

**SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE
INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER
EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2023**

INTRODUCTION

Internal Auditing is an independent and objective assurance and consulting activity that is guided by a philosophy of adding value to improve the operations of the College. It assists the College in accomplishing its objectives by bringing a systematic and disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of the organization's risk management, governance, and internal controls.

ROLE

The internal audit function is established by the College Board of Trustees, Finance, Audit, and Human Resources Committee (hereafter referred to as the Board). The internal audit function's responsibilities are defined by the Board as part of their oversight role.

AUTHORITY

The internal audit function, with strict accountability for confidentiality and safeguarding records and information, is authorized full, free, and unrestricted access to any and all of the College's property, records (manual or electronic), and personnel pertinent to carrying out authorized engagements. All employees are requested to assist the internal audit function in fulfilling its roles and responsibilities. The internal audit function will also have free and unrestricted access to executive management and the Board.

INDEPENDENCE & OBJECTIVITY

The internal audit function will remain free from interference by any element in the organization, including matters of audit selection, scope, procedures, frequency, timing, or report content to permit maintenance of a necessary independent and objective mental attitude. Internal auditors will have no direct operational responsibility or authority over any of the activities audited. Accordingly, they will not implement internal controls, develop procedures, install systems, prepare records, or engage in any other activity that may impair the internal auditor's independence or objectivity. Internal auditors are not authorized to perform any operational duties, initiate or approve accounting transactions external to the internal audit function, or direct the activities of any employee not employed by the internal audit function, except to the extent such employees have been appropriately assigned to auditing teams or otherwise assist the internal audit function. Internal auditors must exhibit the highest level of professional objectivity in gathering, evaluating, and communicating information about the activity or process being examined. Internal auditors must make a balanced assessment of all the relevant circumstances and not be unduly influenced by their own interests or by others in forming judgments.

The Internal Auditor will confirm to the Board, at least annually, the organizational independence of the internal audit activity.

INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN

At least annually, the Internal Auditor will submit to senior management and the Board an internal audit plan for review and approval. The internal audit plan will consist of a work schedule as well as budget and resource requirements for the next fiscal year. The Internal Auditor will communicate the impact of resource limitations and significant interim changes to senior management and the Board. The internal audit plan will be developed based on a prioritization of the audit universe using a risk-based methodology, including input of senior management and the Board. The Internal Auditor will review and adjust the plan, as necessary, in response to changes in the College's risks, operations, programs, systems, and internal controls. Any significant deviation from the approved internal audit plan will be communicated to senior management and the Board.

ORGANIZATION

The Internal Auditor will report functionally to the President and the Board and administratively (i.e. day to day operations) to the Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services.

The Board will

- Approve the internal audit charter;
- Approve the risk-based annual audit plan;
- Approve decisions regarding the appointment and removal of the Internal Auditor;
- Approve the remuneration of the Internal Auditor;
- Complete an annual performance appraisal of the Internal Auditor;
- Approve the internal audit budget and resource plan;
- Receive communications from the Internal Auditor on the internal audit activity's performance relative to its plan and other matters; and
- Make appropriate inquiries of management and the Internal Auditor to determine whether there are inappropriate scope or resource limitations.

The Internal Auditor will communicate and interact directly with the Board, including in executive sessions and between Board meetings as appropriate.

SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES

Assurance Services are objective examinations of evidence for the purpose of providing an independent assessment. The scope of work for assurance services is to determine whether the College's risk management, governance, and control processes as designed and represented by management, is adequate and functioning in a manner to help ensure:

- Risks are appropriately identified and managed;
- Significant financial, managerial, and operating information is accurate, reliable, and timely;
- Employees' actions are in compliance with policies, standard, procedures, and applicable laws and regulations;

- Resources are acquired economically, used efficiently, and adequately protected;
- Established objectives and goals are met and whether operations or activities are being conducted as planned;
- Quality and continuous improvement are fostered in the institution's control process.

Consulting Services are advisory and include other service activities such as counsel, advice, facilitation, training, and participation on standing or temporary management committees or project teams. The objective of consulting services is to add value in the development or modification of organization processes, procedures, and controls to minimize risk and achieve department objectives. Accepted consulting engagements will be included in the audit plan.

