

SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

March 8, 2005

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**Academic
Quality Improvement
Program**

The Higher Learning Commission **NCA**

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INTRODUCTION

The *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* provides AQIP's official response to your *Systems Portfolio* by a team of readers trained in evaluation. After appraisers independently reviewed your document, the team reached consensus on essential elements of your institutional profile, strengths and opportunities for improvement by Category, significant issues for your institution, and an Appraisal Rubric score for each Category. These are presented in four sections of the Feedback Report: *Critical Characteristics Analysis*, *Category Feedback*, *Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis* and the *Appraisal Summary*. These components are interrelated in defining context, evaluating performance, surfacing critical issues, and assessing institutional performance.

Each member of the Systems Appraisal Team devoted many hours to analyzing and reacting to your *Systems Portfolio*, first individually and then via a consensus process designed to ensure that all feedback you receive is the agreed-upon conclusion of an entire group of intelligent, trained peers. There are no one-person opinions here, no idiosyncratic, subjective opinions. Most of the team's members have had executive responsibilities in colleges and universities, but the team also included at least one person whose work and experience lie outside of higher education, and who could help the team maintain perspective on the work higher educators still have to do to bring quality principles into all areas of the Academy. All team members are committed to promoting continuous quality improvement in higher education and have received training in quality processes. Many team members have also had experience with Baldrige-type quality award programs. We know that you and your colleagues will find the astuteness of their perceptions, as embodied in this report, useful in your commitment for continuous quality learning.

Good as the team was, however, it is important to remember that they had only your *Systems Portfolio* to guide their analysis of your institution's strengths and opportunities for improvement. Consequently, their report may omit important strengths — if you were too modest to stress them in your *Systems Portfolio*, or if your discussion and documentation of them was unconvincing. Similarly, the team may have pointed out areas of potential improvement that are, in fact, already receiving the institution's attention. Again, the team used its best judgment in identifying improvement opportunities. If some of these areas of potential improvement are now strengths rather than opportunities because of your own focused efforts, that is all to your credit. If it was unsure about an area, we urged the team to err on the side of giving your institution the best possible advice about where investing your efforts might pay off. If some of their advice comes after the fact, after you've already tackled an area, no harm is done.

Critical Characteristics: Your *Systems Portfolio's* "Organizational Overview" provides context for the team's knowledge of your institution's identity, mission objectives, strategic goals, and key factors related to improvement. Critical Characteristics are those features most important for understanding the institution's mission, environment, stakeholders, competitive position, goals, and processes. Characteristics having the greatest relevance to each Category are identified in the Report.

Category Feedback: The Report's feedback on each of AQIP's nine Categories specifically identifies strengths and opportunities for improvement. An *S* or *SS* identifies *strengths*, with the double letter signifying important achievements or capabilities upon which to build.

Opportunities are designated by *O*, with *OO* indicating areas where attention may result in more significant improvement. Comments, which are keyed to your *Systems Portfolio*, offer brief analysis of each strength and opportunity. Organized by Category, and presenting the team's findings in detail, this section is the heart of the Report. At the end of the list of strengths and opportunities for each Category is the team's consensus assessment of the institution's stage of development on that particular Category. This section consists of a series of statements reflecting the reviewers' assessment of the institution's current status in relation to critical quality characteristics: robustness of process design; utilization or deployment of processes; the existence of results, trends, and comparative data; the use of results data as feedback, and systematic processes for improvement of the activities that the Category covers. Since institutions are complex, maturity levels may vary from one Category to another.

Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis: Strategic issues are those most closely related to your institution's ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning, and quality improvement goals. Accreditation issues are areas where you have not yet provided evidence that you meet the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*, or where the evidence you have presented suggests you may have difficulties, now or in the future, in meeting these expectations. If accreditation is essential for your institution (as it is for most) then any accreditation issues identified are, by definition, also strategic. The Systems Appraisal Team identified both of these kinds of issues through analysis of your *Organizational Overview* and the feedback it provided for each Category, as well as by reviewing the Index to the *Criteria for Accreditation* that you provided along with your *Systems Portfolio*. This list of strategic issues offers a framework for addressing ongoing improvement of processes and systems, and can serve as an "executive summary" of the Report's key findings and recommendations.

Appraisal Summary: The compilation of the nine rubrics that capture the team's appraisal of the organization's Portfolio description of each of the nine AQIP Categories. The summary indicates the team's consensus on the developmental maturity of each Category description.

USING THE FEEDBACK REPORT

The AQIP *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* is intended to initiate action for improvement. It is therefore important that the Report produced by the Systems Appraisal Team stimulate review of organizational processes and systems. Though decisions about specific actions are each institution's, AQIP expects every institution to use its feedback to stimulate cycles of continual improvement. At the next Strategy Forum an AQIP institution attends, its peers will examine in detail how it is using the feedback from its *Systems Appraisal*.

An organization needs to examine its Report strategically to identify those areas that, if addressed, will yield greatest benefit. Some key questions that may arise in careful examination of the Report may be: How do the team's findings challenge our assumptions about ourselves? Given our mission and goals, which issues should we focus on? How will we employ results to innovate, grow, and encourage a positive culture of improvement? How will we incorporate lessons learned from this review in our planning and operational processes? How will we revise the *Systems Portfolio* to reflect what we have learned?

How an organization interprets, communicates, and uses its feedback for improvement ought to support AQIP's core values, encouraging *involvement, learning, collaboration* and *integrity*. Rubrics should be used to understand where the opportunities for ongoing systems improvement are greatest, not as scores indicating success or failure. Based solely upon an organization's *Systems Portfolio*, the Report reflects a disciplined, external review of what an organization says about itself. The report should help an organization identify ways to improve its *Systems Portfolio* so it functions better to communicate accurately to internal and external audiences. But the Report's chief purpose is to help you to identify areas for improvement, and to act so that these areas actually improve. These improvements, in turn, can be incorporated into an updated *Systems Portfolio*, guaranteeing that future *Systems Appraisals* will reflect the progress an institution has made.

