



Accreditation History and Major Changes

Accreditation History

Carl Sandburg College first became affiliated with the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools' Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (NCA) in November 1967, when Federal Fund

Eligibility approval was granted. In March 1972, the College was recognized as a Candidate for Accreditation status. In July 1973, the College became a candidate for accreditation under the new policy of NCA and was visited by an evaluation team in December 1973. NCA granted accreditation to the institution and placed it on a five-year review cycle for newly accepted institutions in March 1974.

Accreditation History

March 1974: 5 year Cycle

October 1979: 3 year Cycle

Fall 1982: 3 year Cycle

November 1985: 5 year Cycle

April 1991: 10 year Cycle

November 2001: 10 year Cycle

The second full Self-Study was conducted in 1979, with the evaluation team visit in October. At this time, the team recommended accreditation be continued at the associate degree granting level with a focus visit scheduled in fall 1982 to monitor and study the institution's financial status and curriculum review. The focus visitation team found the concerns of the previous team relating to curriculum had been addressed and conditions were significantly improved. A tax rate referendum in February 1980 resulted in improvement in the financial condition of the institution, and the team concluded resources would be adequate to support the mission of the College.

A third Self-Study was completed in November 1985, with the evaluation team visit in February 1986. The College was found to be accomplishing its stated purposes, and the organization, staffing, support, and quality of instruction and service were expected to continue at that level or higher. Accreditation was continued for the institution, and the next comprehensive evaluation was scheduled for five years later.

The next full Self-Study was completed for a full team evaluation in April 1991. The team recommended the accreditation of Carl Sandburg College be continued at the associate degree granting level. The team further recommended follow-up reports be filed by the College in July 1991 and July 1992 to include and address the current approved budget for each year, plans to address any decrease in revenues and level of expenditures, and a plan to eliminate deficit spending. The team also recommended a focused evaluation in

fall 1993 on the elimination of deficit spending through improved financial condition, and the implementation of an integrated data collection system.

The most recent comprehensive Self-Study was conducted in the academic year [2000-2001](#). Because the evaluation team found Carl Sandburg College to have met all of the General Institutional Requirements and each of the five criteria for accreditation, the College was granted continued accreditation at the associate degree granting level; furthermore the team recommended the next comprehensive visit to Carl Sandburg College be scheduled for the academic year 2010-2011. It was also requested Carl Sandburg College submit a progress report in the area of [Evaluation and Planning and Assessment of Student Academic Achievement](#) by June 30, 2004. In October 2004 NCA reviewed and accepted the report on evaluation and planning and assessment of student academic achievement, requiring no further reports.

In August 2007, NCA determined Carl Sandburg College's Financial Ratios were of concern. Per the Higher Learning Commission, certain ratios were labeled "In The Zone or Below The Zone" and additional financial information was requested. After further review in November, NCA asked the institution to develop, submit, and implement a [Financial Recovery Plan by February 2008](#). A progress report to the Commission on the institution's progress was scheduled to be submitted March 26, 2010, but The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) reviewed the College's financial ratios and supporting documents prior to the deadline and on March 11. HLC [sent communication](#) stating no further reports would be necessary.

Goals of Self-Study

Affirmation of accreditation status is a goal of this evaluation process. The last NCA Self-Study resulted in continued accreditation for the maximum of ten years, and it is the goal of this cycle's Self-Study team to receive another ten years of accreditation although the move to the AQIP evaluation process is highly probable.

Identifying strengths and weaknesses is a major part of being a productive and reflective institution. Following the guidelines of the PEAQ process outlined by the North Central Association helps the College to objectively evaluate all aspects of operations. By examining what the College is doing right and what needs to be improved, the College can move in a direction that can best serve the district's constituents.

Using the Self-Study as a tool for strategic planning only makes sense. Evaluations of the strengths and weaknesses will be used as the spring board for the strategic planning committee to implement the next 1-3 year plan. This report will provide the strategic planning committee a concise and succinct evaluation of the College's procedural outcomes.

The Self-Study Team believed it was vital to **engage the entire College community in the** Self-Study process.

Not only does surveying all College personnel provide a more accurate picture of the institution, but it creates a sense of ownership and pride in the institution. It presents a unique bonding experience amongst employees, students, and community, and results in a more thorough and realistic evaluation of the institution.



