention Rate Target	79%	80%	80%	81%	82%

\*This is for current HS Programs – Future programs’ numbers will need added once created.

Enrollment is the total number of students registered in a given academic unit at a given time.

Retention rate is the percentage of students who continue in the academic unit the next year. For example, a student who studies in the fall semester and keeps on studying in the program in the next fall semester is counted in this rate.



# MEDICAL ASSISTING STRATEGIC PLAN

2022/23 – 2026/27

*Technical College of the Lowcountry*

# Medical Assisting Vision, Mission, Goals

## Medical Assisting Program Mission

The Medical Assisting Program at The Technical College of the Lowcountry provides a sound technical and competency-based education for students in the theory and performance of Medical Assistant sciences.

The Department seeks to promote a learner-centered instructional environment that encourages critical thinking, facilitates problem solving, and creates a foundation for life-long learning. It encourages student participation in professional and civic activities in the community that are related to the profession of Medical Assistant.

Faculty and graduates act as resources to the community on technical issues and in the promotion of professional growth.

## Medical Assisting Program Goals

To prepare competent entry-level medical assistants in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains.

1. To provide career counseling to students seeking careers in the profession of Medical Assistant.
2. To provide academic advisement and support to students pursuing a certificate in Medical Assistant.
3. To provide a cohesive curriculum in the clinical and administrative medical sciences that meets the needs of the students and employers of graduates of the program.
4. To offer courses in medical assistant sciences which are current, interesting, and academically sound.
5. To provide clinical education which enhances the student's understanding of his/her academic studies and supports the student's professional growth.
6. To provide information and aid to students interested in transfer to upper division programs.
7. To foster an atmosphere of professionalism and competence as our students develop their professional values.
8. To supply information on and access to many facets of the profession.
9. To continue program evaluation via course and curriculum evaluations, and information from employers of our graduates.
10. To continue faculty development and expertise.

## Medical Assisting Program History

The newly established program took its first students in 2016 under the direction of Jaclyn Valenti who has now been involved with Medical Assisting education for almost 15 years. The program currently accepts one cohort of up to 15 students annually for the Beaufort/New River campuses. The Beaufort/New River cohort continues in New River only as of Fall 2021. Katlin Green is the program adjunct instructor and former TCL MA graduate who is currently training to teach the Hampton Campus cohort scheduled to start Fall 2022. She will also take over the clinical coordinator/externship coordinator duties for both cohorts.

The TCL Medical Assisting program prepares graduates in three-semester with 40-credit-hours. Courses include general education; science and medical assisting that are taught in the classroom, online, and at various clinical sites throughout the Lowcountry. Students must complete 160 hours of off-campus clinical experiences as part of curriculum in order to graduate and become eligible to take the credentialing examination. Students will be awarded a medical assisting certificate in health science upon satisfactory completion.

In order to obtain national credentialing, the students can take exams through several professional organizations such as the American Medical Technologist (AMT), the American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA), or the National Healthcare Association (NHA). Graduates are also eligible to take Phlebotomy and Electrocardiogram Technician certification exams.

	Enhance and sustain student success from application to completion	Advance academic quality	Improve operational effectiveness and promote resource stewardship	Cultivate an environment of accountability, communication and teamwork
Encourages evidence-based teaching practices that have been shown to enhance engagement and deepen learning.	X	X		
Ensures that its curricular, co-curricular efforts are outcome-based and focused on fostering student learning, development and integrity.	X	X		X
Utilizes best practices — state-of-the-art online and classroom tools, effective use of technology, accessibility, etc.	X	X	X	
Creates a classroom environment that encourages students to have strong networking relationships, a healthy identity and accountability for their choices.				X

## STRATEGIC SCAN

### The External Environment

#### Opportunities

The current climate for Medical Assisting employment opportunities is vast. The local area experiencing a large number of people from the Baby boomer generation entering retirement and moving to many of the towns in close proximity to the school. This mass migration is steadily increasing the demand for skilled healthcare workers. The students who complete didactic courses are often experiencing an extern to hire scenario where they are hired directly after they finish their clinical hours. The MA program currently has the non-issue of not supplying enough skills workers for the demand of the local area.

#### Challenges

The student population is mostly nontraditional and coming from middle to low income areas. What this means for the student is they sometimes lack the means to travel to the campuses. There is also a significant lack of public transportation that would otherwise assist many students to attend classes. They also face more challenges such as work/school/home life balance. The pay rate for all jobs including MA does drastically change even within short distances. For entry-level positions in MA, pay rates can swing by as much as 10-11 thousand dollars a year. Many graduates are unwilling to travel to the locations that offer more money.

The program does experience a percentage of students who do not seek credentialing. This lack of achievement is mostly because many of the local employers choose not to require it for employment in the first year or even not requiring it at all. This can significantly affect the pass rate when the student waits to take the exam. This could pose a problem for programmatic accreditation requirements and maintenance as we move towards that in the near future.

### The Internal Environment

#### Opportunities

The program experiences a steady application rate and near perfect retention/graduation rate. The students who take the national credentialing exam experience higher pass rates than the national average. These successes and strengths will be built upon by continuing the same strategies with the additional cohort planned for the Hampton campus.

#### Challenges

Areas needing to be improved consist of designating consistent space for the MA program equipment and supplies in the New River Location. The program has been historically taught out of labs designated for Nursing and will continue to do so in New River. Appropriate equipment needs to be moved in order to allow students to experience the best environment.

A reorganization and consolidation of supplies is needed to complete the transition from holding classes in both Beaufort and New River to solely at the New River campus.

The Hampton campus classroom also needs to be set up/organized appropriately and the equipment purchased needs to be assembled in order to begin holding classes at the location. The classroom, now designated for MA at the Hampton Campus, was formally used by other programs.

1. Strategic Focus Area: A

- A. Objective-Initiate Hampton campus cohort.
- B. Alignment with institutional goals-Aligns with enhancing and sustaining student success from application to completion by providing a location more convenient and conducive to MA education. It also aligns with advancement of academic quality by providing designated classroom and lab space to simulate real life application of skills.
- C. Success criteria-an independent fully functional and staffed MA program in Hampton with vetted students.

D. Implementation Plan and tactics

Focus Area	Steps	Description	Timeline	Primary Actor	Resources	Assessment/ Measure
A		Initiate Hampton campus cohort				An independent fully functional and staffed MA program in Hampton with vetted students.
	1	Order basic non-consumable supplies per Perkins grant		MA Program Director	Perkins Grant	Delivery of sufficient equipment/supplies to create MA classroom
	2	Hire qualified adjunct instructor		MA Program Director		Fully on boarded instructor
	3	Instructor training		MA Program Director		Instructor's readiness to instruct independently
	4	Organize completion/readiness of classroom space/lab space		MA Program Director, Facilities management, IT, CE	TBD per department	Completed classroom/lab space. Completion of readiness for an appropriate teaching environment.
	5	Stock classroom with consumables		MA Program Director	Current MA Budget	Delivery and placement of consumable supplies.

				Adjunct Instructor		
	6	Advertise/promote program		MA Program Director, Adjunct, PR/Marketing	Marketing budget/resources	Placement of ads. Attendance of open houses, Attendance of HS and other recruitment events.
	7	Initiate teaching of labs for current NR cohort living in area		Adjunct		Scheduled labs in Hampton
	8	Open applications for additional cohort		MA Program Director, Adjunct, HS Advisor		Acceptance of applicants for Fall 2022 Hampton cohort

E. Resources-Perkins grant money has been allocated and spent for equipment. Facilities management will determine needs and cost of renovations for readiness of the classroom. PR/Marketing will determine budgetary, travel, or equipment needs.

F. Key performance indicators

- Trained Adjunct
- Classroom readiness
- Accepted students for Fall 2022 cohort

2. Strategic Focus Area: B

- A. Objective- To maintain retention and success while increasing student enrollment.
  
- B. Alignment with institutional goals- Alignment is consistent with the goal of Advancing academic quality by continually improving the student experience and their understanding of the knowledge and skills that is takes to become a successful Medical Assistant.

The objective also aligns with the institutional goal of cultivating an environment of accountability, communication and teamwork. Networking and affiliating with additional healthcare facilities broadens the relationship of the program and its students to the surrounding community. Through expansion of the advisory committee and externships sites, the environment of accountability will be increased for the program and its students by broadening the outside evaluation of completing students.

- C. Success Criteria- Meeting or exceeding national placement rates according to medical assisting accreditation standards. Meeting or exceeding national externship to hire ratio expectations.

D. Implementation Plan and tactics

Focus Area	Steps	Description	Timeline	Primary Actor	Resources	Assessment/ Measure
B		To maintain retention and success while increasing student population				Fulfillment of both cohorts while maintaining or increasing current level of program success
	1	Review MAERB curriculum requirements- implement changes		MA Program Director		Curriculum reviewed by Accreditation body
	2	Research new/innovative MA learning techniques		MA Program Director/Clinical coordinator		

	3	Maintain and update curriculum that is cohesive in the clinical and administrative medical sciences. Evaluate and maintain curriculum that meets the needs of the students and employers of graduates of the program.		MA Program Director		Pass rates of national exam. Employer feedback Placement rates.
	4	Further the College's and MA Program's reach and increase its impact with healthcare affiliates.		MA Program director/Clinical coordinator		Sufficient externship sites for new Hampton campus cohort and current New River cohort increase expectations
	5	Advance relationships with affiliate organizations that result in program growth and increased opportunities for clinical partnerships.		MA Program director/Clinical coordinator		Site evaluations and advisory committee attendance

	6	Coordinate with affiliates to create pathways to employment for TCL alumni.		MA Program director/Clinical coordinator		Completed affiliation agreements

E. Resources-

1. The Medical Assisting Education Review Board-MAERB fulfills these functions:

- Ongoing review of program compliance and achievement of outcome thresholds
- Regularly reviewing Standards for medical assisting education accreditation
- Development and revision of the core Curriculum for Medical Assistants
- Conducting accreditation workshops for medical assisting educators
- Conducting workshops for MAERB/CAAHEP surveyors to promote consistent review of programs
- Providing medical assisting educators with current information about CAAHEP and MAERB policies and practices for accreditation

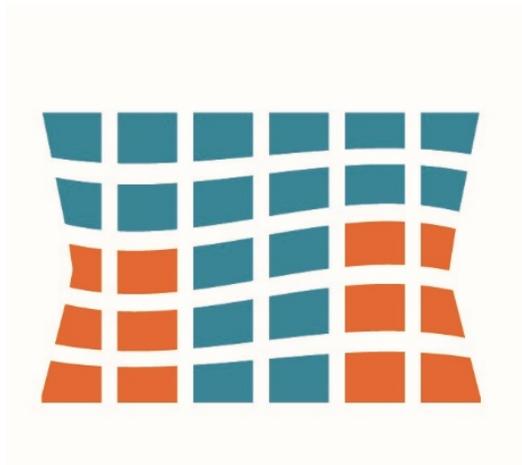
2. External Scan of potential externship sites with location and contact details.

F. Key performance indicators-

- Affiliation agreement increase
- Advisory committee member increase
- Retention rates
- National certification/registration pass rates
- Employment rates

FY 2022/23 to 2025/26 Enrollment and Retention Targets

*Hampton & NR Cohorts					
	FA 2022	FA 2023	FA 2024	FA 2025	FA 2026
Enrollment Target	20	23	25	27	30
Retention Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



*MASSAGE THERAPY PROGRAM*

STRATEGIC PLAN

2022/23 – 2026/27

Technical College of the Lowcountry

# **Technical College of the Lowcountry**

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## **Institutional Goals**

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## UNIT OVERVIEW

### **Massage Therapy Program Vision**

The vision of the TCL Massage Therapy program is to prepare graduates who exemplify the highest standards of Massage Therapy practice, and empower them to achieve their individual goals as licensed practitioners in this rapidly expanding Allied Health career. Massage Therapy is a branch of complementary health care that works to improve health and well-being through the manipulation of muscles and other soft tissues of the body.