CRITICAL CHARACTERISTICS ANALYSIS

The purpose of this section is to identify what team members understood to be the critical and distinguishing characteristics of your institution. They are the shared understanding of the most important aspects of Grand Rapids Community College's identity, its current dynamics and the forces surrounding it, and its internal momentum and aspirations, at least as team members understood them. This section also demonstrates to you, when you study *the Feedback Report*,

that the Systems Appraisal Team recognized and knew what makes Grand Rapids Community College distinctive. Should you find some characteristics that you think are critical and missing from this list, you may want to clarify and highlight these items when you revise your *Systems Portfolio* and other literature explaining your institution to the public.

- 01a Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) has a large urban campus that serves 20 school districts and primarily urban and commuter students in Kent County and two adjacent regions.
- 01b GRCC 's mission is to provide educational, and workforce and economic development opportunities for the community.
- 01c The college is governed by a seven member Board of Trustees and in 1997 developed a policy governance model.
- 01d Since 1992, GRCC has integrated the principles of quality management and recently engaged in a campus-wide, collaborative strategic planning process spearheaded by the President.
- 01e GRCC accomplishes its mission through eight strategic outcomes, seven values, and six strategic priorities.
- 02a The college includes both credit and non-credit instruction including traditional classes, community service offerings, seminars, workshops, training classes, and distance learning.
- 03a GRCC is located in Kent County, which is a vibrant location with a growing population of 600,000.
- 03b GRCC's primary student base of 20,000: 21.3% minority, 78.4% credit seeking, 55% part-time students, with an average age of 24.7, who are local residents and residents from the Western Michigan area.
- 03c The college utilizes input from its key stakeholder groups to determine their key requirements and designs services and programs to meet key student needs.
- 04a Key stakeholders include its employees, the community, business and industry, K-12 schools, other colleges/universities.

- 04b GRCC has partnered with Ferris State University in Applied Technology so that students can obtain a four-year degree on GRCC's campus.
- 04c GRCC seeks to be a premier transfer institution using 3 + 1 and MACRAO agreements to facilitate student transfer.
- 05a The college employs 1035 faculty and staff, 21% minorities, and 247 full-time and 417 part-time faculty that matches the demographics of its community.
- 05b Four of the college's seven employee groups are unionized, including the faculty.
- 06a GRCC offers instruction supported by various technologies and labs on its main campus and at off-site facilities.
- 07a Grand Valley State University is the primary higher education competitor. Another major source of competition is the comparison of its educational processes and systems to other premier institutions. Additional competition for GRCC's student base is other higher education institutions (22 private and public institutions in its service area), business and industry training providers, and distance learning providers.
- 07b GRCC differentiates it self from competitors by its downtown location and equal access, open door admission policy, technology, and cost.
- 08a Six strategic priorities guide GRCC's strategic planning and budget process and action plans.

CATEGORY FEEDBACK

In the following sections, each of which deals with strengths and opportunities for improvement for one of the nine AQIP Categories, selected *Critical Characteristics* are again highlighted, those the Systems Appraisal Team believed were critical keys to reviewing that particular AQIP Category. The symbols used in these "strengths and opportunities" sections for each Category stand for *outstanding strength* (SS), *strength* (S), *opportunity for improvement* (O) and *pressing or outstanding opportunity for improvement* (OO). The choice of symbol for each item represents the consensus evaluation of the Systems Appraisal Team members, and deserves your thoughtful consideration. Comments marked SS or OO may need immediate attention,

either to ensure the institution preserves and maximizes the value of its greatest strengths, or to devote immediate attention to its greatest opportunities for improvement.

AQIP CATEGORY 1: *HELPING STUDENTS LEARN*

Helping Students Learn identifies the shared purpose of all higher education organizations, and is accordingly the pivot of any institutional analysis. This Category focuses on the teaching-learning process within a formal instructional context, yet also addresses how your entire institution contributes to helping students learn and overall student development. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to learning objectives, mission-driven student learning and development, intellectual climate, academic programs and courses, student preparation, key issues such as technology and diversity, program and course delivery, faculty and staff roles, teaching and learning effectiveness, course sequencing and scheduling, learning and co-curricular support, student assessment, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Grand Rapids Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 1, *Helping Students Learn*:

02a. The college includes both credit and non-credit instruction including traditional classes, community service offerings, seminars, workshops, training classes, and distance learning.

03b. GRCC's primary student base of 20,000: 21.3% minority, 78.4% credit seeking, 55% part-time students, with an average age of 24.7, who are local residents and residents from the Western Michigan area.

04b. GRCC has partnered with Ferris State University in Applied Technology so that students can obtain a four-year degree on GRCC's campus.

04c. GRCC seeks to be a premier transfer institution using 3 + 1 and MACRAO agreements to facilitate student transfer.

06a. GRCC offers instruction supported by various technologies and labs on its main campus and at off-site facilities.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Grand Rapids Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 1, *Helping Students Learn*.

- 1C4 S GRCC has obtained a FIPSE grant to implement learning circles on five teaching strategies.
- 1P1 S GRCC has a process in place to determine its general learning outcomes (GLOs). The 8 GLOs are assessed over a three-year period by teams of faculty.
- 1P2 S GRCC has a defined process for designing new and revising existing courses (CARP). This process ensures that all sections of a course have consistent outcomes and use diverse teaching strategies to meet student needs. In addition, GRCC reviews the CARP process itself annually.
- 1P5 O GRCC does not clearly define how students are assisted in selecting programs of study.
- 1P6 S GRCC uses a campus-wide Academic Program Planning and Review Process to structure departmental self-studies, assess student achievement in the GLOs, and measure the program against institutional indicators and thereby plan for its improvement.
- 1P11 O GRCC has identified a process for assessing GLOs and course and program level outcomes but is still at a preliminary stage in its collection and use of assessment data.
- 1P13 S GRCC has developed multiple indirect measures of student success, including annual retention, course success rates, transfer student success, three-year graduation rates, graduation placement success, preparation for employment, and Academic Foundation Program success.
- 1R14 S GRCC makes effective use of a dashboard and benchmarking measures to assess student learning.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Grand Rapids Community College's performance on this Category as Maturing, characterized by:

Growing, emergent processes that typically achieve many of their goals have been put in place. Successful approaches and processes are occasionally adopted and used throughout the institution. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in most

areas. Recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance can be found in several areas. Information is collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes but used irregularly. Feedback is periodically used to set performance targets in a few areas. A record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 2: ACCOMPLISHING OTHER DISTINCTIVE OBJECTIVES

Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of your institution's major objectives that complement student learning and fulfill other portions of your mission. Depending on your institution's character, it examines your institution's processes and systems related to identification of other distinctive objectives, alignment of other distinctive objectives, faculty and staff roles, assessment and review of objectives, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Grand Rapids Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 2, *Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives*:

01b. GRCC 's mission is to provide educational, and workforce and economic development opportunities for the community.

