



Higher Learning Commission
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September 18, 2013

Charles T. Dillon
President
West Shore Community College
3000 N. Stiles Road
Scottville, MI 49454

Dear President Dillon:

Enclosed is a copy of West Shore Community College's *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*. We ask that you formally acknowledge receipt of this report within the next two weeks, and provide us with any comments you wish to make about it. Your response will become part of your institution's permanent HLC file. Please email your response to AQIP@hlcommission.org.

Sincerely,

Mary L. Green
AQIP Process Administrator

SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

WEST SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

September 17, 2013



**Academic
Quality Improvement
Program**

The Higher Learning Commission **NCA**

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ELEMENTS OF WEST SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S FEEDBACK REPORT

Welcome to the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*. This report provides AQIP's official response to an institution's *Systems Portfolio* by a team of peer reviewers (the Systems Appraisal Team). After the team independently reviews the institution's portfolio, it reaches consensus on essential elements of the institutional profile, strengths and opportunities for improvement by AQIP Category, and any significant issues related to accreditation. These are then presented in three sections of the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*: "Strategic Challenges Analysis," "AQIP Category Feedback," and "Accreditation Issues Analysis." These components are interrelated in defining context, evaluating institutional performance, surfacing critical issues or accreditation concerns, and assessing institutional performance. Ahead of these three areas, the team provides a "Reflective Introduction" followed closely by an "Executive Summary." The appraisal concludes with commentary on the overall quality of the report and advice on using the report. Each of these areas is overviewed below.

It is important to remember that the Systems Appraisal Team has only the institution's *Systems Portfolio* to guide its analysis of the institution's strengths and opportunities for improvement. Consequently the team's report may omit important strengths, particularly if the institution were too modest to stress them or if discussion or documentation of these areas in the *Systems Portfolio* were presented minimally. Similarly the team may point out areas of potential improvement that are already receiving wide-spread institutional attention. Indeed it is possible that some areas recommended for potential improvement have since become strengths rather than opportunities through the institution's ongoing efforts. Recall that the overarching goal of the Systems Appraisal Team is to provide an institution with the best possible advice for ongoing improvement.

The various sections of the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* can be described as follows:

Reflective Introduction & Executive Summary: In this first section of the *System's Appraisal Feedback Report*, the team provides a summative statement that reflects its broad understanding of the institution and the constituents served (Reflective Introduction), and also the team's overall judgment regarding the institution's current performance in relation to the nine AQIP Categories (Executive Summary). In the Executive Summary, the team considers such factors as: 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 each AQIP Category covers. Since institutions are complex, maturity levels may vary from one Category to another.

Strategic Challenges Analysis: Strategic challenges are those most closely related to an institution's ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning, and quality improvement goals. Teams formulate judgments related to strategic challenges and accreditation issues (discussed below) through careful analysis of the Organizational Overview included in the institution's Systems Portfolio and through the team's own feedback provided for each AQIP Category. These collected findings offer a framework for future improvement of processes and systems.

AQIP Category Feedback: The *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* addresses each AQIP Category by identifying (and also coding) 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. Through comments, which are keyed to the institution's Systems Portfolio, the team offers brief analysis of each strength and opportunity. Organized by AQIP Category, and presenting the team's findings in detail, this section is often considered the heart of the *Feedback Report*.

Accreditation Issues Analysis: Accreditation issues are areas where an institution may have not yet provided sufficient evidence that it meets the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*. It is also possible that the evidence provided suggests to the team that the institution may have difficulties, whether at present or in the future, in satisfying the *Criteria*. As with strategic challenges, teams formulate judgments related to accreditation issues through close analysis of the entire Systems Portfolio with particular attention given to the evidence that the institution provides for satisfying the various core components of the *Criteria*. For purposes of consistency, AQIP instructs appraisal teams to identify any accreditation issue as a strategic challenge as well.

Quality of Report & Its Use: As with any institutional report, the *Systems Portfolio* should work to enhance the integrity and credibility of the organization by celebrating successes while also stating honestly those opportunities for improvement. The *Systems Portfolio* should therefore be transformational, and it should provide external peer reviewers insight as to how such transformation may occur through processes of continuous improvement. The AQIP Categories and the Criteria for Accreditation serve as the overarching measures for the institution's current state as well as its proposed future state. As such, it is imperative that the *Portfolio* be fully developed, that it adhere to the prescribed format, and that it be thoroughly vetted for clarity and correctness. Though decisions about specific actions rest with each institution following this review, AQIP expects every institution

to use its feedback to stimulate cycles of continual improvement and to inform future AQIP processes.

REFLECTIVE INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR WEST SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The following consensus statement is from the System Appraisal Team's review of the institution's *Systems Portfolio Overview* and its introductions to the nine AQIP Categories. The purpose of this reflective introduction is to highlight the team's broad understanding of the institution, its mission, and the constituents that it serves.

WSCC is a small, public, comprehensive, community college serving the rural area around Scottsville, MI.

WSCC has a new organizational structure with nine of ten administrators new to their positions.

The following are summary comments on each of the AQIP Categories crafted by the Appraisal Team to highlight **West Shore Community College's** achievements and to identify challenges yet to be met.