### **Massage Therapy Program Mission**

The mission of the TCL Massage Therapy program is to prepare graduates to succeed as professional entry-level massage therapists in a variety of settings. The program provides a sequential curriculum integrating knowledge, skill, and awareness, leading to a Certificate in Massage Therapy. Students develop depth of technical knowledge to provide individualized care to clients, and establish self-care strategies for career longevity in this physically rigorous profession. The combination of placement testing, developmental educational courses, and extensive financial aid based on eligibility allows access for a broad range of students. The curriculum supports success in the Massage and Bodywork Licensing Exam (MBLEx), and effective application of skills in the workplace.

### **Massage Therapy Program Goals**

The Massage Therapy Program goals address the foundational elements of Massage Therapy education, aligning with the Massage Therapy Entry Level Analysis Project (ELAP):

- 1) Perform safe and effective massage therapy application
- 2) Demonstrate healthy body mechanics and self-care
- 3) Employ professional ethics and laws specific to the practice of massage therapy
- 4) Apply knowledge of human structure, function, and pathology
- 5) Provide massage therapy services to the public in clinical courses
- 6) Document clinical activities using proper medical terminology
- 7) Develop basic business planning and management skills
- 8) Integrate knowledge and skills needed to pass Massage and Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx)

## Unit Level Summary

### **Massage Therapy Program History**

The TCL Massage Therapy Program was established in August, 2005, and offered during the first year in a modified classroom in the Health Sciences building on the Beaufort campus, prior to the completion of the Bluffton New River campus. From August 2006 to the present, the Massage Therapy Program has been offered at the Bluffton New River campus, providing education to nearly 200 students who have become licensed therapists in South Carolina, Georgia, and many states throughout the nation.

The TCL Massage Therapy Program comprises a three-semester, 31 credit hour curriculum, the equivalent of a 750 contact-hour program. A Certificate in Massage Therapy is awarded upon graduation. Successful completion of the Massage Therapy Program, including coursework and

supervised clinical practice, makes graduates eligible for the Massage and Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx), meeting requirements for South Carolina Massage Licensure.

In addition to the General Education course BIO 112 Basic Anatomy and Physiology and its prerequisites, the Massage Therapy curriculum includes education in Musculoskeletal Anatomy, Pathology, Treatment Planning and Documentation, Business and Ethics, and detailed technical application of massage for clients along the continuum of illness to wellness, including Clinical and Practicum courses.

MTH 123 and MTH 133 Massage Clinical courses offered during Spring and Summer semesters allow students to practice professional application of massage in a supervised setting, and provide the opportunity for outreach to hundreds of residents of our service area through hour-long student massages scheduled by appointment at the Bluffton New River campus. Community members who might not otherwise have a specific incentive to visit the campus get to know our students on a personal level and experience the sense of excellence in our program. Scheduled clients receive individualized massage to enhance wellness; they support student learning, contribute to the general fund of the college through appointment fees, and expand their awareness of TCL's mission for our students.

Massage Therapy Program Director Denise Van Nostran is the original designer of the Program, and she is currently assisted by two Adjunct Instructors, Kathyne McCracken (Program graduate 2009), and Laurel Berkey (Program graduate 2017). Denise Van Nostran currently serves as Vice-Chair of the South Carolina Massage Therapy Panel, and as one of eleven Commissioners with the Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation.

The TCL Massage Therapy Program met criteria by years of demonstrated outcomes as required for programmatic accreditation by the Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation (COMTA). Initial COMTA accreditation was awarded in 2011 for the maximum five-year period. Renewal of COMTA accreditation was awarded in 2016 for the maximum seven-year period, and the application, self-study report, and site visit are planned for 2022 ahead of the April 2023 deadline for renewal. The Massage Therapy Program is also recognized by the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork.

	Enhance and sustain student success from application to completion	Advance academic quality	Improve operational effectiveness and promote resource stewardship	Cultivate an environment of accountability, communication and teamwork
Clinical Education:				
MTH 123 Massage Clinical I, MTH 133 Massage Clinical II	X	X	X	X
Faculty Professional Development/Service:				
Denise Van Nostran, Vice-Chair, SC Massage Therapy Panel	X		X	X
Faculty Professional Development/Service:				
Denise Van Nostran, Regulatory Seat, Commission for Massage Therapy Accreditation	X	X	X	
Student Outreach:				
Massage Therapy Job Fair 2022	X		X	X

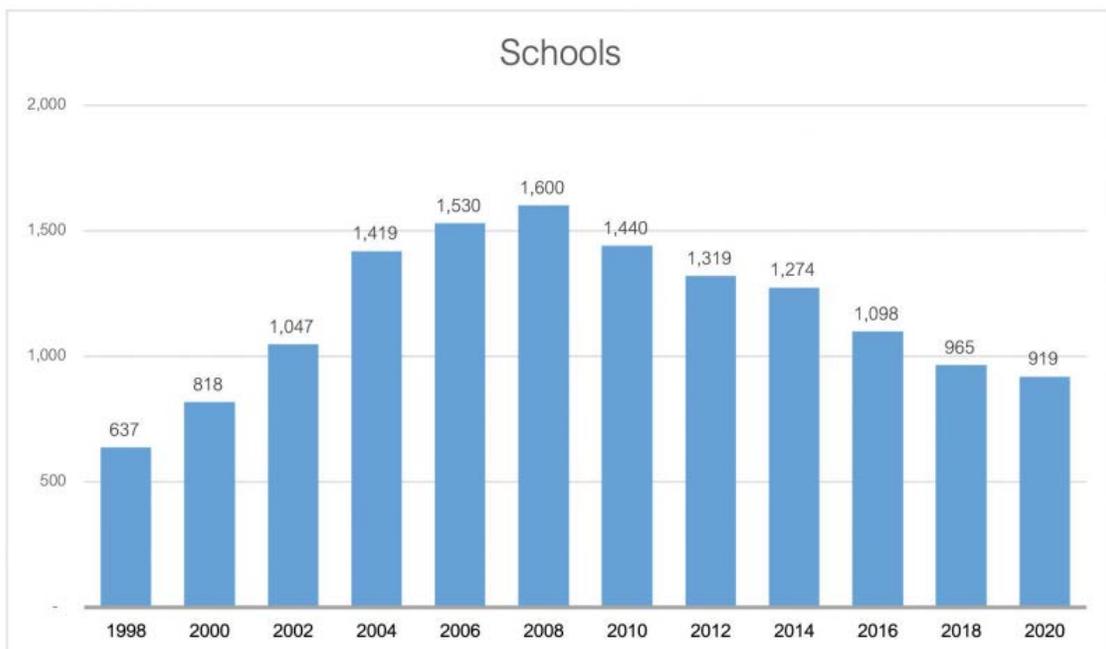
## STRATEGIC SCAN

### The External Environment

#### Opportunities for the Program/Profession

There is a national shortage of massage therapists largely caused by the rapid expansion of the industry, and the decrease in enrollment in massage schools across the country, a trend that has been observed over the past decade. The expansion of spa and franchise massage businesses drove demand for therapists. Corporate ownership of massage schools, investor groups purchasing successful proprietary schools, and the expansion of for-profit trade schools created conditions that undermined confidence in massage education. Corporate entities tended to minimize and standardize curricula and accept as many students as possible, sometimes passing into Federal financial aid fraud and abuse of students, and several large corporate schools have closed all campuses. The drive to maximize profits led to sales and resales of investor-owned schools, resulting in reduced educational standards and closure of schools when earning targets were not reached.

TCL's Massage Therapy program maintained consistent enrollment during a period of rapid change that led to the closure of other massage schools in the area. Quality of instruction, stability of the institution, and demand for Licensed Massage Therapists has positioned the Massage Therapy program as a key provider of specialized workers to the employers in our service area.





<https://www.abmp.com/updates/blog-posts/massage-schools-stay-resilient-during-covid-19-pandemic>

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts the demand for massage therapists will grow by 23 percent within the next five years. In 2019, there were an estimated 19,000 unfilled massage therapist positions and in 2021, the number has risen to an estimated 25,000 available positions.

<https://www.massagetcouncil.com/is-there-a-massage-therapist-shortage/>

It is not unusual for massage therapists to work at more than one location, tending to work as employees to gain experience in the early years of their licensure, transitioning to private practice and increased earnings over time. 70% of massage therapists describe themselves as sole practitioners.

Many individuals are drawn to the profession for the flexibility in scheduling, and on the larger scale, the increased reciprocity of licensure between states in case of relocation. The Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards (FSMTB) announced on March 17, 2021 that the U.S. Department of Defense has selected the massage therapy profession to receive technical assistance from The Council of State Governments to develop an interstate compact for occupational licensing portability.

The average work week of massage therapists was 27.2 hours in 2020, up from 26.6 last year. Sixty-eight percent of those hours were spent performing massage. Additional hours were spent cleaning and sanitizing massage rooms and offices, marketing, performing general business tasks, filing for insurance reimbursement, and other tasks.

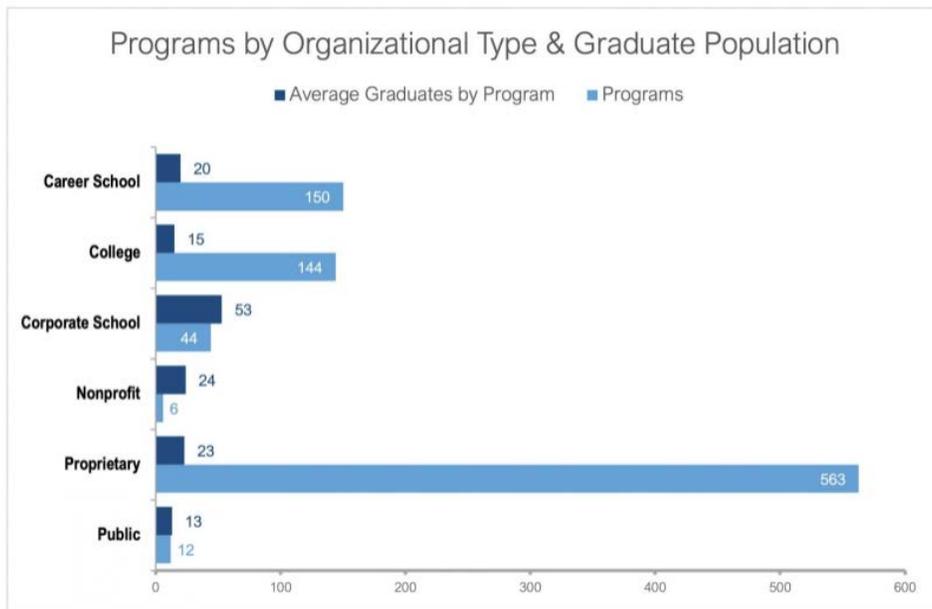
Pre-COVID, there were roughly 330,000 licensed massage therapists in the U.S. Although Massage Therapy as a profession was impacted by the pandemic, by November 2020, 79% of therapists had returned to practice, and all but 1% of therapists anticipated returning to work in future.