01e. GRCC accomplishes its mission through eight strategic outcomes, seven values, and six strategic priorities.

02a. The college includes both credit and non-credit instruction including traditional classes, community service offerings, seminars, workshops, training classes, and distance learning.

03c. The college utilizes input from its key stakeholder groups to determine their key requirements and designs services and programs to meet key student needs.

04a. Key stakeholders include its employees, the community, business and industry, K-12 schools, other colleges/universities.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Grand Rapids Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 2, *Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives*:

- 2P1 S The college engages in a detailed process to determine its other distinctive objectives. This process includes the GRCC Strategic Guide for Planning and Resource Allocation, a SWOT analysis, market analysis, and mission and vision to determine the strategic direction.
- 2P2 O GRCC has a process in place to communicate expectations through the strategic plan, however it is unclear how the expectations are communicated to the campus faculty and staff as a whole, students, and other constituents.
- 2P3 S GRCC determines faculty and staff needs through the college's annual strategic planning and budget processes of Quality Management Systems Review.
- 2P4 S All employees participate on at least one action plan team for assessing and reviewing objectives. Input is also obtained from employers and the community through the Tassell M-TEC Leadership Committee and advisory committees.
- 2P5 S GRCC has dashboards in place that measure targets and results, and provides for a revision of action plans to achieve results. Dashboards were recently revised for Training Solutions and Job Training to reflect learner success.
- 2R1a O Figure 2a and 2c indicate that targets are not being met for 03-04 fiscal year and the year to date measures for 04-05 in the areas of instructor utilization, and revenue and expense rates. However, the Training Solutions' revised dashboard plan is in the draft stages (Figure 2b) and complete development and implementation will allow improvements to be monitored.
- 2R1b S Job Training's scorecard (Figure 2c) provides data related to budgets and enrollment and show that there has been sufficient revenue to offset expenses for the first four months of fiscal year 2004.
- 2R2 O The college states it has a process to compare its results to peer institutions for best practices however comparative data for learner success, customer satisfaction and resource utilization is not provided.

- 2R3 S GRCC has multiple partnerships with community agencies and businesses. In 2003, 10,000 employees were served through job training, apprenticeship programs, continuing education, and customized training opportunities.
- 211 SS GRCC employs various processes to ensure improvement of current processes including the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and Quality Management System Continuous Improvement Cycle.
- 212 S Training Solutions and Job Training are engaged in several one-year action plans to address needed improvements.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Grand Rapids Community College's performance on this Category as Maturing, characterized by:

Growing, emergent processes that typically achieve many of their goals have been put in place. Successful approaches and processes are occasionally adopted and used throughout the institution. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in most areas. Recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance can be found in several areas. Information is collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes but used irregularly. Feedback is periodically used to set performance targets in a few areas. A record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 3: *UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS' AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS' NEEDS*

Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs examines how your institution works actively to understand student and other stakeholder needs. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student and stakeholder identification, student and stakeholder requirements, analysis of student and stakeholder needs, relationship building with students and stakeholders, complaint collection, analysis, and resolution, determining satisfaction of students and stakeholders, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Grand Rapids Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its

Systems Portfolio section covering Category 3, Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs:

01a. Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) has a large urban campus that serves 20 school districts and primarily urban and commuter students in Kent County and two adjacent regions.

01b. GRCC 's mission is to provide educational, and workforce and economic development opportunities for the community.

03b. GRCC's primary student base of 20,000: 21.3% minority, 78.4% credit seeking, 55% part-time students, with an average age of 24.7, who are local residents and residents from the Western Michigan area.

03c. The college utilizes input from its key stakeholder groups to determine their key requirements and designs services and programs to meet key student needs.

04a. Key stakeholders include its employees, the community, business and industry, K-12 schools, other colleges/universities.

04b. GRCC has partnered with Ferris State University in Applied Technology so that students can obtain a four-year degree on GRCC's campus.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Grand Rapids Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 3, Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs:

3P1	SS	GRCC has implemented a variety of formal and informal assessments to determine and respond to student needs such as satisfaction surveys, graduate surveys, and reports from Student Congress leaders. Additionally, the college appears to have a process in place to analyze the data and determine a course of action. For example, GRCC has implemented a new complaint process, improved the process for transcript processing, and enhanced accessibility to testing online.
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- 3P2 O Although the college has several methods for building relationships with current students such as through student organizations, academic advising, career exploration counseling, scheduled faculty office hours and subject-specific tutors it is not clear whether the college utilizes a process consistently or systematically to guide and maintain relationships with prospective students.
- 3P3 O GRCC has several methods in place for learning the needs of key stakeholder groups such as surveys of students, graduates, environmental scans, and research of current trends. (See Figure 5b). However, it is unclear whether or not GRCC uses this information to learn about the changing needs of key stakeholder groups and to select a course of action of addressing those needs.
- 3P4 S GRCC has established various methods for maintaining and building relationships with community stakeholders, future students, alumni and their largest local educational partner, Grand Valley State University. For example, GRCC has built a relationship with Grand Valley State University, which has resulted in a concurrent enrollment program. This relationship and others allow the college to achieve its mission of providing “the community with learning opportunities that enable people to meet their goals.”
- 3P5a O Although the college indicates it utilizes environmental scanning to obtain data and information on broader issues within the Western Michigan region and that it relies on information gathered from employees who travel to state and national conferences, there is lack of evidence that a college-wide process exists to ensure the information is systematically collected, reviewed, analyzed and used to determine new stakeholder groups.
- 3P5b S GRCC utilizes community advisory boards and the Dean’s Council reviews high school and employment trends to determine if needs are being met within current educational offerings. This process allows the college to adhere to its value of responsiveness and accountability.