Significant Changes and Developments Since 2000

Mission

The Mission Statement was slightly modified in 2006, and a set of beliefs and strategies were added as part of the Strategic Planning Process hosted by the College. This retreat involved a number of employees (administration and faculty), high school educators, district entrepreneurs, students, and college trustees. Jim Burgett, a nationally known strategic planning process consultant, led the Strategic Planning Process. After considerable discussion and debate, the Mission Statement remained unchanged with the exception of adding the slogan: *Opportunity to Succeed*.

Administration and Governance

Administration

There have been significant changes in the administration in the last 10 years. The most important event has been the installation of a new president, Mr. Thomas Schmidt, in 2002. At the time of his installation and during the following three years, the new president was afforded an opportunity to redesign his administrative team and its reporting structures.

Part of the administrative restructuring involved moving from division chairs to deans/associate deans. President Schmidt believed creating associate deans would facilitate communication. Having deans/associate deans for each department creates a key link between faculty and administration. Currently, the three transfer/university studies areas, Math/Science, Humanities/Performing Arts, and Social/Behavioral Sciences, have an associate dean who is also a faculty member. This gives the administrative team first hand information regarding instructional needs and responsibilities as well as giving the faculty a voice in administrative decisions.

In addition to reassigning the administrative team and reporting requirements, the College has reduced overall the number of administrators in the last ten years. As the College has experienced natural attrition, all positions have been re-evaluated to determine the need for the overall operation. Administratively, the College has compressed duties to further achieve cost efficiencies. The total number of administrators has gone from [25 in September 2000 to 21 in September 2009](#). This has resulted in a net savings of several hundred thousand dollars over the last 8-10 years.

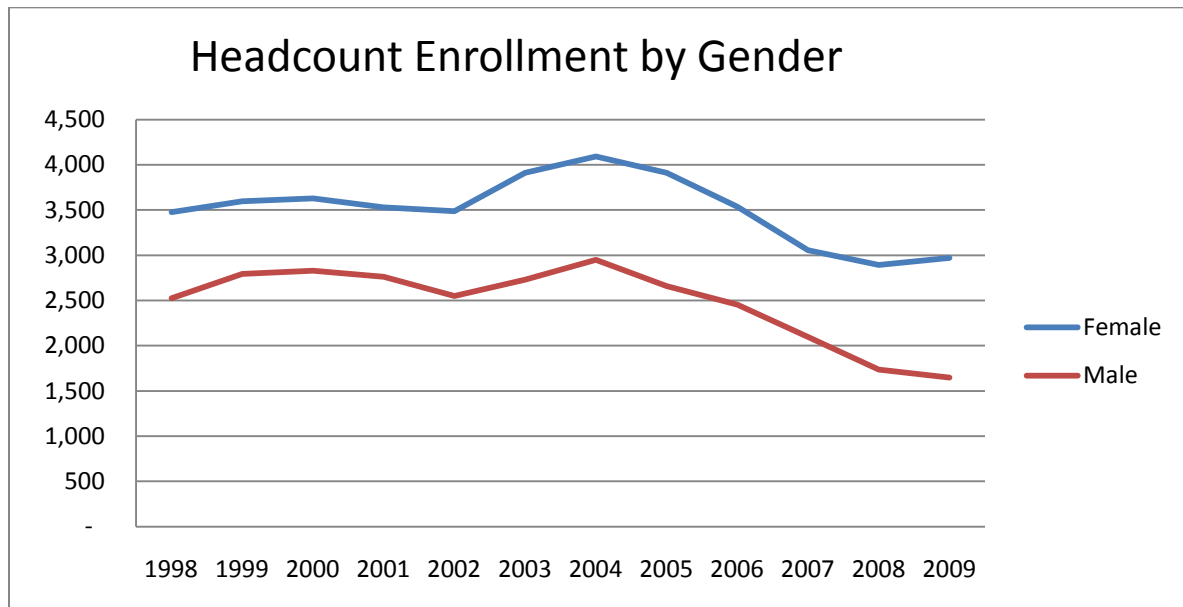
Students, Faculty, Staff

Students

Student enrollment has fluctuated considerably in the last 10 years. Early in the decade the district suffered major factory layoffs, leaving multitudes of dislocated workers. Carl Sandburg College opened its doors to these nontraditional students who were now without a source of income and faced with making many changes in their lives. Enrollment surged upward as a result. [Reimbursable credit hours](#) reached 59,507 in 2001 (6,289 head count) and peaked in 2005 with 73,314 reimbursable credit hours (6,569 head count). While the increase in enrollment was financially profitable, it was short lived. Once the dislocated worker population had completed their degrees, enrollment began to plummet downward, ending in one of the lowest enrollments since approximately 1996. The influx of dislocated factory workers was evident in the percentage of students pursuing baccalaureate/transfer degrees versus occupational degrees. [In 2001, 56 percent of the degrees sought were occupational degrees. This rose to 65 percent in 2004 and dropped to 30 percent in 2009.](#)