<https://www.amtamassage.org/documents/2021-massage-prof-research-report/Document/?assetType=pdf>

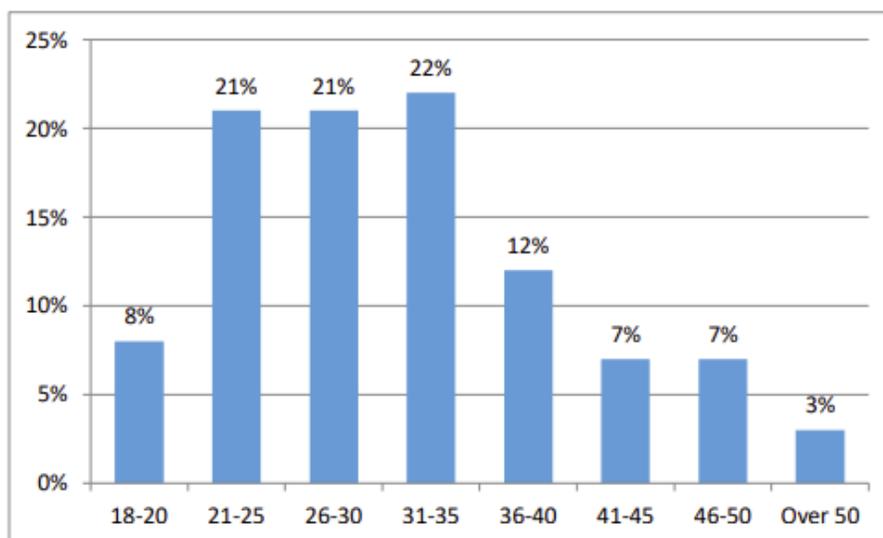
The Alliance of Bodywork and Massage Professionals (ABMP) categorizes massage programs into six organizational types:

- 1) Career School—multiprogram institutions offering many career training programs in addition to massage therapy, typically medical and dental assisting, medical recordkeeping, etc.
- 2) College—massage program offered at a community, junior, or technical college.
- 3) Corporate School—massage therapy and spa programs as part of a multi-campus, multistate, larger corporate entity.
- 4) Nonprofit—programs whose organization is incorporated as a nonprofit entity.
- 5) Proprietary—traditionally and typically “Mom & Pop” programs; single owner at a single campus.
- 6) Public—programs offered through the public education system/school district.

The TCL Massage Program is the only COMTA accredited program in South Carolina. There are currently no massage schools in Savannah and our North Georgia service area.



<https://www.abmp.com/updates/blog-posts/massage-schools-stay-resilient-during-covid-19-pandemic>



**Figure 49. Age of massage students**

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**Highlights from Figure 49**

Fifty percent of massage students were 30 or under in 2020.

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The American Massage Therapy Association 2021 Massage Profession Research Report states 50% of massage students in the U.S. in 2020 were under age 30. Across age groups, 75% of massage therapy students in 2020 were female.

<https://www.amtamassage.org/documents/2021-massage-prof-research-report/Document/?assetType=pdf>

**Threats to the Program/Profession**

Media accounts of individuals perpetrating fraud and criminal behavior under the cover of isolated massage businesses damage the reputation of the profession and require schools to define themselves in the marketplace and reassure prospective students and the public of the legitimacy of massage therapy education and this valuable, expanding career path.

Due to the intensely physical nature of massage therapy, 20-25 hour-long massages per week is considered a full-time schedule, organized in 4-6 massages per day depending on the individual therapist and workplace. Self-care is a critical component of the Massage Therapy program curriculum to support longevity in practice for graduates.

Statistics on earnings and practice often skew low for massage therapy because they combine data for full-time and part-time employees, and there is no standardization in hours for massage therapists. Prospective students rightly factor potential earnings into their decision making when choosing programs. Bureau of Labor Statistics average annual income numbers cited in promotional materials are accurate but not fully representative of the opportunities for higher earnings in the profession, particularly in our service area.

## The Internal Environment

The TCL Massage Therapy Program has exceptional strengths in the education provided to students:

- COMTA Accredited Curriculum

The Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation (COMTA) awards programmatic accreditation, providing rigorous standards for continual analysis and revision of curriculum content and delivery of technical education.

- Licensing Exam Success Rates

Since the implementation of the Massage and Bodywork Licensing Exam (MBLEx) in 2010, graduates of the Program have maintained a 100% pass rate in 10 of the past 11 years.

- Partnerships with Employers

The depth of relationships with service area employers enables exceptional opportunities for students. During the pandemic, only the generous participation of our employers to provide specially modified clinical and internship experiences allowed the progression and completion of students in Program.

- Network of Graduates

The longevity of the Program, with graduates establishing careers over the past 16 years provides a substantial resource for the development of adjuncts and mentors. These graduates have gone on to establish businesses in the community, providing opportunities for our current and future students. Graduates regularly refer new students to the Program.

- Physical Facility

The TCL Massage Therapy Program offers a broad range of opportunities to students within the basic footprint of the Massage Therapy Lab and the environment of the New River campus. The general public experiences our students on campus through individual student massage appointments during Spring and Summer semesters.

The primary challenge rests in reaching all of the prospective students in our service area and heightening awareness of the program, particularly in North Georgia counties.

- With the closure of the Savannah School of Massage in 2011 and Virginia College in 2018, TCL is the only massage therapy program in reasonable driving distance of the Savannah metro area. Service area demographics overlap well with the Program.
- Because applications are taken between January-May, prospective students need messaging that alerts them to the existence of the Program, and the time-sensitive nature of applications.

## STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

The Massage Therapy Program strategic plan focuses on delivering consistently high-quality massage therapy education, increasing enrollment, and supporting students in persisting to successful completion of the Program and licensure in the profession.

### 1. Strategic Focus Area: A

#### A. Objective

The TCL Massage Therapy Program will renew COMTA accreditation in 2022, supporting excellence in the curriculum, and enhancing one of the standards that distinguishes us in the marketplace.

#### B. Describe alignment with institutional goals

This objective aligns with the institutional goal to “Advance academic quality.” The TCL Massage Therapy Program is the only COMTA accredited program in South Carolina. Program content and our accreditation status has enabled graduates to have consistent access to licensures other states.

#### C. Success criteria

Completion of Application for renewal of accreditation, completion of Self-Study Report, completion of Site Visit, and award of renewal of programmatic accreditation.

#### D. Implementation Plan and tactics

The TCL Massage Therapy Program will renew COMTA accreditation					
Steps	Description	Timeline	Primary Actor	Resources	Assessment/Measure
1.	Application	1/1/2022	Program Director	\$2000 fee	Feedback of COMTA Site Visit team and administrator; Award of accreditation renewal
2.	Self-Study Report	4/1/2022	Program Director and TCL Staff	\$4500 fee	
3.	Site Visit	July 2022	Program Director and TCL Staff	No additional resources required	
4.	Renewal of Accreditation	April 2023	COMTA Commission	No additional resources required	

#### E. Resources

Application and Self-Study Report fees as listed above, limited release time in preparation of SSR and Site Visit.

#### F. Key performance indicators

Feedback of COMTA Site Visit team will be provided at conclusion of Site Visit. Renewal of Accreditation to be awarded based on evaluation and formal Motion at COMTA Commission meeting in April 2023.

2. Strategic Focus Area: B

A. Objective

The TCL Massage Therapy Program will increase applicants to the program by 25% to enhance cohort size and opportunities for greater numbers of highly skilled licensed therapists to enter the profession.

B. Describe alignment with institutional goals

This aligns with the institutional goal to “Enhance and sustain student success from application to completion,” and to “Advance academic quality.” Individuals drawn to massage therapy frequently experience the work as a calling as much as an economic opportunity, and students bring a broad range of backgrounds and goals to the Program. The goal is to reach as many individuals as possible considering the profession and enable them to easily access information about the application process and Program.

C. Success criteria

Over the past five years, we had an average of 13 applicants to the Massage Therapy Program each year (affected somewhat by variations during the pandemic). Our goal is to increase applications by 25% (>16 applications/cohort) within the next three to five years.

D. Implementation Plan and tactics (See sample template)

<b>The TCL Massage Therapy Program will increase applicants to the program by 25%</b>					
Steps	Description	Timeline	Primary Actor	Resources	Assessment/Measure
1	MTH Advisory Meeting	Fall 2021 Spring 2022	Program Director & HS Advisory	No additional resources	We will monitor applications each year to determine overall number and average, with a goal of being consistently >16 applicants by 2024.
2	Massage Therapy Job Fair	Spring 2022	Program Director, Director of Business & Workforce Solutions, ACCE, & HS Advisor	Release time for event and scheduled time for planning	
4	TCL Open Houses	One event per semester	Program Director, ACCE, & HS Advisor	No additional resources	
5	Community Involvement	One event per semester	HHI Heart Walk and other events TBA	No additional resources, events already included in course planning	
6	Targeted Electronic Marketing in North GA Service Areas	Fall 2021 Spring 2022	Program Director, AVP Marketing	\$2500	
7	Develop Program Marketing and Outreach	Ongoing	Program Director, AVP Marketing	TBA	

E. Resources

The Director of Business and Workforce Solutions has initiated the Massage Therapy Job Fair in response to the level of need in our service area employers. This event will provide a live opportunity for our current students, our graduates, and other licensed massage therapists in the area to interact with employers; for our employers to access the resource of potential employees; and for the college as we use this event to highlight Massage Therapy career opportunities and the Program itself. Planned for the New River campus TBS January-February 2022, this event provides a marketing target within the window of application for the 2022-23 cohort. Targeted outreach and marketing in advance of this event is requested in coordination with the Director of Business & Workforce Solutions.

The time involved in all activities should be covered as part of the job duties for the Program Director, Director of Workforce Development, ACCE, and HS Advisor.

\$2500 is requested for electronic/online marketing in North GA counties designed to promote awareness of TCL and the Massage Therapy program in advance of the 2022 application period and deadline. At this time there are no other Massage Therapy schools operating in the Savannah metro area.

F. Key performance indicators

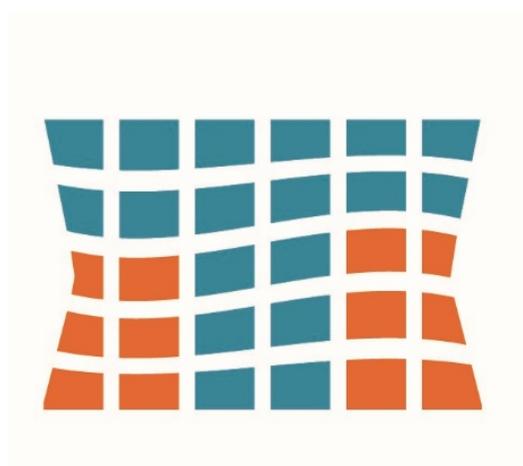
The Division of Health Sciences and the MTH Program Director will monitor numbers of applications and the dates of first contact from applicants.

FY 2022/23 to 2025/26 Enrollment and Retention Targets

	FA 2022	FA 2023	FA 2024	FA 2025	FA 2026
Enrollment Target	13	14	15	15	16
Retention Rate Target	75%	75%	75%	80%	80%

Enrollment is the total number of students registered in a given academic unit at a given time.

Retention rate is the percentage of students who continue in the academic unit the next year. For example, a student who studies in the fall semester and keeps on studying in the program in the next fall semester is counted in this rate.



***Nursing Program***

STRATEGIC PLAN

2022/23 – 2026/27

Technical College of the Lowcountry

## Technical College of the Lowcountry

### **Mission**

The TCL provides quality, affordable academic and technical programs leading to Associate Degrees, Diplomas, and Certificates in an environment fostering excellence in teaching and learning.

### **Vision**

Our vision is to elevate each student and every community we serve through transformative technology and exceptional teaching.

### **Values**

#### *Excellence*

We value continuous quality improvement leading to true excellence in all areas of the college.

#### *Innovation*

We value expansion and enhancement of the college's services and educational offerings to meet the increasing and changing needs of students, employers and the communities we serve.

#### *Integrity*

We value responsibility, accountability, ethical behavior in an atmosphere of honesty, open communication, and with mutual respect.

#### *Respect*

We value an education environment that attracts and supports a diverse student and staff community, and fosters awareness.

#### *Stewardship*

We value the responsible use of resources to achieve balance among social, economic, and environmental practices.

### **Institutional Goals**

1. Enhance and sustain student success from application to completion.
2. Advance academic quality.
3. Improve operational effectiveness and promote resource stewardship.
4. Cultivate an environment of accountability, communication and teamwork.

## UNIT OVERVIEW

### Unit Level Mission Statement

The mission of the nursing education unit reflects the governing organization's core values and is congruent with its mission/goals. The college's mission statement incorporates creativity, innovation, and resourcefulness and empowers students to embark on and pursue lifelong learning by providing a positive, student-centered learning environment committed to excellence. TCL's core values are learning, integrity, service, excellence, stewardship, and diversity. These characteristics provide a framework also reflected in the Nursing philosophy.