- 3P5c S GRCC's methods for determining new student and stakeholder groups has resulted in several improvement projects – Street to Seat Program, Building Bridges and Blue Program, and the creation of an Enrollment Center. In addition, several other methods are utilized to determine new student and stakeholder groups including extensive tracking through the use of technology of enrollment trends, student information system, off-site registration and course enrollment patterns.
- 3P6 S GRCC has recently implemented a new complaint management process that includes an intake and tracking system which conforms to specific guidelines. A complaint management team meets quarterly to review the data and prepare summary reports in a standardized template. Recommended actions are forwarded to the Dean's Council for decisions and implementation. The team monitors these actions and tracks the impact on future complaints. The college is in the first full year of implementation of this process.
- 3P7 SS GRCC utilizes sixteen different methods (surveys/focus groups/forums) to collect qualitative and quantitative data on a regular schedule for determining student and stakeholder satisfaction. In addition, departments and programs conduct point of contact surveys to elicit feedback from students and stakeholders immediately following a service transaction. The college has identified 9 measures of student and stakeholder satisfaction and these satisfaction ratings are included on the College Dashboard as an indicator of the College's performance.
- 3R1a S GRCC has established several measures of student satisfaction and has trend (three or more years) data for most of these measures. In addition, GRCC has established targets and benchmarks for all of its measures. The graduate ratings of key college experiences exceeded its targeted goals. Reviewing trend data enables the college to assess its effectiveness over time and establishing benchmarks and targets assists the college in achieving its goals.
- 3R1b O Although GRCC has well established measures of student and stakeholder satisfaction, results in several areas indicate the College is performing below the benchmark/target. See Figure 3a, 3b, 3c, 3e. Additionally, GRCC has levels of student success in its basic academic skills program that are below targets.

- 3R4 O It should be made clearer how the College is measuring its results in building relationships with key stakeholders.
- 3R5a S The College reports it uses on-site virtual tours to identify benchmarks as well as collects benchmark data from the 12 Vanguard learning colleges. State and national benchmarks, best practice benchmarks and data from quality award winners are also reported to be used for comparison purposes.
- 3R5b O Although GRCC indicated it collects benchmark data from Vanguard learning colleges, best practice colleges, state and national benchmarks and quality award winners, there are no data comparisons made to these benchmark institutions or organizations in many of the measures identified in 3R1-4.
- 3I1 S Input on current processes in place to understand student and stakeholder needs is sought through student feedback on data collection instruments as well as by keeping measures of data collection current through benchmarking efforts. In addition, two strategic priorities are directed at improving learning processes and redesigning services to increase learner success.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Grand Rapids Community College's performance on this Category as Proficient, characterized by:

Practical, sturdy processes that generally achieve their fundamental goals are in place. Successful approaches and processes are sometimes adopted and used throughout the institution. Mid-term (two-four years or more) data on performance results exist in most areas. Shorter trends (under five years) of improving levels of performance can be found in some areas. Information collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes is used systematically in a few significant areas. Feedback from processes is gathered and used systematically to set performance targets and drive improvement in a few significant areas. A record of significant improvements resulting from systematic multi-year (two - 10 year) improvement processes is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 4: VALUING PEOPLE

Valuing People explores your institution's commitment to the development of your faculty, staff, and administrators since the efforts of all are required for institutional success. It examines your

institution's processes and systems related to work and job environment; workforce needs; training initiatives; job competencies and characteristics; recruitment, hiring, and retention practices; work processes and activities; training and development; personnel evaluation; recognition, reward, compensation, and benefits; motivation factors; satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Grand Rapids Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 4, *Valuing People*:

01d. Since 1992, GRCC has integrated the principles of quality management and recently engaged in a campus-wide, collaborative strategic planning process spearheaded by the President.

04a. Key stakeholders include its employees, the community, business and industry, K-12 schools, other colleges/universities.

05a. The college employs 1035 faculty and staff, 21% minorities, and 247 full-time and 417 part-time faculty that matches the demographics of its community.

05b. Four of the college's seven employee groups are unionized, including the faculty.

06a. GRCC offers instruction supported by various technologies and labs on its main campus and at off-site facilities.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Grand Rapids Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 4, *Valuing People*:

4P1 S A new Learning Management System and the Faculty Profile Guide are used to identify skill sets that are in turn used for effective hiring and recruitment. Additionally, GRCC is in the process of certifying that instructional staff meets credentialing requirements.

- 4P2a S The College has a very formal process for the recruiting, hiring and orienting faculty and staff complete with appropriate forms and procedures. The process includes explicit steps to recruit minorities, women and candidates with disabilities. Additionally, GRCC conducts a monthly new employee orientation that includes presentations by the President and key employees covering the college's mission, vision, values and strategic outcomes and new employees are assigned to a mentor.
- 4P2b O It should be made clearer what the College's systematic and consistent process is for retaining faculty and staff.
- 4P3a S The College has specific policies and procedures that state expectations related to ethical behavior and accountability.
- 4P3b O Although the College indicates that it continues to develop a more intensive process for employees teaching employees, it is unclear whether or not the College has a systematic and consistent process for ensuring its work practices contribute to communication, cooperation, high performance, innovation, empowerment, organizational learning and skill sharing.
- 4P4 SS The College is focused on staff education and development as evidenced by campus Learning Days, training offerings through the Raider Learning Center and the Center for Teaching and Learning, support for the use of technology through the Distance and Learning Technologies staff, and funding support for various external professional development activities. Additionally, there are a number of on-going institutes including CARP School, Faculty Formation, Leadership Formation and Service Learning Scholars.
- 4P5a S The College determines faculty development needs through formal monthly meetings, faculty surveys, data collected during Learning Days, departmental meetings, and via Faculty Goals and Improvement Plans. The performance appraisal system is also used for determining training and education needs of faculty and staff.