There have been some interesting [demographic changes in the student population](#) from 2001-present. Early this decade males made up 44 percent of

the student population, but in 2009 they only made up 38 percent. National data reflect a similar phenomenon, with higher enrollments of women across the country. [Opportunity in Post-secondary Education](#) (Feb 2001) has continued to provide data showing the college completion rate for males in the United States is at its lowest point since World War II.



While male attendance has dropped, there have been demographics that have remained constant. The most populated age range has stayed steady at 17-20 years of age. Interestingly, ethnic populations have been virtually unchanged for the last eight years. One distinction of the Carl Sandburg College district is its low percentage of ethnic minorities; however, the percentage of enrollment at CSC is higher than what is representative of the district population. At the last census, only [seven percent](#) of the district population was ethnic minority. The College has consistently enrolled [10 to 11 percent minority populations](#).

Online course enrollment has continued to increase since the first course was offered in 1998. During the fall of [2009 the College offered 146 Internet sections](#), as well as an agreement with ILCCO (Illinois Community College Online) for course sharing among community colleges. Online courses have made college accessible for a new population of students. Those students who have tremendous constraints placed on their time are now able to attend outside of the traditional community college hours of 8:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m. Online courses provide greater attendance flexibility for those who find themselves faced with considerable demands placed on their time.



Faculty

There has been a decrease in total full-time teaching staff from [78 \(fall of 2000\) to 64 \(fall of 2009\)](#). This reduction has occurred primarily with the loss of the Henry C. Hill Correctional Center contract but also resulted from a Supplementary Retirement Program implemented in 2008. The number of adjunct also decreased within this same time frame from 179 to 126.

During the enrollment surge in the mid 2000's, there was a dramatic rise in part-time faculty. In an effort to be financially responsible, the College has increased the number of adjunct faculty relative to the number of full-time faculty. Knowing the

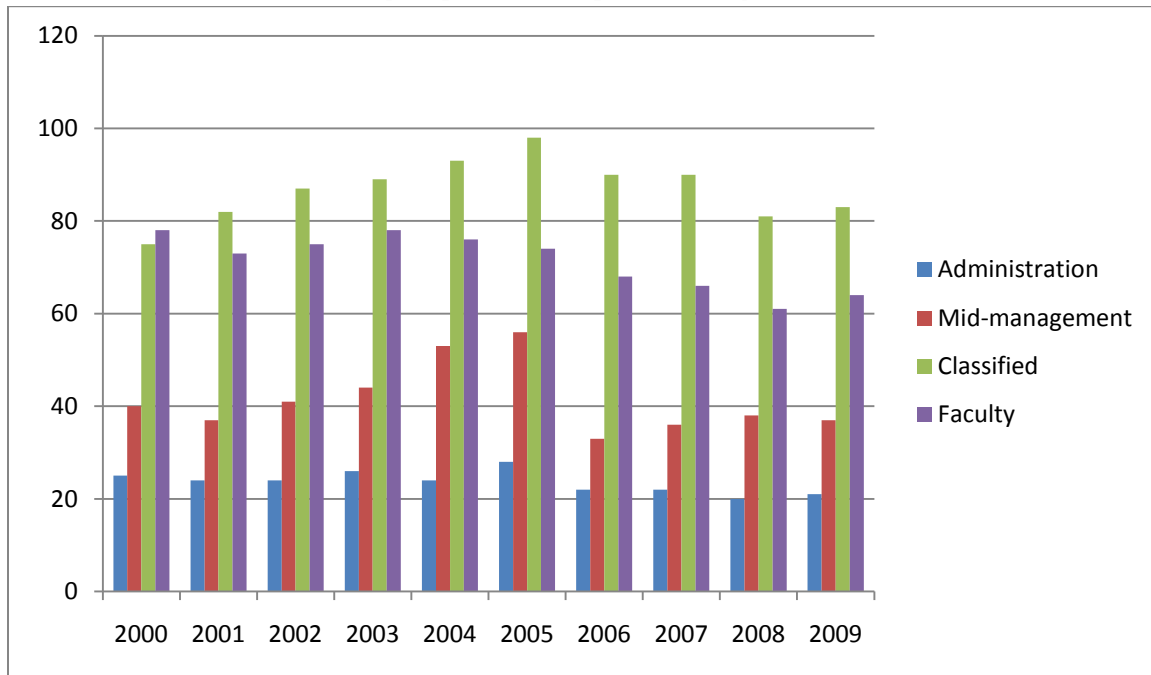
enrollment level would not be maintained, CSC made an effort to use short term personnel to deal with a short term need. In 2004, [71 percent of faculty were part-time](#). As the enrollment numbers began to drop so did the temporary part-time faculty, and as of September 2009, adjunct instructors were cut by 5 percent.