### Unit Level Summary

The TCL Practical Nursing Program (DAS.PN) was established in 1976 and approved in 1978, and the Associate Degree Nursing (AAS: ADN) program was established in 1981 and accredited in 1998. The DAS: PN program is comprised of 42 credits with an additional seven prerequisite credit hours to be completed in three semesters. The AAS: ADN program is comprised of 68 credit hours with an additional seven prerequisite credit hours designed to be completed in two academic years including one summer, making it a five-semester program. The AAS: ADN program has two tracks: a generic tract for pre-licensure students and an advance placement track for Licensed Practical Nurses who are furthering their education. The South Carolina Board of Nursing serves as the regulatory entity for the programs, while the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) is the accrediting body.

The nursing programs at TCL are designed to help meet the growing demands for nurses by educating both traditional and non-traditional college students. Most students elect to complete the majority of their general education courses prior to entering the program. Many students are working full time and/or raising families while attending college. The Nursing Program leadership and faculty are cognizant of the special needs of working students, single parents, underprepared students, students with disabilities, and active duty military.

Curriculum flexibility is offered to allow students to accommodate a one-time course repeat for academic failure or to step away from the program for a semester for personal reasons. Thus, the academic program may be extended for some students by one or two semesters. Students are held to completing the nursing program within the three-year limit as per US Department of Education regulations. Students with two academic failures are permitted to return following a two-year hiatus and achieving a technical grade point average (GPA) of 2.75 or greater.

The nursing faculty is comprised of five full-time and one part-time (75%) nursing faculty along with a program director. All faculty have a master's degree in nursing and several have national

certifications in their area of expertise. The faculty is a diverse group with well over a hundred years combined nursing experience. The program director is a TCL graduate and native of the Lowcountry and is in a prime position to provide empirical knowledge of the history of the program, current needs, including barriers, to success of the residents within our service area.

The goal of the nursing faculty is to empower graduates through education and training. Within this goal is to have graduates pass their licensing exam on the first attempt. For the PN program, this would be the NCLEX-PN. Currently the TCL pass rate for first-time test takers of the NCLEX-PN is 100% for the third consecutive year. The TCL pass rate for first-time test takers of the NCLEX-RN was 83.64% for the year 2020, compared to the national pass rate of 86.58%. There has been a decline in NCLEX-RN pass rates over the last several years nationwide. The nursing faculty at TCL are committed to continually assessing teaching methodologies and student outcomes for quality improvement initiatives.

#### CORE VALUES

Nursing is an art and a science distinguished by personalized and holistic care. Theory and research drive the science of nursing while caring embodies the art of nursing. The nursing process is the framework for the provision of care and promotion of health for people with varying capacities to function in society. The nurse promotes health or death with dignity. Caring serves to protect and promote dignity and creates a climate of support, respectful of beliefs, cultural values and lifestyles. All people have the right to expect excellence in health care and to be treated with dignity, justice, and compassion.

	Enhance and sustain student success from application to completion	Advance academic quality	Improve operational effectiveness and promote resource stewardship	Cultivate an environment of accountability, communication and teamwork
Provide quality, affordable health sciences programs	X		X	
Prepare technically competent Health Sciences graduates	X	X		X
Provide quality education within a rapidly changing healthcare environment <i>(By developing faculty who are specialists in their field and constantly pursuing professional development)</i>		X	X	X

## STRATEGIC SCAN

### The External Environment

Opportunities- It is a well-documented fact that the South Carolina workforce is aging. This is particularly true of the TCL service area. Additionally, the SC Lowcountry has consistently grown in the number of retirees who have relocated to the area. This creates a workforce gap in that there are currently not enough workers to replace the number who are retiring. This also means that healthcare needs of the aging population will continue to grow.

Threats-The nursing program is limited to 40 students being accepted on a twice yearly basis. This figure is sanctioned by the Board of Nursing and ACEN. Our service area healthcare facilities are saturated with student rotation placements. We are also having to compete with other schools of nursing, even those outside of SC, for this clinical space. Therefore, even though the desire to expand the program is strong, there is simply not enough clinical space to accommodate an expansion in student numbers.

### The Internal Environment

#### Success/Strengths

- 1) TCL nursing is a long-standing and very successful nursing program. The nursing faculty is cohesive and committed to the success of the nursing program and its students.
- 2) Course unit tests are blueprinted, reviewed pre- and post-testing by other faculty, and an item analysis provides guidance for improved test questions. TCL uses NCLEX-style questions to familiarize students with this type of testing in preparation for their licensing exam.
- 3) Kaplan is used as one of the learning platforms. Kaplan is considered a leader in nursing education and focuses on industry standards and expectations. Kaplan focused review testing and integrated testing are woven into the nursing program curriculum. Kaplan provides norming data with which to measure strengths/weaknesses which influence program decision-making.
- 4) Skills laboratory with high fidelity simulation is integrated in every clinical course to develop critical thinking skills.
- 5) Full-time faculty are in the clinical rotations instructing students.
- 6) Clinical partners/agencies provide excellent clinical experience to teach nursing students skills and clinical judgements.

## Challenges

- 1) Lack of sufficient release time for professional development
- 2) Difficulty in recruiting and retaining qualified nurse educators. According to a publication from the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), the wage disparity between a master's prepared nurse educator and a master's prepared nurse in the private sector is around \$30,000 yearly <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/IDS/index.htm>.
- 3) Decline in highly qualified applicants to nursing programs. TCL faces competition from other schools of nursing in the region such as USC-B, South University, EPCI and others.
- 4) Many of our students live in outlying rural parts of our service area and therefore do not have access to reliable high-speed internet. This creates a hardship for those times when online learning is required. It is not always a matter of inability to pay for internet services, but rather a lack of infrastructure to deliver those services to the underserved areas.
- 5) Rising costs for students to attend clinical rotations (background checks, drug screens, vaccinations, cost of learning modules/clinical clearance platforms required by facilities, etc.).
- 6) Growing pressure to produce more qualified graduates, both PNs and ADNs, to meet the ever-increasing demand for healthcare in the community.

## STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

A statement of the unit's strategic plan's primary strategic focus areas to be discussed in detail below. Focus areas are those areas of major emphasis that will allow the unit to maximize its opportunities and strengths and address the challenges discussed above. The focus areas should be aligned with the college's institutional goals.

### 1. Strategic Focus Area: A

#### A. Objective

To increase the number of qualified applicants to the ADN nursing program by 25% within 5 years in an effort to improve NCLEX scores to >90%.

Describe alignment with institutional goals.

This objective aligns most closely with the institutional goal of innovation to value expansion and enhancement of the college's services and educational offerings to meet the increasing and changing needs of students, employers and the communities we serve. This will serve to address the growing demand for well-prepared ADN nursing graduates to help fill the vacancies within our service area.

#### B. Success criteria

The main source to verify success is to see an increase in the NCLEX scores for first time test takers. Not only does this expedite the availability of qualified graduates to fill nursing positions, this is in keeping with the SC Board of Nursing trends and ACEN accreditation requirements.

#### C. Implementation Plan and tactics

<b>The TCL Nursing Program will increase the number of qualified ADN applicants by 25% within 3 years.</b>					
Steps	Description	Timeline	Primary Actor	Resources	Assessment/Measure
1	Faculty will attend job/career fairs at local high schools (including our neighboring GA counties) when permitted	2-3 times yearly	Faculty	None	Increase in high school graduates applying to pre-nursing programs within 3 years.
2	Use of social media platforms by TCL administrators to showcase the nursing programs	Quarterly	Faculty/Recent Graduates	IT/Marketing	Increase in number of "followers" on social media

3	Advertisement for TCL ADN nursing program in clinical partners' internal newsletters	2-3 times yearly	Clinical partners	Marketing	Increase in number of applicants from clinical partners
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#### D. Resources

The resources that support the nursing program itself are already in place. There may be a need for funding to update simulation equipment/lab space/release time for faculty. Additional funding to be considered for professional development for retention of faculty.

Key performance indicators

- 1) 10-15% increase in number of qualified ADN applicants within 3 years, 25% within 5 years
- 2) Report from communities of interest regarding job placement data for ADNs
- 3) NCLEX Pass Rates

## 2. Strategic Focus Area: B

### A. Objective

The TCL nursing program will partner with navigators to help identify students who are seeking to complete the PN program of study. This means instead of all students coming in under the ADN major and later being given the chance to “opt out” and exit as a PN, these students will be identified prior to acceptance into the nursing program. This will prevent students from being required to take courses which they do not need for the PN diploma.

### B. Describe alignment with institutional goals

This objective aligns with the TCL vision and educational offerings to meet the increasing and changing needs of students, employers and the communities we serve. According to a recent publication of the SC Employment and Workforce, the job market for LPNs has increased by 24% <https://lmi.dew.sc.gov/lmi%20site/documents/JJH.pdf>.

### C. Success criteria

The PN program will transition from an “opt out” program to a stand-alone program within 3 years while maintaining NCLEX-PN pass rates higher than the national and state average.

### D. Implementation Plan and tactics

The TCL Nursing Program will increase PN applicants by 10-15% within 3 years.					
Steps	Description	Timeline	Primary Actor	Resources	Assessment/Measure
1	Promote PN program applicants through potential area employers	2-3 times yearly	Faculty	HUB/Advisory Board/Marketing	Marked increase in students seeking PN option only
2	Work with navigators for early identification of students seeking PN option	Ongoing	Faculty/navigators/HS advisor	Already in place	Increased number of PN graduates
3	Promote PN option through high school job/career fairs as a faster path to licensure and entry into workforce	2-3 times yearly	Faculty/navigators/HS advisor	Already in place	Increased number of PN graduates

E. Resources

The resources that support the nursing program itself are already in place. There may be a need for funding to update simulation equipment/lab space/release time for faculty. Additional funding to be considered for professional development for retention of faculty.

F. Key performance indicators

- 1) 10-15% increase in number of qualified PN applicants within 1-2 years
- 2) Report from communities of interest regarding job placement data for LPNs

3. Strategic Focus Area: C

A. Objective

The TCL Health Sciences Division will increase retention rates of in-program students to 75%. The nursing program will attempt to engage students in an atmosphere of support to include examining methods to help identify those students at risk for attrition.

B. Describe alignment with institutional goals

This area clearly aligns with the institutional goal of enhancing student success from application to completion. With focus on guided pathways, our individual strategic plans, and program/curriculum assessment, our department should be able to improve student retention/graduation rates.

C. Success criteria

On average our program will graduate 70-75% of nursing students, excluding students who withdraw for personal/medical reasons.

D. Implementation Plan and tactics

<b>The TCL Nursing Program will prioritize student retention and graduation rates.</b>					
Steps	Description	Timeline	Primary Actor	Resources	Assessment/Measure
1	Faculty will assess program/curriculum to identify key areas leading to student dropout	ongoing	Program Director and faculty	None	Qualitative Analysis Graduation Rates, Exit interviews, Student/Graduate Surveys
2	Prioritize establishment of SC Student Nurses Association chapter at TCL; Reactivation of OADN chapter at TCL	ASAP	Program Director and designated faculty	Unknown	SCSNA Membership of 50-75% student nurses  OADN membership of 50—75% student nurses (membership is based on GPA)
3	Student mentoring	Ongoing	Program Director, faculty, and designated 2 <sup>nd</sup> year students	None	Improved retention and graduation rates

E. Resources

The resources for this area are already in place. Memberships to the student associations will be voluntary and at a minimal cost.