- 4P5b O Although the College indicates that it utilizes the performance evaluation process to determine training needs, it is unclear whether these needs are systematically and centrally assessed to determine organizational development needs or whether the evaluation process helps to identify training content that is aligned with the institutional mission. Additionally, emphasis has been placed on faculty development and it is unclear whether there is a comprehensive and ongoing approach to determining the training needs of staff.
- 4P6 S The institution has a well-developed process for evaluating faculty and staff, union and non-union employees, in several areas that are related to the strategic plan and several other specific areas. Evaluation tools for faculty include student questionnaires, self-evaluation, portfolio development and goal setting using the Faculty Goals and Improvement Process (FGIP).
- 4P7 S The College offers an array of formal and informal recognition programs for faculty and staff. Examples of recognition and rewards include the Excellence in Education Award, the Salute to Women Award, the monthly Raider Spirit Award, Faculty Excellence Award, recognition of recipients of grants at an annual employee recognition event and featuring faculty and staff works in the newsletter and television show.
- 4P9 S The College assesses employee satisfaction through the PACE survey. The survey has been administered three times since 1999. Trend data shows GRCC improvement and movement toward a collaborative working environment. Additionally, a Personal Enrichment Team plans social activities for GRCC faculty and staff that appear to be well attended.
- 4P10 S The College measures its effectiveness in valuing people through the PACE and the Are We Making Progress Surveys as well as via other indicators of employee satisfaction such as faculty and staff retention, absenteeism, grievances, safety issues and productivity. Additionally, the college is working to relate evaluation findings to key organizational performance results and to use findings to improve work environment and climate.

- 4R1a S GRCC has developed three years of trend data measuring staff perceptions of institutional climate, participation in professional development opportunities and perceived progress on strategic priorities. Additionally, PACE results indicate GRCC has outperformed the national benchmark in faculty and satisfaction in all areas measured in 99, 01, and 03. (See Figure 4b.)
- 4R1b O Although GRCC indicated that it collects data related to valuing people in the areas of faculty and staff retention, absenteeism, productivity, etc., there is no data shown to determine GRCC's effectiveness against these measures. Additionally, figures 4d, 4e, and 4g indicate that although there is a trend toward improvement, opportunities exist to implement strategies to meet the set target ratings.
- 4R3 O It is unclear whether or not there is evidence to indicate that GRCC's staff is productive or effective at helping the institution accomplish its goals.
- 4R4 OO Although GRCC has indicated that it compares itself against Vanguard institutions and other best practice colleges and area businesses, GRCC has provided little data to make a comparison of its results in valuing people.
- 4I2 S GRCC links one of its strategic priorities to valuing people – Advance the college's shared values through the cultivation of individual and organizational learning – and it has established a detailed work plan complete with targets for accomplishing this strategic priority. This work plan is available on the web.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Grand Rapids Community College's performance on this Category as Maturing, characterized by:

Growing, emergent processes that typically achieve many of their goals have been put in place. Successful approaches and processes are occasionally adopted and used throughout the institution. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in most areas. Recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance can be found in several areas. Information is collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes but used irregularly. Feedback is periodically used to set performance targets in a few areas. A record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 5: LEADING AND COMMUNICATING

Leading and Communicating addresses how your institution's leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide your institution in setting directions, making decisions, seeking future opportunities, and building and sustaining a learning environment. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to leading activities, communicating activities, alignment of leadership system practices, institutional values and expectations, direction setting, future opportunity seeking, decision making, use of data, leadership development and sharing, succession planning, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Grand Rapids Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 5, *Leading and Communicating*:

01c. The college is governed by a seven member Board of Trustees and in 1997 developed a policy governance model.

01d. Since 1992, GRCC has integrated the principles of quality management and recently engaged in a campus-wide, collaborative strategic planning process spearheaded by the President.

01e. GRCC accomplishes its mission through eight strategic outcomes, seven values, and six strategic priorities.

08a. Six strategic priorities guide GRCC's strategic planning and budget process and action plans.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Grand Rapids Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 5, *Leading and Communicating*:

5P2 S GRCC seeks future opportunities by building relationships with community stakeholders. For example, the Board of Trustees hosts Community conversations, Advisory Committees meet regularly, and the Strategy Team visits businesses on a three year cycle.

- 5P3 S Decision-making occurs at all levels of the institution, is based on data and involves employees in the decision-making process. There is a commitment to whole systems engagement evident through the multiple ways the college communicates organizational data, information, and decisions to faculty and staff.
- 5P4 S GRCC's institutional leaders use dashboard measures as well as results from student, faculty and staff and external stakeholder surveys and studies to assist in decision-making. Surveys and studies are conducted on a predefined time schedule (i.e. annually, every two years, etc.) and dashboard measures are reviewed several times through the year.
- 5P5 S GRCC communicates with students, faculty and staff and other external stakeholders through a variety of communication methods such as meetings, community conversations, student forums, learning days, college connections, newsletters, via cable television show, the GRCC website, and the intranet.
- 5P6 S The College has a wide array of communication vehicles to communicate the shared vision. Additionally the leadership and faculty come together to discuss key college messages regarding future direction, strategic priorities, indicators of success and the deployment of planning and budgeting processes.
- 5P7 S GRCC has a Talent Cultivation system in place that is evolving to eventually link development with job descriptions and other employment opportunities for leadership.
- 5P7-8 O Although GRCC mentions talent cultivation as its succession planning process and also mentions training in teaching and learning, diversity training, and managerial and procedural training as opportunities for building leadership skills, it appears as if these leadership development methods are not fully developed or deployed throughout the college.
- 5P9 S The College uses the PACE Survey as well as the survey "Are We Making Progress" in 2004.

- 5R1-2 O It is unclear what specific results in the PACE survey GRCC uses to determine leadership effectiveness. In addition, although according to the "Are We Making Progress" survey there is significant agreement that leadership does a good job communicating the college's mission, it is not clear whether the results for the other six questions related to leadership on this survey are within GRCC's target or even how they compare with benchmark colleges or other institutions in general.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Grand Rapids Community College's performance on this Category as Maturing, characterized by:

Growing, emergent processes that typically achieve many of their goals have been put in place. Successful approaches and processes are occasionally adopted and used throughout the institution. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in most areas. Recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance can be found in several areas. Information is collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes but used irregularly. Feedback is periodically used to set performance targets in a few areas. A record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 6: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS

Supporting Institutional Operations addresses the variety of your institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student support, administrative support, identification of needs, contribution to student learning and accomplishing other distinctive objectives, day-to-day operations, use of data, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Grand Rapids Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 6, *Supporting Institutional Operations*:

01d. Since 1992, Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) has integrated the principles of quality management and recently engaged in a campus-wide, collaborative strategic planning process spearheaded by the President.