Staff

During fall of [2000 there were 140 full-time staff](#) (faculty excluded). Twenty-five were administrators and 115 were classified staff. While there has been a decrease in faculty and administration positions, there has been an increase in other areas. The College has had very little net change in staff numbers, going from 140 full-time staff in 2000 to 141 full-time staff (faculty excluded) in 2009. The change has resulted from a decrease in administrative positions while at the same time an increase in classified positions. In addition to the growth in the classified staff, there has been some reclassifying from clerical to technical.

The primary reason for the increase in classified staff has been in the area of security. Prior to this change, security staff was not on duty around the clock or on weekends.

Employment by Classification



Curriculum

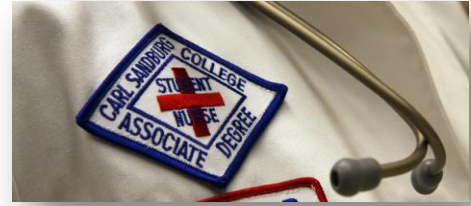
Career and Technical Education (CTE)

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs at the College have been the primary academic path for many of the dislocated workers that the 2000s produced. The College has effectively been able to respond to the needs of the economy and district. CTE programs at the College are separated under the Occupational Programs department and the Allied Health department.

Societal needs and employment demands change over time. It is vital CTE programs are evaluated periodically to assess the ability to meet those changes. As a result, those programs that do not have enough student/employment demand are discontinued. Natural faculty retirements have been part of this process, but recently one full-time tenured faculty member was released due to low enrollment in the program. After any remaining students finish their degree, the de-activated programs are removed from the College Catalog. The College has, and still is, taking a hard look at declining enrollment programs in the hopes of making cost-effective decisions.

The Allied Health Department provides many vibrant and necessary programs for the community, from nursing to mortuary science to dental hygiene and radiologic technology. There has been a surge in enrollment in the

Allied Health area throughout the decade. In 2009, 530 students went through the Allied Health program compared to 470 in 2005 (year of overall enrollment peak). Basically, even though enrollment has decreased for the College, Allied Health has demonstrated a [13 percent increase](#).



The College objectively evaluates each program and its ability to meet the needs of employers. ICCB requires the College to create advisory committees which are composed of area employers and K-12 representatives for its Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. The advisory committee members periodically review CTE programs and determine what changes need to be made to stay on top of the field.

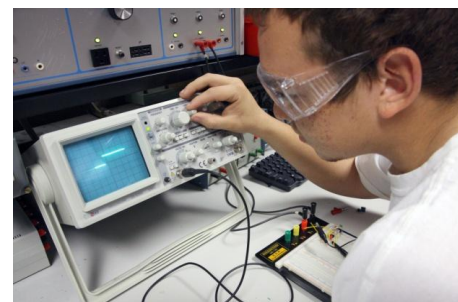
Transfer/University Studies Degrees

At the time of the last accreditation visit, the College had an Associate in Arts, an Associate in Science, an Associate in General Education, and an Associate in Fine Arts-Music. Since then, the College has split the AFA-Music into Music Performance and Music Education and added an Associate in Fine Arts-Art, an Associate in Arts in Teaching (Special Education emphasis), an Associate in Arts in Teaching (Secondary Math emphasis), and an Associate in Engineering Science.

The transfer/university program at the College is strong. [In 2009 70 percent of students were classified as transfer/university studies students](#). All full-time faculty who teach transfer/university studies courses possess a minimum of a master's degree. The College has several transfer/university agreements with both public universities and local private colleges, including Western Illinois University, Knox College, Bradley University, and Monmouth College.