F. Key performance indicators

1) Graduation rates >75%

2) Student reports of feeling engaged and supported as evidenced through end of program surveys

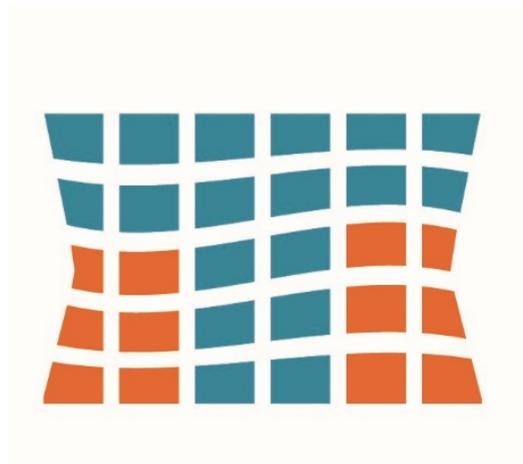
## FY 2020/21 to 2024/25 Enrollment and Retention Targets

	FA 2022	FA 2023	FA 2024	FA 2025	FA 2026
Enrollment Target	120	120	120	120	120
Retention Rate Target	90/120 75%	90/120 75%	90/120 75%	90/120 75%	90/120 75%

Enrollment is the total number of students registered in a given academic unit at a given time.

Retention rate is the percentage of students who continue in the academic unit the next year.

For example, a student who studies in the fall semester and keeps on studying in the program in the next fall semester is counted in this rate.



*Health Sciences – Physical Therapist Assistant*

STRATEGIC PLAN

2022/23 – 2026/27

Technical College of the Lowcountry

# Technical College of the Lowcountry

## **Mission**

The TCL provides quality, affordable academic and technical programs leading to Associate Degrees, Diplomas, and Certificates in an environment fostering excellence in teaching and learning.

## **Vision**

Our vision is to elevate each student and every community we serve through transformative technology and exceptional teaching.

## **Values**

### *Excellence*

We value continuous quality improvement leading to true excellence in all areas of the college.

### *Innovation*

We value expansion and enhancement of the college's services and educational offerings to meet the increasing and changing needs of students, employers and the communities we serve.

### *Integrity*

We value responsibility, accountability, ethical behavior in an atmosphere of honesty, open communication, and with mutual respect.

### *Respect*

We value an education environment that attracts and supports a diverse student and staff community, and fosters awareness.

### *Stewardship*

We value the responsible use of resources to achieve balance among social, economic, and environmental practices.

## **Institutional Goals**

1. Enhance and sustain student success from application to completion.
2. Advance academic quality.
3. Improve operational effectiveness and promote resource stewardship.
4. Cultivate an environment of accountability, communication and teamwork.

## **UNIT OVERVIEW**

### **Unit Level Mission Statement**

The mission of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Technical College of the Lowcountry is to prepare technically competent Physical Therapist Assistants that provide quality physical therapy services within a rapidly changing healthcare environment.

To support this mission, the Physical Therapist Assistant Program provides a comprehensive curriculum that:

- Prepares the physical therapist assistant student with the knowledge and abilities necessary to meet the minimum required skills of physical therapist assistant graduates.
- Prepares the physical therapist assistant students to work under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist in a safe and effective manner.

### **Unit Level Summary**

The Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Program at Technical College of the Lowcountry (TCL) is a two-year, five-semester program leading to an Associate Degree in Applied Sciences. Course work in the Program consists of classes in general education, health-related sciences, and technical course work. Formal clinical education courses are scheduled during the third, fourth, and fifth semesters.

The philosophy of the Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Program is congruent with the mission of the Technical College of the Lowcountry (TCL). The PTA Program has two full-time faculty, as well as four adjunct faculty. Our faculty serves the profession, community, and society. Both TCL and the PTA Program strive to create an atmosphere of excellence in teaching and learning. Within the college's open atmosphere of shared values, the PTA Program encourages creativity, innovation, and resourcefulness among its students and faculty. With these commitments, a positive, student-centered environment is created and individuals are empowered to learn and develop throughout their lifetimes.

Physical therapy is at once both a science and an art. Only through a careful blending of these two components can optimal patient care be provided. For this reason, the PTA Program strives to instill clinical decision-making and technical skills into a strong framework of ethics and compassion. Theory and research drive the science of physical therapy, while caring serves to promote dignity and creates a climate of support that is respectful and accepting of each person's beliefs, culture, and lifestyles. With these values in mind, the PTA Program at TCL was created to prepare individuals to come into the healthcare arena with confidence and competence as entry-level practitioners.

Physical therapy education uses biological, behavioral, and physical therapy sciences to provide students with the opportunities to meet their learning needs. It is the responsibility of the faculty to develop, implement, and evaluate the program and to promote an environment that fosters mutual respect and the development of self-initiated personal and professional goals. It is the responsibility of the student

to be an active, committed partner in the educational process by critically examining information and reflecting upon concepts, beliefs, and ideas. Only through this partnership will both student and program outcomes be achieved. The PTA Program endorses and promotes the vision of the college which is to “elevate each student and every community we serve through transformative technology and exceptional teaching”, as well as the core values of the American Physical Therapy Association, include accountability, altruism, compassion/caring, excellence, integrity, professional duty, and social responsibility.

	Enhance and sustain student success from application to completion	Advance academic quality	Improve operational effectiveness and promote resource stewardship	Cultivate an environment of accountability, communication and teamwork
Prepare technically competent Physical Therapist Assistants	X	X		X
Provide quality physical therapy education within a rapidly changing healthcare environment <i>(By developing faculty who are specialists in their field and constantly pursuing professional development)</i>		X	X	X
Promote social responsibility in each student to meet the mission of TCL to “elevate each student and every community we serve”			X	X

## STRATEGIC SCAN

### The External Environment

Opportunities – We are in a time where the “Baby Boomers” are aging and in need of further health care, especially in our communities. This means that there is a large demand for physical therapy and other medical care in the surrounding counties. In addition, the field of physical therapy is vast, and there are opportunities in multiple settings, such as: hospitals, long-term care facilities, skilled-nursing facilities, in-patient rehab hospitals, outpatient clinics, home-health companies, and even travel work.

The salary is competitive in this market, and the average salary for a Physical Therapist Assistant in South Carolina is \$55,900, according to the 2017 reports from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics .

In addition, overall employment of physical therapist assistants and aides is projected to grow 32 percent from 2020 to 2030, much faster than the average for all occupations. About 23,800 openings for physical therapist assistants and aides are projected each year (on average) over the decade. Many of those openings are expected to result from the need to replace workers who transfer to different occupations or exit the labor force, such as to retire.

Threats – There have been some recent external threats to the profession of physical therapist assistants. Medicare (Part B) has proposed a change in billing that reimburses 15% less for charges performed by a physical therapist assistant (PTA), compared to those charged by a physical therapist (PT). While it is still more cost-effective for an outpatient clinic to staff a PTA than a PT, some owners have mentioned they may not be hiring as many physical therapist assistants, which could limit the job market or at least affect salaries. It is too early to determine the actual impact, as the proposed fee schedule is being fought by advocacy groups from several different professions. In addition, the change in reimbursement is not scheduled to take place until 2022.

## **The Internal Environment**

Successes/Strengths – Both full-time faculty are new and excited about the potential for the TCL Physical Therapist Assistant program. Our philosophies towards PTA education are the similar, and we recently attended a conference from our accrediting body that allowed us to determine areas that need to be addressed. Our adjunct faculty are passionate about the success of our students, and they have all voiced positive comments regarding the direction of the program.

Challenges – There are several areas that need to be addressed within our program, and we have started a weekly program meeting to make positive changes based on our initial assessment of the curriculum, the content, and the clinical education.

- Curriculum – A change in curriculum was just approved based on faculty evaluation and comments from clinical instructors during mid-term meetings and on the clinical performance instrument (CPI). These changes are trying to ensure that the foundational anatomy is sufficient to succeed throughout the program and as an entry-level professional. This will allow us to separate anatomy and kinesiology into two separate courses, and make sure the students have a good understanding of both before continuing into further courses.
- Clinical Education – Changes in the curriculum and course schedule will also allow us to make the final two clinical education courses full-time (5 days/wk). We have many clinical instructors who have voiced their opinions on the difficulties of splitting up the clinical rotations (ex. M, W, F or T, R). This will also guarantee that our students are well beyond the required clinical hours mandated by our accrediting body (CAPTE – 520 minimum).

- Content – We are continually assessing the content of each course to make sure that we are teaching the required elements by CAPTE, the information covered on the national physical therapy exam, and information that is pertinent to success as an entry-level physical therapist assistant.
- Faculty Development – Physical therapy is a competitive field for both PTs and PTAs. In addition to preparing technically competent PTAs, the TCL PTA Program emphasizes faculty professional development and encourages specialization in their respective areas. This will help increase the academic quality, improve effectiveness, and ultimately, improve student retention.

## **STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS**

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program’s strategic plan focuses on recruiting high quality applicants for the program, as well as improving the retention and success of the students who are accepted into the program. Specifics to these strategic focus areas are listed below

### 1. Strategic Focus Area: A

#### A. Objective

The TCL PTA Program will graduate 70-75% of students accepted into the program starting with the Fall 2022 cohort.

#### B. Describe alignment with institutional goals

This objective aligns perfectly with the institution goal to “Enhance and sustain student success from application to completion”. Over the past couple of years, our program has had significant retention issues due to both academic and non-academic reasons. Our program is difficult, and success requires hard-work. However, I do believe there are steps that can be taken to improve retention.

#### C. Success criteria

Graduation Rate (If we accept 16 into the program, our goal will be to graduate 11-12). In addition, we will not count anyone who does not start the program for any specific reason (or exits in the first semester due to non-academic reasons).

#### Previous History

- Class of 2019 – 4 students
- Class of 2020 – 6 students
  - 1 withdrawn for academic reasons
- Class of 2021 – 12 students
  - 1 withdrawn for academic reasons
- Class of 2022 – 11 students on track to graduate
  - 2 withdrawn for academic reasons

#### D. Implementation Plan and tactics (See sample template)

**The TCL PTA Program will graduate 75% of students accepted into the program**

Steps	Description	Timeline	Primary Actor	Resources	Assessment/Measure
1.	Set Expectations at Initial Orientation	June	Program Director & ACCE	No additional resources required	Compare number of students at the end of each semester to the number initially accepted into the program (Goal-75%)
2.	Mid-Term advising with each student (set academic goals if anyone below 84%)	Mid-term	Program Director & ACCE	No additional resources required	
3.	Individual Meeting with Program Director or ACCE following any test/practical <78%	PRN	Program Director & ACCE	No additional resources required	

E. Resources  
No additional resources required

F. Key performance indicators  
We will assess the percentage of students moving on each semester compared to the number initially accepted in each cohort. Long term goal is 70-75% graduation rate (averaged over 2-3 years).

2. Strategic Focus Area: B

A. Objective  
The TCL Physical Therapist Assistant Program will increase applicants to the program by 25% to help improve competitiveness, success rates, and NPTE Pass Rates

B. Describe alignment with institutional goals  
This aligns with the goal to “Enhance and sustain student success from application to completion”, as well as the goal to “Advance academic quality”. By increasing our promotion of the major and increasing understanding of the application process and requirements, we will increase our applicant pool. This should help to increase the competitiveness of the application process, as well as improve the quality of students accepted into the program. This should also help to ensure that students succeed at a higher rate throughout the program.

C. Success criteria  
Over the previous three years (Fall 2019-21), we had an average of 21 applicants to the PTA program. Our goal is to increase applications by 25% (>25 applications/cohort) within the next three years.

D. Implementation Plan and tactics (See sample template)

The TCL Physical Therapist Assistant Program will increase applicants to the program by 25% to improve competitiveness to enter the program					
Steps	Description	Timeline	Primary Actor	Resources	Assessment/Measure
1	Annual Prospective PTA Meeting	Mid-Spring Semester	Program Director & HS Advisory	No additional resources	We will monitor applications each year to determine overall number and average, with a goal of being >25 applicants by 2024.
2	Meet with Local HS programs	Spring	Program Director, ACCE, & HS Advisor	Relief time for travel/meetings	
3	Attend Career Fairs	PRN	Program Director, ACCE, & HS Advisor	Relief time for health fairs	
4	TCL Open Houses	1x/semester	Program Director, ACCE, & HS Advisor	No additional resources	
5	Community Involvement	1x/month	TCL PTA Students @ Adaptive Golf, Wheelchair Tennis Championship, and other community events	PTA Program will start community service requirement	
6	Work with Marketing to increase promotions in the community and on social media	As available	PTA Program Director and Marketing/PR	Funds may be needed depending on the type of marketing	

E. Resources

The only additional resources will be the time required to attend the above-mentioned events, as well as marketing and promotional materials, as needed. The time should be covered as part of the job duties for the Program Director, ACCE, and HS Advisor.