01e. GRCC accomplishes its mission through eight strategic outcomes, seven values, and six strategic priorities.

02a The college includes both credit and non-credit instruction including traditional classes, community service offerings, seminars, workshops, training classes, and distance learning.

03c The college utilizes input from its key stakeholder groups to determine their key requirements and designs services and programs to meet key student needs.

04a Key stakeholders include its employees, the community, business and industry, K-12 schools, other colleges, universities.

06a GRCC offers instruction supported by various technologies and labs on its main campus and at off-site facilities.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Grand Rapids Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 6, *Supporting Institutional Operations*:

- 6C1 S Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) supports operations through learning centered processes including academic and non-credit programs, Center for Teaching and Learning, the Distance Learning Technologies Department, Service Learning Office, and the Street to Seat program.

- 6P1a O The College uses a State process to determine key student support service needs, which includes a needs analysis. However, the process appears to focus on academic needs of students and stakeholders, and not the identification and development of key deployment services.

- 6P1b S The organization conducts a needs analysis and collects data for several support service areas that include: Counseling, tutoring, student technology, "Help Desk" and Student Activities. The Course Approval and Review Process (CARP) developed in 2000, serves a number of purposes including curricular development, documentation of internal and external needs and institutional information.

- 6P3a S GRCC utilizes student feedback, data analysis and individuals that perform processes each day to define and design key support process improvements. Cross-college teams support this process with their participation.

- 6P3b O Student participation in outcomes assessment has not met the expectations set by GRCC. The institution may wish to consider how to gain the expected level of participation in the outcome assessment with such methods as using portfolios of capstone courses.
- 6P4 O The institution identifies a need for a supportive process and policies relating to faculty and staff development. An opportunity exists to build this supportive process by collaborative planning between the CTL and RLC. While several of the support areas have continuous improvement plans in place, none of the identified areas have specific measures.
- 6R1a S GRCC data indicates a very strong standing in key measures of fiscal accountability, ethical behavior and safety, and regulatory/legal compliance (Figure 6m). Further, unrestricted net assets as a percentage of revenue in 2003 stood at 170% of the Board's target. Additionally, the college has steadily reduced its tuition/fees as a % of the Michigan Public four-year average.
- 6R1b O The College lists 9 administrative support service areas in Figure 6c, four of the seven Figures that list the data for these areas focus on the financial area. There is a lack of data for several other key support service areas such as tutoring, counseling, and Student Technology Help Desk. GRCC may wish to consider collecting student perceptions of the quality of services provided through administrative services.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Grand Rapids Community College's performance on this Category as Maturing, characterized by:

Growing, emergent processes that typically achieve many of their goals have been put in place. Successful approaches and processes are occasionally adopted and used throughout the institution. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in most areas. Recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance can be found in several areas. Information is collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes but used irregularly. Feedback is periodically used to set performance targets in a few areas. A record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 7: MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

Measuring Effectiveness examines how your institution collects, analyzes, and uses information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to collection, storage, management, and use of information and data – at the institutional and departmental/unit levels; institutional measures of effectiveness; information and data alignment with institutional needs and directions; comparative information and data; analysis of information and data; effectiveness of information system and processes; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Grand Rapids Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 7, *Measuring Effectiveness*:

01d. Since 1992, GRCC has integrated the principles of quality management and recently engaged in a campus-wide, collaborative strategic planning process spearheaded by the President.

01e. GRCC accomplishes its mission through eight strategic outcomes, seven values, and six strategic priorities.

03c. The college utilizes input from its key stakeholder groups to determine their key requirements and designs services and programs to meet key student needs.

08a. Six strategic priorities guide GRCC's strategic planning and budget process and action plans.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Grand Rapids Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 7, *Measuring Effectiveness*:

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| 7C2 | SS | The college dashboard system contains four decision drivers that: measure performance; support decision-making; and align priorities, goals and resources across all levels. |
| 7P1 | S | The College Leadership Council (CLC) and Board of Trustees are responsible for setting the direction of the strategic outcomes and monitoring organizational progress. |

- 7P2a S To assure that staff and students have access to data and leading edge technology; GRCC utilizes criteria to prioritize technology distribution; employee surveys to determine technology needs; standards in place for software deployment, and file and information sharing; and processes in place for replacing out dated technology.
- 7P2b S Strong community partnerships provide access to adequate supplies of leading edge technology hardware, software, and services.
- 7P3 SS GRCC gathers comparative data for benchmarking through several sources and strategies including state and federal reports, national and professional organizations, and the twelve Vanguard colleges identified by the *League for Innovation in the Community College* to provide evidence of best practice among community colleges (Figure 7b). Also, the Academic Deans take benchmarking trips to other colleges to identify areas of comparison.
- 7P4 S Figure 7C provides the array of systems that have been put in place to enable faculty and staff access to information to do their work. Further the Dashboard system provides evaluation of the department and through “red lights” a warning is set off that will indicate that improvement is necessary.
- 7R2 OO GRCC indicated that it compares itself with other Vanguard Colleges in the League of Innovation in the Community College. Some of the areas of comparison relate to measuring effectiveness. However, there is a lack of data and information that demonstrates how GRCC compares against these institutions.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Grand Rapids Community College’s performance on this Category as Maturing, characterized by:

Growing, emergent processes that typically achieve many of their goals have been put in place. Successful approaches and processes are occasionally adopted and used throughout the institution. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in most areas. Recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance can be found in several areas. Information is collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes but used irregularly Feedback is periodically used to set performance targets in a few

areas. A record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 8: *PLANNING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT*

Planning Continuous Improvement examines your institution's planning processes and how your strategies and action plans are helping you achieve your mission and vision. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to institutional vision; planning; strategies and action plans; coordination and alignment of strategies and action plans; measures and performance projections; resource needs; faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities; measures; analysis of performance projections and results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Grand Rapids Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 8, *Planning Continuous Improvement*:

01d. Since 1992, GRCC has integrated the principles of quality management and recently engaged in a campus-wide, collaborative strategic planning process spearheaded by the President.