Technology and the Curriculum

The College has been a leader in its use of technology in recent years. In [October 2008](#) the College was recognized as the most technologically advanced community college of its size in the nation. The WebCT online classroom management system was first used in 1998 and has been an important component of making the College more accessible to



students who have a schedule that prohibits or hinders taking courses which meet during traditional hours. With the acquisition of WebCT by Blackboard in 2008, the College has transitioned to the Blackboard Campus Edition. The use of distance learning has also been a core part of the education process for the College due to the district's geographical size. In order to effectively serve the rural, sparsely populated district, the use of the two-way interactive compressed video technology has been vital.

Student Services

The past decade has been a time of updates and improvements for the Academic Support and Student Life Programs at Carl Sandburg College. The College continues to strive to provide quality out-of-class experiences for the students.



Student Support Services

The Student Services Department at the College was reorganized in 2005. The position of dean of student support services was created to improve communication and increase the opportunities for academic support available to students. This allowed for a more interrelated unit under the Student Services Department. Prior to this reorganization, recruitment, advising, counseling, TRiO programs, academic support services, student life, extracurricular activities, financial aid, and athletics were all under the Student Services roof with only the vice president as acting supervisor. With this restructure there is a more evenly distributed flow of information not only within each department but also between departments. Regular meetings are held wherein advising information is discussed. TRiO Student Support Services (SSS), TRiO Upward Bound (UB), Adult Learning Center, Academic Support, Advisors, Counselors, and the Student Services Generalist meet once each month, and these same people join the rest of the Student Services staff plus representatives from the Business Office, Occupational Instructional areas, and the Academic Services Office in yet another monthly meeting. All activities are discussed so each area knows what the others are doing in regard to student enrollment and retention.

Prior to the reorganization, the Student Success Center was constructed. This facility serves as the home to TRiO SSS, TRiO UB, Academic Support Services, and the Writing and Math Labs as well as general tutoring services. The coordinator of academic support services and the coordinator of the

assessment center are also located in the Student Success Center. Prior to the construction of this facility, these services were offered in several different locations throughout the campus, making them difficult for students to find.

Student Life

The [Dr. Donald G. Crist Student Center](#) (Computer Center) was constructed in 2003. This new facility serves as the home to the Student Government Association and Student Life as well as a gathering and meeting place for student clubs and activities. The College Bookstore and Cyber Cafe are also located in this area. Prior to the construction of this facility, these services were not centrally located and were not convenient for students to access. There was no student area outside of a small cafeteria that was shared with College personnel. After the completion of the Student Center, it became clear how much the students had needed an area to meet, study, and develop relationships with their peers. In addition to the camaraderie created by the facility, the Student Center also functions as a Computer Center. The Student Center provides a number of computer stations that are readily available. Computer and Internet use is a requirement for being academically successful, and the College acknowledges its role in providing access to a medium it expects the student to use.

"I wouldn't have anywhere to go between classes if it wasn't for the [...Crist Center...]"

Molly Malone, Student '08



The number of athletic programs at CSC has increased since 2000. At the beginning of the decade there were five teams: Women's Basketball, Volleyball, and Softball along with Men's Basketball and Baseball. During 2004-05, CSC added Cross Country and Golf for both women and men. Men and Women's Soccer teams were added in fall 2008. There are now 11 intercollegiate sports available at CSC.

The College believes strongly in providing out of class experiences for students. The use of outside speakers has changed in the last ten years. What was initially a Faculty line item became a Student Government Association (SGA) budgetary matter. After a few years of SGA procuring speakers, it became evident students were more interested in the entertainment value of a speaker than the educational value. When Dr. Lori Sundberg became vice president of academic services, she brought back speaker funds to the Instructional side of the house. Since that funding process change, Sandburg has had the following speakers: Dr. Stephen Osama (Teaching

In Thailand), Thomas and Patricia Wolf (Forensic Psychology), Paula Huntley (Teaching in Kosovo) and Dr. Al Goldfarb (Holocaust).



Growth in Community, Civic Engagement, & Outreach

Growth in Community: Galesburg

Since the turn of the millennium, Corporate & Community Services has undergone several transitions. Oversight for some departments and locations has shifted within the Carl Sandburg College organizational chart. Previously, the Adult Education and Academic Skills Department was under Corporate & Community Services. Responsibility for the Carthage Branch Campus, Education Commons, and the Bushnell Extension Center was also part of Corporate & Community Services. Since 2000, the Corporate & Community Services has not only been restructured but also renamed Corporate and Community Services. Corporate and Community Services continues to be involved in business and industry training (open enrollment and customized non-credit courses), community education, continuing professional development, youth programming, and senior citizen programs.