We will also look to start a community service requirement for all PTA students in Fall of 2021. This will require them to log 10-15 hours of community service each year, and attend at least one adaptive golf event each semester (which counts towards their hour requirement).

F. Key performance indicators

Applications received is the main performance indicator. We will also look at retention rates and NPTE pass rates.

3. Strategic Focus Area: C

A. Objective

Faculty will be active in pursuing:

- Professional Membership through the American Physical Therapy Association
- Continuing Education
- Specialization (through the ABPTS if available)

B. Describe alignment with institutional goals

This focus area aligns mostly with the goal to “Advance academic quality. By requiring our faculty to pursue professional involvement, specialization, and continuing education, it will improve the overall quality of education in the PTA program, and this should help to increase retention rates and cultivate an environment of accountability.

C. Success criteria

All faculty in the PTA Programs must meet or be pursuing at least 2 of the following:

- Member of the APTA
- Specialist Certification through the ABPTS
- Pursuing further education in related area
- Yearly continuing education (15 hours) in specialty area or area of interest

D. Implementation Plan and tactics (See sample template)

<b>All faculty will be active in pursuing professional membership, continuing education, and/or specialization in their respective specialties</b>					
Steps	Description	Timeline	Primary Actor	Resources	Assessment/Measure
1	Faculty will set yearly professional goals that align with specialty area and program needs	Yearly	Faculty & Program Director	None	Yearly review at PTA Program Assessment and Planning Meeting
2	Plan required actions	Yearly	Faculty	Relief time and funding for APTA memberships, professional meetings, and/or specialization exam	Review previous year’s progress at annual meeting (prior to setting new goals)
3	Report back on progress and benefit to PTA Program	After events or exams	Faculty & Program Director	None	None

E. Resources

The only additional resources needed for this focus area will be release time for professional meetings and/or specialization exams, as well as funding for these items (if needed). APTA membership is covered in our current budget, and the professional meetings and specialist exam fees are normally covered via Perkin’s funding for Professional Development.

F. Key performance indicators

Our goals are easily assessed via yearly PTA Program Assessment and Planning Meeting and Performance Reviews with Division Dean. The Program Director will follow-up with each faculty related to the prior year’s performance, and new goals will be set to ensure we reach our targets.

4. Strategic Focus Area: D

G. Objective

The TCL PTA Program will promote the Core Value of Social Responsibility.

H. Describe alignment with institutional goals

This focus aligns with the goals to promote resource stewardship and to create an environment of accountability, communication, and teamwork. These values are shared by our program, as well as our profession and accrediting body (CAPTE).

I. Success criteria

Students will complete 15 hours of service learning throughout the 2-year PTA Program. These service learning activities must involve strategic partners (Adaptive Golf, Wheelchair Tennis Championship, or other TCL sanctioned-events), or they must be pre-approved by program faculty.

J. Implementation Plan and tactics (See sample template)

<b>The TCL Physical Therapist Assistant Program will increase applicants to the program by 50% to improve competitiveness to enter the program</b>					
Steps	Description	Timeline	Primary Actor	Resources	Assessment/Measure
1	Students are given the service learning form and requirements at PTA Orientation	PTA Orientation	Program Director ACCE	None	None
2	Students and faculty will work to increase strategic	Ongoing	Faculty and students	Relief time to meet with strategic	Reviewed yearly prior to student orientation

	partners and provide multiple opportunities for service learning			partners and set-up opportunities for service	
3	Students will complete	Ongoing	Students	None	Student's responsibility
4	Forms turned in prior to graduation	End of Spring semester	Students/Faculty	None	Review/Evaluate forms prior to signing graduation application

K. Resources

No major resources are needed other than occasional release time to meet with strategic partners.

L. Key performance indicators

Review of service-learning forms (to verify accuracy and completion) prior to submitting grad apps.

**FY 2020/21 to 2024/25 Enrollment and Retention Targets**

	FA 2022	FA 2023	FA 2024	FA 2025	FA 2026
Enrollment Target (both cohorts)	25	26	26	27	28
Retention Rate Target	70%	70%	75%	75%	80%

Enrollment is the total number of students registered in a given academic unit at a given time.

Retention rate is the percentage of students who continue in the academic unit the next year. For example, a student who studies in the fall semester and keeps on studying in the program in the next fall semester is counted in this rate.

**Previous Years Graduation Rates**

	2019	2020	2021	2022 (projected)
<b>Started Program</b>	13	16	14	16
<b>W – Academic</b>	1	1	1	2
<b>W – Non-Academic</b>	8	9	1	3
<b>Graduated</b>	4	6	12	11
<b>Graduation Rate</b>	80%	86%	92.3%	85%
<b>Retention Rate</b>	31%	37.5%	86%	69%



*Health Science-Surgical Technology Program*

STRATEGIC PLAN

2022/23 – 2026/27

Technical College of the Lowcountry

# Technical College of the Lowcountry

## **Mission**

The TCL provides quality, affordable academic and technical programs leading to Associate Degrees, Diplomas, and Certificates in an environment fostering excellence in teaching and learning.

## **Vision**

Our vision is to elevate each student and every community we serve through transformative technology and exceptional teaching.

## **Values**

### *Excellence*

We value continuous quality improvement leading to true excellence in all areas of the college.

### *Innovation*

We value expansion and enhancement of the college's services and educational offerings to meet the increasing and changing needs of students, employers and the communities we serve.

### *Integrity*

We value responsibility, accountability, ethical behavior in an atmosphere of honesty, open communication, and with mutual respect.

### *Respect*

We value an education environment that attracts and supports a diverse student and staff community, and fosters awareness.

### *Stewardship*

We value the responsible use of resources to achieve balance among social, economic, and environmental practices.

## **Institutional Goals**

1. Enhance and sustain student success from application to completion.
2. Advance academic quality.
3. Improve operational effectiveness and promote resource stewardship.
4. Cultivate an environment of accountability, communication and teamwork.

## UNIT OVERVIEW

### Unit Level Mission Statement

**While supporting the stated mission and goals of the college, the mission of the Surgical Technology Program at the Technical College of the Lowcountry is to provide a comprehensive, competency-based curriculum, preparing students who will graduate with entry-level skills needed to perform as a competent Surgical Technologist and provide the best possible care to patients. Upon successful completion of the program, the graduate is eligible to take the National Certification Examination through the National Board of Surgical Technologist and Surgical Assistant (NBSTSA).**

### Unit Level Summary

**The Surgical Technology Program is an integral part of the Technical College of the Lowcountry and holds with the philosophy and purposes of the College and the South Carolina Technical College System. It is a limited enrollment Health Science Program, accepting a maximum of fifteen (15) new students each fall.**

**The Surgical Technology Department Faculty of the Technical College of the Lowcountry believes that:**

**Health is the state of optimum well-being for humanity. Health is relative and constantly changing.**

**Due to this changing state, the Surgical Technologist practices in the unique role of restoring optimum health and alleviating suffering by aiding surgical intervention. In fulfilling this role, the Surgical Technologist works closely with the patient, surgeon, and other operating room professionals in the operative care of the surgical patient.**

**Surgical Technology practice is not limited to the physical setting of the operating room. It is also utilized in other health care areas and facilities. These areas and facilities include, but are not limited to Labor and Delivery, Emergency Room, Central/Sterile Processing, Ambulatory Surgical Facilities, and private physician's offices.**

**The educational environment of the Surgical Technology Program at the Technical College of the Lowcountry considers individual differences, which affect learning ability, and provides motivation to continue to learn and adapt in the changing surgical environment. The faculty believes an individual's ability to learn is based on past experiences and personal**

potential, which permits learning to occur at different rates and levels. Learning takes place most readily when material is covered in logical sequence and progresses in difficulty from simple to complex. Under the guidance of the faculty, the student should assume responsibility for much of their own learning.

The faculty believes that Surgical Technology education should reflect the student’s development of skills and theoretical knowledge essential for restoring optimum health and alleviating suffering in the operative setting.

The Surgical Technology program employs two full time faculty (program director and core instructor) and two adjunct faculty for clinical courses.

	Enhance and sustain student success from application to completion	Advance academic quality	Improve operational effectiveness and promote resource stewardship	Cultivate an environment of accountability, communication and teamwork
Prepare students who will graduate with entry-level skills needed to perform as a competent Surgical Technologist and provide the best possible care to patients.		X		X
Provide comprehensive, competency-based curriculum	X		X	
Increase quality and effectiveness of teach by obtaining up to date equipment, expansion of laboratory space, and requiring SUR faculty to attend program specific professional development.	X	X	X	X
Prepare students to sit for and pass the National Certification Exam to obtain Certified Surgical Technologist credential	X		X	

## STRATEGIC SCAN

### The External Environment

A description of the external environment as it affects the unit's opportunities and poses challenges.

**Opportunities:** The Surgical Technology profession produces an average of 13 graduates per year. Of those 13, about 85-90% pass their national certification exam to be credentialed as a Certified Surgical Technologist (CST).

Nationally, employment of surgical technologists is projected to increase by nearly 7 percent from 2019 to 2029. The projected employment need is estimated based on the increase in the elderly population and the advances made in medical technology for treatment of a wide variety of illnesses and injuries. The baby boomer generation will be at least 65 years of age by 2030, resulting in an increased need for surgical services.

	Employment	Employment Projection	Numeric Change	Percent Change
<b>National</b>	<b>111,300</b> <b>(2019)</b>	<b>118,900</b> <b>(2029)</b>	<b>7,600</b>	<b>6.8%</b>
<b>State of SC</b>	<b>1,960</b> <b>(2018)</b>	<b>2,070</b> <b>(2018)</b> 170 projected annual job openings	<b>110</b>	<b>6%</b>

**SOURCE:**

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Projections  
<https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/occupational-projections-and-characteristics.htm>  
<https://www.onetonline.org/link/localtrends/29-2055.00?st=SC&q=Go>

### Challenges:

**Currently, the Surgical Technology program is unable to meet the needs of the community. The turnover rate of CST employees is far greater than the number of CST graduates produced by this program. It is within the community's best interest to expand the overall size of the Surgical Technology program to**

**produce more entry-level Certified Surgical Technologists each year.**

**The Surgical Technology program is expanding the curriculum to a 5 semester, Applied Science Associate Degree. The expansion to a 5 semester curriculum will create a new pattern for the graduation timeline. Currently, the program is using a 4 semester curriculum which will produce graduates in December 2022. A new cohort of students will begin August 2022 and they will be the first cohort to start the 5 semester track. The Surgical Technology Program will not produce any CST graduates from December 2022 until May 2024 (17 months). After May 2024, the program will produce CST graduates annually every May (end of Spring Semester).**

### **The Internal Environment**

A description of the internal environment as it affects the unit's opportunities and poses challenges. Discussion of, as appropriate:

- Recent successes and other strengths that your unit will build upon

**Recently, the Surgical Technology program has made several strides in the education for its students.**

- **After analyzing the most recent graduating cohort's success rate for the National Certification Exam, it was decided to change the core textbook for the program. The textbook now being used is endorsed by the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting, the organization responsible for creating and administering the certification exam for our students.**
- **Cohort enrollment has improved. The program did not accept students for Fall 2020 cohort. Initial enrollment for Fall 2019 was 9 students and initial enrollment for Fall 2021 is 12 students. Communication with students including academic advisement and additional "free" time are being used as strategies to improve program retention.**
- **Program proposal to implement new curriculum for Associate in Applied Science-Surgical Technology has been approved by the SC Technical College System. Approval is anticipated for Commission on Higher Education (CHE), The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), Veterans Affairs, and the Department of Education.**
- **Acquisition of additional clinical site. Candler Hospital System has multiple locations which will create advanced learning opportunities for students. Students are required to participate in a minimum number of surgeries spanning several categories and specialties. Candler Hospital and St. Joseph's Hospitals offer a variety of surgical specialties including neurosurgery, cardiothoracic, vascular, and orthopedics. Students will be exposed to all levels of surgical procedures and operating room environments. The acquisition of**

**Candler Hospital system as a new clinical facility will increase the number of job opportunities for graduates.**

- **Hiring of 2 adjunct faculty members who are currently employed at hospitals within the community. The adjuncts have several years of experience and bring a wealth of knowledge with them to our program.**
  - **Overall improvement of the Surgical Technology program since December 2020. The program is pending a continuing accreditation visit from the review committee (ARC/STSA). During the process of preparing for the site visit, several areas of concern were discovered (see below).**
  - **Recent Perkins Funding approved to purchase *LapSim ST*, a virtual reality laparoscopic trainer that will enable students to have real-life practice for common laparoscopic procedures. The simulator will also create student profiles and individual progress reports to help students gauge their learning retention.**
- Areas needing to be improved or else reduced
    - Standardized filing system needs to be established. Paperwork including tests, quizzes, and projects from recent cohorts are scattered in multiple places. Digital storage of files is improving for recent and current cohorts to facilitate new storage procedures. Hard copies of student work is maintained within Program Director's office and most student work is stored electronically as well.
    - Communication with clinical facilities could be improved. Surgical Technology faculty are improving on methods of communication with the representatives at each facility (i.e. texting vs. email- as requested by representative).
    - Laboratory facilities need expansion to support current student-faculty ratio of 10:1. Lab sessions are divided in to two sessions to accommodate the ratio which is a requirement from the accrediting body (CAAHEP). Improvisation of lab space has taken place during FA2021 semester (i.e. using nursing/medical assisting lab *and* the surgical technology lab). Unfortunately, splitting the class in to two sections has resulted in inconsistent teaching methods and communication between students and faculty.
    - Laboratory equipment is in great need of updating. A majority of the equipment is not useful for teaching because it is outdated by at least 10-15 years. This includes, but not limited to: Laparoscopic tower systems, anesthesia cart, OR beds, endoscopes, and OR lights.
    - The variety of instrumentation needs to be improved for lab usage. Inventory consists of basic instrumentation, leading students to learn about specialty instruments from pictures in their textbook. This does not support the hands-on learning style intended for the lab setting.

## STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

A statement of the unit's strategic plan's primary strategic focus areas to be discussed in detail below. Focus areas are those areas of major emphasis that will allow the unit to maximize its opportunities and strengths and address the challenges discussed above. The focus areas should be aligned with the college's institutional goals.

1. Strategic Focus Area: A

A. Objective

Increase student retention rate to provide a larger number of quality, entry-level certified surgical technologists to the community.

B. Describe alignment with institutional goals

1. *Enhance and sustain student success from application to completion.*

2. *Advance academic quality.*

C. Success criteria

To be successful in increasing the student retention rate for the Surgical Technology program, several steps must take place. The most important factor is to accept higher quality students in to the program. Students who have a higher GPA and who are higher than average academically are more likely to meet all program requirements for completion. The table below will identify the minimum requirements of a “higher quality student” that is desired for application. The Surgical Technologist profession is not a very well-known career and many people do not realize that certification is obtainable within two years. Marketing and advertisement of the profession should increase and begin within the hospitals and healthcare facilities we have in our community.

D. Implementation Plan and tactics

Higher quality students will...					
Steps	Description	Timeline	Primary Actor	Resources	Assessment/Measure
1	Be successful in BIO 210 and BIO 211	Beginning Fall 2022	Faculty/Student		Students must be eligible to take BIO 210/211 to be able to apply for program
2	Obtain final grade of 78.00 or higher for progression within program	Each semester	Faculty/Student		Students will be given a variety of assessments to measure outcomes and retention of course content
3	Be recruited from hospitals and other healthcare facilities	1-2 years	PD and Faculty	Marketing and advertisement to facilities	Students who a healthcare employment background typically have higher rates of success within the SUR program.

E. Resources

No specific resources will be required for this objective. Upon acceptance, the students who have a high rate of (above average) success in general education courses will likely display the same academic success in the Surgical Technology program.

F. Key performance indicators

A review of the retention rate will be performed annually. The Surgical Technology program develops an Annual Report for the accrediting body which evaluates retention, pass/fail for the National Certification Exam, and employment placement. The higher quality student who progresses successfully through the program will also likely pass the National Certification Exam on the first attempt (1<sup>st</sup> attempt pass/fail rate is reported in the Annual Report).

2. Strategic Focus Area: B

A. Objective

Increase maximum enrollment capacity for Surgical Technology program to produce a larger number of entry-level Certified Surgical Technologists (CST) to our community health partners.

B. Describe alignment with institutional goals

*“Improve operational effectiveness”*- Increasing the number of CSTs produced annually from this program, we will help to improve the staffing shortages in our community. Ideally, the program will expand to accept 20 students for new cohorts beginning 2023. ; the current maximum enrollment capacity is 15 students. If more students are able to be accepted in to the program, the likelihood of producing a higher number of CSTs will increase as well. This is important because our community health partners expect graduating students to apply for employment immediately upon passing the National Certification Exam. More graduates/CSTs equals higher employment placement rates which will equal higher level of program effectiveness. This also aligns directly with the program’s mission statement.

C. Success criteria

Successful increase of the maximum enrollment capacity will be evidenced by the approval from the accrediting body (CAAHEP) and review committee (ARC/STSA). One the new enrollment capacity is approved by these organizations, the Surgical Technology program will be able to begin a new cycle of graduating more CSTs annually.

D. Implementation Plan and tactics

In order to increase maximum enrollment capacity the program must...					
Steps	Description	Timeline	Primary Actor	Resources	Assessment/Measure
1	Establish a <b>permanent</b> expansion of SUR lab space	1-2 years	SUR Faculty and Dean of HS, additional support as	Lab space acquired within Building 4	Permanent physical space dedicated to only SUR. Ensures student-faculty ratio can be maintained < or = to

			needed for expansion		10:1 within one contiguous space.
2	Ensure clinical affiliates can accommodate the need for increase in clinical slots for student placement	Beginning Fall 2021	Program Director/ Program Faculty	Representatives from clinical affiliates to provide institution approved availability	Proof of clinical availability via documents provided to ARC/STSA. Continuous communication with clinical representatives to ensure slots approved are still attainable and efficient for student success.
3	Obtain Advisory Committee Approval	After expansion of lab space	All members of SUR Faculty and SUR Advisory Committee	Clinical Sufficiency form provided by Accreditation Review Committee (ARC/STSA).	Meeting minutes provided to ARC/STSA to support approval of increase.

\*Note: Step 2 is complete as of FA2021. Acquisition of new clinical facility increased the ability to raise enrollment capacity to 20 students.

E. Resources

Currently, the program is utilizing lab space that was not designed for Surgical Technology. The lab space is not contiguous with the SUR lab (bldg. 4/212). Lab space for SUR should be large enough to prevent having to split students. Separating students can result in an unintentional disadvantage to student learning (i.e. students asking relevant questions that may not be addressed in both groups).

Clinical affiliates have assessed the available slots for Surgical Technology students.

Communication with affiliates will be continuous to ensure availability remains supportive of the enrollment capacity.

CAAHEP requires the Surgical Technology Advisory Committee to vote on and approve the enrollment capacity change. This will be noted in the meeting minutes, which are then approved, and provided as supporting documentation to the ARC/STSA when reporting the substantive program change. A clinical sufficiency form is also required to be completed during this process.

F. Key performance indicators

1. Approval from Program Advisory Committee regarding the increase of MEC.

2. Notification from CAAHEP via ARC/STSA reflecting approval of increased Maximum Enrollment Capacity (MEC).
3. Number of students in each cohort supporting the increase of enrollment capacity.

FY 2022/23 to 2025/26 Enrollment and Retention Targets

	FA 2022	FA 2023	FA 2024	FA 2025	FA 2026
Class Breakdown	Cohort A-9 New Cohort B- 15	Cohort A grad.-9 Cohort B remain- 12 New Cohort C- 16	Cohort B grad.-11 Cohort C rem.- 13 New Cohort D- 17	Cohort C grad.-12 Cohort D rem.-13 New Cohort E-18	Cohort D grad.-13 Cohort E rem.-14 New Cohort F- 20
Enrollment Target	24	28	30	31	34
Retention Rate Target	21/24 87.5%	24/28 85.7%	25/30 83.3%	27/31 87%	29/34 85.3%

*\*beginning with Fall 2022 new cohort, cohorts will graduate at the end of Spring semester (5 semester curriculum with Fall starts).*

Enrollment is the total number of students registered in a given academic unit at a given time.

Retention rate is the percentage of students who continue in the academic unit the next year. For example, a student who studies in the fall semester and keeps on studying in the program in the next fall semester is counted in this rate.

**Previous Retention Data:**

Most recent graduating cohort (enrolled 2019, grad. 2021) 9 Start, 6 graduated **67%** \*

Previous (Enrolled 2018, grad 2019) 11 start, 8 graduated **72%\*\***

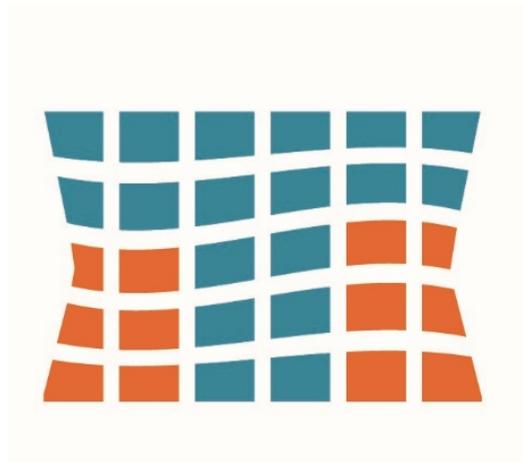
Previous (Enrolled 2017, grad. 2018) 10 start, 4 graduated **40%\*\*\***

Previous (enrolled 2016, grad. 2017) 14 start, 13 graduated **93%**

*\* extenuating circumstances regarding program director- 13 students were accepted to the program but 4 students withdrew on the first day of class after being informed of the program's standing challenges.*

*\*\* Two students withdrawn for clinical attendance policy violation, one withdrawn for personal reasons, one student withdrawn for unknown reason.*

*\*\*\* 5 of the 6 students who did not continue in the program were withdrawn for personal conflict, failure to pass required drug screen, and violations of clinical policy. One student withdrawn for academic failure.*



*RADIOLOGIC TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM*  
STRATEGIC PLAN  
2022/23 – 2026/27  
Technical College of the Lowcountry

# Technical College of the Lowcountry

## **Mission**

The TCL provides quality, affordable academic and technical programs leading to Associate Degrees, Diplomas, and Certificates in an environment fostering excellence in teaching and learning.

## **Vision**

Our vision is to elevate each student and every community we serve through transformative technology and exceptional teaching.

## **Values**

### *Excellence*

We value continuous quality improvement leading to true excellence in all areas of the college.

### *Innovation*

We value expansion and enhancement of the college's services and educational offerings to meet the increasing and changing needs of students, employers and the communities we serve.

### *Integrity*

We value responsibility, accountability, ethical behavior in an atmosphere of honesty, open communication, and with mutual respect.

### *Respect*

We value an education environment that attracts and supports a diverse student and staff community, and fosters awareness.

### *Stewardship*

We value the responsible use of resources to achieve balance among social, economic, and environmental practices.