01e. GRCC accomplishes its mission through eight strategic outcomes, seven values, and six strategic priorities.

08a. Six strategic priorities guide GRCC's strategic planning and budget process and action plans

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Grand Rapids Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 8, *Planning Continuous Improvement*:

8P1 S GRCC has a well-defined planning process (Figure 8b). The 12 step process includes the review of the vision, mission, and values and integrates the budget process and planning tools.

8P2 S Each year the College Leadership Council with input from the Strategy Team sets forward a set of strategic directions, which are the shorter-term planning horizon and used to reach long-term goals. The system of college dashboards uses four decision drivers to link action project indicators from departments, units and teams to the College Dashboard.

- 8P3a S GRCC develops key action plans to support the institution's strategies through the 12 step process outlined in its *Strategic Guide for Planning and Resource Allocations* document. The College Leadership Council (CLC) ensures that the information is updated on an annual basis along with the allocation of the appropriate resources.
- 8P3b S The College develops action plans at the operational level. There is a 7 step (Figure Oa) process for the support units and 12 critical indicators for the academic departments.
- 8R1-4 OO The College has not provided its results relative to its dashboard indicators, nor has the college provided its dashboard results in comparison to benchmark institutions. Therefore, it is not clear whether or not GRCC is accomplishing its action plans and targets.

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Grand Rapids Community College's performance on this Category as Maturing, characterized by:

Growing, emergent processes that typically achieve many of their goals have been put in place. Successful approaches and processes are occasionally adopted and used throughout the institution. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in most areas. Recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance can be found in several areas. Information is collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes but used irregularly. Feedback is periodically used to set performance targets in a few areas. A record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 9: *BUILDING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS*

Building Collaborative Relationships examines your institution's relationships – current and potential – to analyze how they contribute to the institution's accomplishing its mission. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to identification of key internal and external collaborative relationships; alignment of key collaborative relationships; relationship creation, prioritization, building; needs identification; internal relationships; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Grand Rapids Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 9, *Building Collaborative Relationships*:

O3c. The college utilizes input from its key stakeholder groups to determine their key requirements and designs services and programs to meet key student needs.

O4a. Key stakeholders include its employees, the community, business and industry, K-12 schools, other colleges/universities.

O4b. GRCC has partnered with Ferris State University in Applied Technology so that students can obtain a four-year degree on GRCC's campus.

O4c. GRCC seeks to be a premier transfer institution using 3 + 1 and MACRAO agreements to facilitate student transfer.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Grand Rapids Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 9, *Building Collaborative Relationships*:

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| 9P1 | SS | GRCC collaborates through involvement of staff and students in the community such as the Workforce Development Board, outreach activities, and partnerships with other higher education institutions (3 + 1 agreements and concurrent enrollments) and businesses and industry. |
| 9P2 | S | GRCC developed several processes to ensure that the varying needs of those whom they developed relationships are met. For example, the Board of Trustees hosts periodic Conversation Days, the academic divisions have advisory boards, and the President is in the process of developing an ongoing community study. |
| 9P3 | S | The college's use of the whole-systems engagement practices and team-based management works to strengthen relationships with the institution. |
| 9P4 | 00 | GRCC currently has no systematic measures or baselines for determining partnership success. However, Strategic Priority #6 provides the opportunity to establish this assessment. |

Overall, the Systems Appraisal Team saw Grand Rapids Community College's performance on this Category as Beginning, characterized by:

Processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are beginning to be planned and developed. Successful approaches and processes are employed exclusively in those units that develop them. The institution is just beginning to gather results showing how successful its approaches and processes are. Performance data has not been collected long enough to reveal trends or patterns. The institution does not yet collect data that measures its performance against other organizations. Feedback from processes is casual and not used to set future performance targets. Systematic cycles of improvement are just beginning to be considered and implemented.

STRATEGIC AND ACCREDITATION ISSUES FOR: Grand Rapids Community College

Strategic issues are those most closely related to Grand Rapids Community College's ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning, and quality improvement goals. Accreditation issues are areas where you have not yet provided evidence that you meet the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*, or where the evidence you have presented suggests you may have difficulties, now or in the future, in meeting these expectations. If accreditation is essential for your institution (as it is for most) then any accreditation issues identified are, by definition, also strategic. The Systems Appraisal Team identified these issues through analysis of your *Organizational Overview*, the feedback it provided for each Category, and a review of the Index to the *Criteria for Accreditation* that you provided along with your Systems Portfolio. This list of strategic and accreditation issues is included to assist you and your colleagues on prioritizing the important issues facing Grand Rapids Community College. Among these you may discover your vital immediate priorities, the opportunities and challenges that can lead to a quantum leap in the performance of your institution. AQIP expects an institution to have three or four vital Action Projects at a time in order to encourage administrators, faculty, and staff to prioritize their efforts and resources. The Systems Appraisal Team has listed more than three or four issues, trusting that Grand Rapids Community College will discuss and prioritize those it concludes are most critical. Hopefully, this *Strategic Issues Analysis* will intensify your continuing quality efforts.

- ◆ Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) is at a preliminary stage in its collection and analysis of data that assess its general learning outcomes. The institution is encouraged to continue this effort and to incorporate the outcomes of such assessment into its cycle of course revision. (NCA Criterion 2)

- ◆ The College has and uses a wealth of data for the *Helping Students Learn* criterion. However, the other eight criteria appear to be lacking sufficient data to assist the institution in measuring its effectiveness, for example assessing the success of its partnerships. The collection, storage, and analysis of data for all nine AQIP criteria would allow the College to measure its performance in key processes.
- ◆ GRCC has several professional development programs and processes in place for its employees. However, most of the emphasis appears to be on the development of faculty. Providing professional development opportunities for all GRCC employee would allow the College to achieve its mission and vision along with strengthening key processes around the nine AQIP criteria.
- ◆ The College states that it uses comparative data to benchmark best practices from Vanguard colleges, a Baldrige award winner, Pacesetter award winner and Michigan averages. Additionally the deans participate in benchmarking best practices. Clearly making these comparisons to best practices across each criteria and data set would provide evidence that this practice is occurring systematically.