STANDARDS OF AUDIT PRACTICE

The internal audit function will govern itself by adherence to The Institute of Internal Auditors' mandatory guidance including the Definition of Internal Auditing, the Code of Ethics, and the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing (Standards). This mandatory guidance constitutes principles of the fundamental requirements for the professional practice of internal auditing and for evaluating the effectiveness of the internal audit activity's performance. The Institute of Internal Auditors' Practice Advisories, Practice Guides, and Position Papers will also be adhered to as applicable to guide operations. In addition, the internal audit activity will adhere to the College's relevant policies and procedures and the internal audit activity's audit manual.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Internal Auditor has a responsibility to:

- Develop a flexible, annual work plan using an appropriate risk-based methodology, including any risks or control concerns identified by management, and submit that plan to the President, and the Board of Trustees' Finance, Audit, and Human Resources Committee for review and approval as well as periodic updates;
- Implement the annual work plan, as approved by the Finance, Audit, and Human Resources Committee;
- Issue periodic reports to the President and the Finance, Audit, and Human Resources Committee summarizing results of audit activities, annual work plans, sufficiency of office resources, and emerging trends and successful practices in internal auditing;
- Review systems to verify compliance with established policy, procedures, and applicable regulations;
- Review compliance with guidelines for ethical professional conduct.
- Maintain a follow-up process to monitor management actions on reported engagement observations and whether recommendations have been effectively implemented;
- Identify indicators of fraud and facilitate the investigation of suspected fraudulent activities within the organization;
- Act as liaison between the College and external auditors, including the review of their findings and the follow-up on necessary corrective action;

RESPONSIBILITIES (Cont.)

- Identify necessary training to improve the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for the internal auditors to have sufficient proficiency for auditing with the organization and maintaining professional certifications;
- Obtain competent advice and assistance necessary for the engagement when needed or decline the engagement;
- Ensure that an external review of the internal audit function in accordance with the Standards is conducted at least once every five years.
- Evaluate specific operations at the request of the Finance, Audit, and Human Resources Committee or the President, as appropriate.

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The internal audit function will maintain a quality assurance and improvement program that covers all aspects of the internal audit activity. The program will include an evaluation of the internal audit function's conformance with the Definition of Internal Auditing and the IIA Standards and an evaluation of whether internal auditors apply the Code of Ethics. The program also assesses the efficiency and effectiveness of the internal audit function and identifies opportunities for improvement. The Internal Auditor will communicate to senior management and the Board on the internal audit activity's quality assurance and improvement program, including results of ongoing internal assessments and external assessments conducted at least every five (5) years.

The results of internal audit reviews as well as a report on Internal Audit's activities shall be presented to the President, and the Board of Trustees. The report shall include:

- 1) Internal audit finding(s);
- 2) Internal audit recommendation(s);
- 3) Management response(s);
- 4) Date of implementation of audit recommendation(s).

The Internal Auditor verifies corrective action has been taken by management and reports on the corrective action to the Board of Trustees' Finance, Audit, and Human Resources Committee.



Khalil M. Abdullah
Chief Internal Auditor

9/30/23

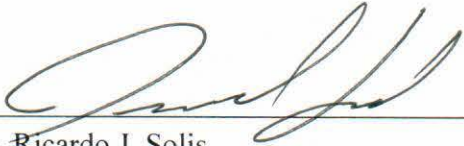
Date



Maria G. Elizondo
Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services

8/28/23

Date



Dr. Ricardo J. Solis
President

AUG 25 2023

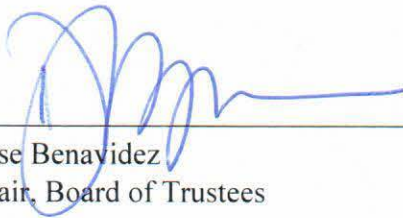
Date



Rene Guajardo
Chair, Finance, Audit, and Human Resources Committee

8/22/2023

Date



Rose Benavidez
Chair, Board of Trustees

8/22/2023

Date