## **Institutional Goals**

1. Enhance and sustain student success from application to completion.
2. Advance academic quality.
3. Improve operational effectiveness and promote resource stewardship.
4. Cultivate an environment of accountability, communication and teamwork.

## UNIT OVERVIEW

### Unit Level Mission Statement

While supporting the stated mission and goals of the college, the mission of the Radiologic Technology Program at the Technical College of the Lowcountry is to provide a comprehensive, competency-based curriculum, preparing students who will graduate with entry-level skills needed to perform quality radiologic procedures and provide the best care possible to patients.

### Unit Level Summary

Students complete six consecutive semesters of combined academic study and clinical experience. The academic program includes professional and general education courses. All professional courses (RAD prefix) have listed course goals, objectives, and/or competencies, which must be satisfied before a student can progress. Students who complete the program will be awarded an Associate in Applied Science Radiologic Technology, and may be eligible to sit for the radiography examination for national certification given by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (A.R.R.T.) The program is conducted in cooperation with hospitals, clinics, and physician practices located within the counties of Beaufort, Colleton, Jasper, Hampton, and Chatham served by the Technical College of the Lowcountry. To meet educational goals, students can expect to have clinical education class rotations at several designated clinical sites. Students can also expect clinical education classes/rotations that will involve afternoon and/or evening hours. Combined assigned clinical and academic hours cannot exceed forty (40) contact hours per week. Approximately 40% of the time is devoted to classroom and laboratory activities with the remainder in the clinical setting. Classes begin in the fall semester and accept 14 – 16 students. The program capacity approved by the Joint Review Committee on Education of Radiologic Technology (JRCERT) is 32 seats. The program has been active since the fall of 2003, and the first graduating class took place in the summer of 2005.

### PROGRAM GOALS

- ❖ **Goal 1:** The student will possess problem solving and critical thinking abilities needed to function in the changing healthcare environment.
  - **Student Learning Outcomes:** Student will be able to achieve diagnostic radiographs on trauma patients. Student will demonstrate ability to critique and analyze images.
- ❖ **Goal 2:** The student will demonstrate academic and technical competence as an entry level radiographer.
  - **Student Learning Outcomes:** Students will produce a diagnostic quality image. Students will apply positioning skills in the lab and clinical setting. Students will demonstrate competence in the clinical and classroom environment.

- ❖ **Goal 3:** The student will communicate effectively in the classroom and clinical setting.
  - **Student Learning Outcomes:** Students will demonstrate effective oral communication skills with patients. Students will demonstrate effective oral communication skills in the classroom. Students will demonstrate effective written communication skills.
  
- ❖ **Goal 4:** The student will demonstrate professional attitudes, behavior and ethics in the clinical and classroom environment as well as participate in professional development activities.
  - **Student Learning Outcomes:** Students will demonstrate professional attitudes, behavior, and ethics. Students will apply radiation protection practices on patients in clinical. Students will learn the importance of professional development for continuous learning.

### Core Values

- Compassion
- Ethical
- Culturally competent
- Respectful
- Collaboration

	Enhance and sustain student success from application to completion	Advance academic quality	Improve operational effectiveness and promote resource stewardship	Cultivate an environment of accountability, communication and teamwork
Enhancing continuous didactic and clinical learning objectives with academic and technical competence	X	X		X
Providing supportive learning strategies with changing technology	X		X	X
Encourage communication and support to students in meeting learning objectives	X		X	X
Active participation in meeting competent goals and objectives set by program faculty	X	X		X

## STRATEGIC SCAN

### The External Environment

The radiologic technology program offers educational opportunities to traditional and non-traditional students. Students attend clinical affiliations to gain competent training and skills and employment opportunities that may be present after graduation. Upon training and certification, graduates can continue to grow and advance in their career paths in the community and across the country. With a diverse applicant population, a competitive resource could be present within our community as more opportunities promote the program and answer general questions of student interests.

With additional learning resources, retention rates could increase with different learning opportunities to reinforce course material and information. Additional learning resources and review of program goals and outcomes will identify strengths and weaknesses with the program and improvements to meet benchmarks. These resources can be an advantage to meet the need of retention and graduation rates.

**Strengths:** Students who graduate from the program are eligible for employment upon certification with the ARRT. Employment within the community allows relationships to build and possibly expand into additional modalities. As clinical partnerships increase, the program support from the community will increase and possibly increase program enrollment with an expansion of clinical placement.

**Opportunities:** Expanding partnerships could be helpful in program placement and recruitment of additional full-time/part-time faculty with qualified credentials. Faculty professional development and additional certifications could provide additional opportunities and certificate programs in advanced modalities in the future. With additional opportunities for advanced modalities, this will increase faculty with program needs and enhance faculty with training and receiving continuing education and provide technical and quality standards with advancing healthcare technology for program graduates.

**Challenges:** The program may see a limitation of full-time employment opportunities for students upon graduation, and more employment opportunities may require additional training or additional certification requirements. Additional training requirements may occur in employment opportunities in settings like urgent care or outpatient centers.

### The Internal Environment

With collaborative efforts with program faculty, enhanced practices will help the application process include a diverse, competitive applicant selection. This effort aligns with internal practices to enhance student enrollment and guide students to achieve their goals to follow the institutional strategy.

**Strengths:** The program has effectively started a new cohort with the current acceptance placement with a pandemic in view. Annually, faculty review benchmarks to see if each cohort has met the program goal and student learning outcome for each assessment. These assessments are appraised to the program's advisory board committee, where assistance and review take place for recommendations. Areas of improvement are reviewed and addressed, and a plan of action identifies and improves a critical assessment.

**Opportunities:** With an enhanced diverse, competitive weighted admission, a more extensive applicant selection can occur. This objective can also help increase retention rates with competitive applicants and, in the end, increase graduation and examination pass rates. Several clinical affiliations hire graduates immediately upon graduation to serve within the community and continuous growing health advancement and needs.

**Challenges:** Due to COVID-19, we may see a limitation of enrollment due to personal/work schedules for students and the flexibility of taking in-program courses as assigned. Many students face choosing to continue their college journey and working full-time to take care of personal and family needs. Unfortunately, the challenge with in-program courses is the flexibility of student's schedules and taking didactic and clinical courses.

## STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

The radiologic technology's primary focus for enhancing the program application process is identifying diverse, competitive students interested in the program and the pathway to apply. As stated previously, a challenge that may appear is the flexibility of a student's schedule and adjusting their schedule with general education needs for the weighted admission process. With current in-program students, faculty assess the program goals and outcomes for all benchmarks. Assessments of certification pass rates are reviewed and a focus area could include an annual review seminar for additional preparation for second-year students to take their certification exam upon graduation.

Additional learning resources could be influential in assisting all learner types. With additional learning resources, additional certifications could exist with faculty attending professional development workshops to gain information with current technology. With additional certifications and faculty, additional programs focused on advanced modalities could be a potential focus for the program. Additional advanced modality programs would also require additional faculty to help focus and assist with student completion programs.

### 1. Strategic Focus Area: A

#### A. Objective

Enhance the program application process with a diverse, competitive cohort by increasing applicants by 30%

B. Describe alignment with institutional goals

With the promotion of programs in the community, an increase of applicants incorporates interests and general questions. Assisting students with interests and questions aligns with the institutional goal for guided pathways with students and assisting their needs in the application process.

C. Success criteria

With an enhanced application process, a more diverse, competitive applicant selection may become available with a larger quantity of applicants (25% increase). Promoting the program is key in meeting this objective.

D. Implementation Plan and tactics

Enhance program application process with a diverse, competitive cohort.						
Focus Area	Steps	Description	Timeline	Primary Actor	Resources	Assessment/Measure
A	1	Promote mini Q&A sessions on a monthly basis	Monthly	Program Faculty	Program Faculty	Assess program interests (could this be advertised on the website under the RAD Tech Page with a scheduled date for the Q&A)
	2	Expand support and advertising for program to community	Fall/Spring	Program Faculty and Adjuncts	Release time for Program Faculty to attend career fairs/PR and Marketing	Weekly announcements/emails sent to students interested and pre-RAD students; faculty and adjuncts can increase attendance at career fairs
	3	Outreach and support to Pre-RAD students	Semester / Quarterly	Program Faculty	Program Faculty	Continued support and contact with Program Navigators with Pre-RAD students interests and questions

## E. Resources

- Collaborative efforts from program faculty and adjuncts occur before and during the application period; the need for release time allows faculty to attend career fairs promoting the program and identifying student interests. Additional funds with Marketing and Public Relations may be needed to promote program information while attending career fairs.
- Increased part-time, or adjunct faculty. The RAD Tech program has been unable to find necessary adjunct faculty requiring overload for both full-time faculty over the past 1-2 academic years. A part-time faculty would help address multiple areas, including: controlling overloads, allowing program director release time for administrative duties, adding certifications/specializations to the program, and decreasing the need for adjunct faculty (which has been difficult to find).

## F. Key performance indicators

A projected 30% increase in program applications would enhance a competitive application process in the next 3-5 years.

## 2. Strategic Focus Area: B

### A. Objective

Increase student retention with in-program students by increasing technology practices to enhance student learning in all areas. Professional development for faculty can help with current technology trends and updates for the future of technology for the program.

### B. Describe alignment with institutional goals

Student retention aligns with meeting communication requirements and utilizing the early alert system and tutoring resources if needed. This objective aligns with meeting institutional needs and guidance for student direction and success. Learning resources and campus activities are vital assets in allowing students to become competent in program objectives. Integration of activities will enhance student participation in the classroom with all learning types and increase retention rates in the program.

Professional development and additional certifications will assist in keeping the program current with technology trends. Students will be able to identify career goals after completing of the Radiologic Technology Program and continue their journey with advanced modalities.

### C. Success criteria

With advancing technology and learning opportunities, different strategies can be applied within the classroom to accommodate all types of learners. Interactive technology resources can assist faculty in the classroom and be accessible from campus to review course material and critical objectives to meet the current advancement requirements. Additional professional development and certifications could help promote advanced modalities in the imaging field and attract more students as certified radiographers. Retention rate will be targeted for > 85% in 5 years.

#### D. Implementation Plan and tactics

Increase student retention with in-program students.						
Focus Area	Steps	Description	Timeline	Primary Actor	Resources	Assessment/Measure
<b>B</b>	1	Program goals reviewed with Advisory Board Committee Yearly	Annually	Program Faculty	Program Faculty/Advisory Board Committee	Assess benchmarks and outcomes and meeting all required benchmarks - review unmet benchmarks
	2	Expand support and technology/equipment updates to increase active participation within the classroom	Semester / Annually	Program Faculty	Technology/Learning Resources	Assess participation and active learning within the classroom to help/enhance retaining course material (Review benchmark/goal for specific areas)
	3	Registry review seminars for second year students for preparation of ARRT examination	Annually	Learning Resources	Learning Resources	Contact with seminar programs and resources for student attendance;
	4	Professional development workshops/Additional certifications	Annually	Program Faculty/Additional Faculty	Professional Workshops/Additional certifications	Additional professional workshops to stay abreast of updated technology – Additional certifications and additional faculty with

						increased student placement

E. Resources

Resources needed are hosting a review seminar on campus for the credentialing exam and additional professional workshops to stay up to date on teaching techniques and technology in the classroom to increase student retention.

With the ever-changing technology, enhancing faculty needs with additional training opportunities in professional development meet objectives needed for student success. With updates in technology, faculty will need to attend professional development workshops. Additional faculty will be needed if increased student placement with target enrollment occurs and advanced modality programs in the potential future.

F. Key performance indicators

The ARRT examination pass rate will be assessed annually along with program benchmark assessment data. For program retention, a projected 10% increase would show improvement in the program’s retention rate.

FY 2022/23 to 2025/26 Enrollment and Retention Targets

	FA 2022	FA 2023	FA 2024	FA 2025	FA 2026
Enrollment Target	30	30	32	32	32
Retention Target	86.66%	90.00%	87.5%	90.63%	93.75%

**\*In-program student enrollment would be dependent upon current program capacity.**