APPRAISAL SUMMARY FOR: GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The Systems Appraisal conducted by the Academic Quality Improvement Program of The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools provides a comprehensive examination of the Grand Rapids Community College conducted by a trained team composed primarily of higher education peer reviewers. In order to provide fresh and objective insights and perspectives the team also included reviewers from outside higher education. Following is the Appraisal Team's summary evaluation of Grand Rapids Community College's current performance in each of the nine AQIP Categories.

AQIP CATEGORY 1: *Helping Students Learn* identifies the shared purpose of all higher education organizations, and is accordingly the pivot of any institutional analysis. This Category focuses on the teaching-learning process within a formal instructional context, yet also addresses how your entire institution contributes to helping students learn and overall student development. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to learning objectives, mission-driven student learning and development, intellectual climate, academic programs and courses, student preparation, key issues such as technology and diversity, program and course delivery, faculty and staff roles, teaching and learning effectiveness, course sequencing and scheduling, learning and co-curricular support, student assessment, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Growing, emergent processes that typically achieve many of their goals have been put in place. Successful approaches and processes are occasionally adopted and used throughout the institution. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in most areas. Recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance can be found in several areas. Information is collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes but used irregularly. Feedback is periodically used to set performance targets in a few areas. A record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 2: *Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives* addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of your institution's major objectives that complement student learning and fulfill other portions of your mission. Depending on your institution's character, it examines your institution's processes and systems related to identification of other distinctive objectives, alignment of other distinctive objectives, faculty and staff roles, assessment and review of objectives, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Growing, emergent processes that typically achieve many of their goals have been put in place. Successful approaches and processes are occasionally adopted and used throughout the institution. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in most areas. Recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance can be found in several areas. Information is collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes but used irregularly. Feedback is periodically used to set performance targets in a few areas. A record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 3: *Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs* examines how your institution works actively to understand student and other stakeholder needs. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student and stakeholder identification, student and stakeholder requirements, analysis of student and stakeholder needs, relationship building with students and stakeholders, complaint collection, analysis, and resolution, determining satisfaction of students and stakeholders, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Practical, sturdy processes that generally achieve their fundamental goals are in place. Successful approaches and processes are sometimes adopted and used throughout the institution. Mid-term (two-four years or more) data on performance results exist in most areas. Shorter trends (under five years) of improving levels of performance can be found in some areas. Information collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes is used systematically in a few significant areas. Feedback from processes is gathered and used systematically to set performance targets and drive improvement in a few significant areas. A record of significant improvements resulting from systematic multi-year (two - 10 year) improvement processes is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 4: *Valuing People* explores your institution's commitment to the development of your faculty, staff, and administrators since the efforts of all are required for institutional success. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to work and job environment; workforce needs; training initiatives; job competencies and characteristics; recruitment, hiring, and retention practices; work processes and activities; training and development; personnel evaluation; recognition, reward, compensation, and benefits; motivation factors; satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Growing, emergent processes that typically achieve many of their goals have been put in place. Successful approaches and processes are occasionally adopted and used throughout the

institution. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in most areas. Recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance can be found in several areas. Information is collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes but used irregularly Feedback is periodically used to set performance targets in a few areas. A record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 5: *Leading and Communicating* addresses how your institution's leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide your institution in setting directions, making decisions, seeking future opportunities, and building and sustaining a learning environment. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to leading activities, communicating activities, alignment of leadership system practices, institutional values and expectations, direction setting, future opportunity seeking, decision making, use of data, leadership development and sharing, succession planning, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Growing, emergent processes that typically achieve many of their goals have been put in place. Successful approaches and processes are occasionally adopted and used throughout the institution. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in most areas. Recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance can be found in several areas. Information is collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes but used irregularly Feedback is periodically used to set performance targets in a few areas. A record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 6: *Supporting Institutional Operations* addresses the variety of your institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student support, administrative support, identification of needs, contribution to student learning and accomplishing other distinctive objectives, day-to-day operations, use of data, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Growing, emergent processes that typically achieve many of their goals have been put in place. Successful approaches and processes are occasionally adopted and used throughout the institution. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in most areas. Recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance can be found in several areas. Information is collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar

processes but used irregularly Feedback is periodically used to set performance targets in a few areas. A record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 7: *Measuring Effectiveness* examines how your institution collects, analyzes, and uses information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to collection, storage, management, and use of information and data – at the institutional and departmental/unit levels; institutional measures of effectiveness; information and data alignment with institutional needs and directions; comparative information and data; analysis of information and data; effectiveness of information system and processes; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Growing, emergent processes that typically achieve many of their goals have been put in place. Successful approaches and processes are occasionally adopted and used throughout the institution. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in most areas. Recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance can be found in several areas. Information is collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes but used irregularly Feedback is periodically used to set performance targets in a few areas. A record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 8: *Planning Continuous Improvement* examines your institution's planning processes and how your strategies and action plans are helping you achieve your mission and vision. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to institutional vision; planning; strategies and action plans; coordination and alignment of strategies and action plans; measures and performance projections; resource needs; faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities; measures; analysis of performance projections and results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Growing, emergent processes that typically achieve many of their goals have been put in place. Successful approaches and processes are occasionally adopted and used throughout the institution. Occasional short-term (under two years) data on performance results exist in most areas. Recent (within last two years) of improving levels of performance can be found in several areas. Information is collected on performance of outstanding organizations with similar processes but used irregularly Feedback is periodically used to set performance targets in a few areas. A record of significant improvements, occurring periodically, as the result of specific initiatives is provided.

AQIP CATEGORY 9: *Building Collaborative Relationships* examines your institution's relationships – current and potential – to analyze how they contribute to the institution's accomplishing its mission. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to identification of key internal and external collaborative relationships; alignment of key collaborative relationships; relationship creation, prioritization, building; needs identification; internal relationships; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Processes that work consistently to achieve their goals are beginning to be planned and developed. Successful approaches and processes are employed exclusively in those units that develop them. The institution is just beginning to gather results showing how successful its approaches and processes are. Performance data has not been collected long enough to reveal trends or patterns. The institution does not yet collect data that measures its performance against other organizations. Feedback from processes is casual and not used to set future performance targets. Systematic cycles of improvement are just beginning to be considered and implemented.