Growth in Community: Bushnell and Carthage

The Branch Campus in Carthage continues to provide the same services to students as the Galesburg campus. The Extension Center in Bushnell has recently been reorganized to direct resources toward instructional and student services. As a small service center, The Extension Center can serve a niche for students wanting and needing more personal attention. Personnel from these campuses are involved in the local chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, business groups, service clubs and various other civic organizations. Efforts are made to keep CSC closely involved in community development at all levels.



Civic Engagement: Community Organization Membership

A part of the mission of Carl Sandburg College is to be engaged with the community; therefore, administrators and staff at all campuses serve in various business and community leadership capacities. Staff at all campuses as well as the president of Carl Sandburg College attend meetings regarding a variety of community issues, including, but not limited to economic development, tax increment financing, transportation, employment enhancement, and quality of life issues. Carl Sandburg College is a member of the Chambers of Commerce for Galesburg, Bushnell and Carthage and administrators and staff attend various meetings of the Chamber and/or Chamber committees. Administrative staff at all campuses are also invited to attend special issues meetings and/or make presentations as representatives of higher education in the community. As massive layoffs occurred in the district, CSC administrative staff attended planning meetings and supplied information and support to the community to assist with the transition for the hundreds of workers affected.

Facilities

As stated earlier, the most significant addition was the Dr. Donald G. Crist Student Center in 2003. The College lacked an area where students could have access to available computers. It became exceedingly difficult for students to be academically competitive without reliable and available computer usage. Equally as important, this area now provides a locale that fosters student interaction. Through the College's involvement with Noel-Levitz, Inc., it has learned [the key to student retention](#) at the community college level is student involvement. Typically, community college students are car-class-car students with little time devoted to campus activities. The addition of the Crist Center provided increased opportunities to not only establish friendships, but also provided a central location for campus presentations and activities.



Administrative Technologies

Carl Sandburg College is proud of its ability to stay technologically current and believes, to meet its mission of serving the district, this is imperative.



Migration to Datatel Administrative Software System, 2003

Prior to 2003 the administrative software system used for registration and all other areas of the College was *Triton*. The *Triton* system was designed for a few colleges in Illinois. It was not a relational database, and retrieval of data was difficult at best. Triton served its initial purpose of allowing departments within the institution to operate, but it was certainly not ideal in allowing the College to move toward being data driven. The College believed it was time to bring the entire operation under one administrative software system, thereby allowing communication across the departments to occur. The College became part of the steering committee for the Alliance of Community Colleges for Electronic Sharing (ACCES). ACCES is made of seven community colleges in Iowa and two community colleges in Illinois. After approximately 24 months of research by the Information Technology Department along with others, the decision was made to migrate to *Datatel's* "Colleague" software program, which would allow the institution to easily gather data across departments and move toward data driven-decision making.

State Funding and Overall College Fiscal Environment

The lack of funding from the state of Illinois had been at the forefront of the last 10 years. Illinois continues to have significant problems with the way in which it funds higher education. Specifically, in 2008, the Illinois Community College Board began a campaign to educate people in Illinois that while community colleges served 64 percent of the students enrolled in higher education in the state, it only received 15.9 percent of the funding. When the state does not fulfill its funding requirements, it puts increased stress on local tax funding and on the student. Consequently, student tuition has increased by 111 percent.

In addition, for Carl Sandburg College, there has been an additional twist to this story. As large manufacturers left the area, property values began dropping thereby affecting the assessed valuation in the district. With funding formulas

in place which cap the level of funding available, the reduction in assessed valuations lowers the amount of funding that can come from property taxes. Once again this lack of funding puts increased pressure on the tuition rate.

The College has made good use of its bonding authority to achieve many projects that would have otherwise been unattainable; however this is the area that drew the attention of the Higher Learning Commission when it received its financial indicators and generated a need for a Financial Recovery Plan. The College complied with this request; however, it is believed the Higher Learning Commission was not fully cognizant of the bonding structure the College has in place. The College was well within its bonding limit as specified by the Illinois Community College Board and at the same time held an [A2 rating from Moody's Investors](#). While it is true the College has approximately \$24,000,000 in outstanding bonds, it has retained \$14,000,000 in cash which is invested. From this investment only the interest is used. The College has made good, prudent use of its bonding authority and uses a reputable consultant from Harris Bank to make all decisions regarding its bonded indebtedness. With the issues facing rural United States and particularly Illinois, CSC likely will never be without financial challenges.