- The institution's culture of "students first" is integral to the viability of a smaller, rural community college. This philosophy forms the fabric of processes within Category One Helping Students Learn as evidenced by its priorities in student learning and support services. The team perceives that gaps exist in consistent and continuous assessment efforts as well as review and analysis of processes. Ongoing application of CCSSE surveys could provide trend-line data and document decision-making. Likewise, the implementation of systematic processes in general education (Core Abilities) program assessment that provide reliable and valid data for decision-making can facilitate alignment of processes within Category One.
- As the only institution of higher learning in a predominately rural area, WSCC serves as a vital resource for residents and local businesses. As such, non-instructional distinctive objectives in Category Two remain a high priority for the institution. Over the past several years, WSCC has made demonstrative progress in assessing its Performing Arts Series and Business Opportunity Center and has recently launched a high school Early College program in partnership with the West Shore Educational Service District. With some additional focus on assessment of recreation and wellness programs and further development of appropriate targets and benchmarks, the institution is likely to continue to demonstrate success in this category

- WSCC plays a critical role both in responding to the needs of students on campus as well as to the broader communities within the region. The institution acknowledges that performance results in Category Three are lacking and that there is room to improve data sources to assess not only students' and stakeholders' needs but also to provide a lens for comparing performance against other institutions. While a number of satisfaction surveys are in place, the institution is encouraged to develop a more focused strategy around *how* and *why* it selects, scales and structures the relationships it has. A broader focus on overarching strategy will, in turn, help the institution to identify appropriate metrics for its next systems portfolio.
- WSCC has demonstrated a strong commitment to Category Four Valuing People. Integrated recruitment and hiring processes provide a foundation upon which systematic orientation, training, planning, and development processes have been built. A more formalized process to identify elements that contribute to staff motivation, coupled with a process to measure those elements, could lead to more effective and focused motivation-enhancing efforts. As WSCC matures as an AQIP institution, important next steps may include the narrowing and focusing of data to those which are most relevant to the strategic mission of the institution. As AQIP colleges move to data driven cultures, results are often presented in a visual format such as charts and graphs rather than a narrative response. WSCC has the opportunity to do so in future portfolios. Doing so may help the college more clearly document continuous improvement and determine performance targets.
- WSCC has focused significant effort to systematize its processes to define and review Category Five Leading and Communicating within the institution. In particular, the new foundation of the organizational structure would appear to be serving the institution well. The College is participating in various normed data gathering initiatives such as CCSSE and PACE, and is encouraged to follow its plan to expand its sources of data both externally utilizing the Great Colleges to Work For Survey for example, and internally. Important next steps would be to establish measurable goals and targets for improvement efforts; ensure there is a systematic cycle of review for those efforts, such as every two years, every three years, etc.; create a defined succession plan for college leadership; and use formal process mapping as a tool.
- The institution has processes in place that address and support institutional operations and the needs of students and stakeholder groups in Category Six. These processes range from informal/reactive to formal/proactive and systematic. The institution acknowledges the

importance of processes that drive support services, and the need to improve processes that lag. Improvements in this area have been numerous and are expected to continue under the new administrative organizational structure.

- WSCC has noted its progress in Category Seven Measuring Effectiveness while recognizing that it is still reacting and has many opportunities in this category. The College is to be commended for making “develop a data-driven culture” a strategic goal, drafting an institutional dashboard, and implementing an institutional research model. The responses to results questions in Category Seven indicate the College may be relying too heavily on data readily available versus most appropriate. Participating in CCSSE, PACE and NCCBP provides valuable data, but WSCC should be cautioned to not consider these instruments to be the answer for all continuous improvements measurements in every category. Important next steps would be identifying true measures for Category Seven, including the information technology area, and setting targets accordingly.
- A planning process is in place in Category Eight, with goals and objectives that flow logically into long-term strategies and shorter-term tactical actions. The planning process is well aligned with institutional governance structures. Important next steps may include the development of specific performance targets, especially as related to the key performance indicators, and a more comprehensive data analysis that could further inform and improve performance.
- WSCC takes seriously its role to strengthen relationships with businesses, other educational institutions, and cultural/social organizations that surround its main campus. In response to Category Nine, the College appears to have a strong and growing foundation and financial base and is well-positioned to grow strategically in this area. Collaborative relationships abound, but assessment of these relationships and linkage of the relationships to the overall college mission for students is lacking. Some of these relationships may be adding value to the institution, but without analysis, their impact is unknown. The College may want to identify a formal process to evaluate the impact of these relationships in the future.

Note: Strategic challenges and accreditation issues are discussed in detail in subsequent sections of the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*.

STRATEGIC CHALLENGES FOR WEST SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In conducting the Systems Appraisal, the Systems Appraisal Team attempted to identify the broader issues that would seem to present the greatest challenges and opportunities for the institution in the coming years. These areas are ones that the institution should address as it seeks to become the institution it wants to be. From these the institution may discover its immediate priorities as well as shaping strategies for long-term performance improvement. These items may also serve as the basis for future activities and projects that satisfy other AQIP requirements. The team also considered whether any of these challenges put the institution at risk of not meeting the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*. That portion of the team's work is presented later in this report.

Knowing that **West Shore Community College** will discuss these strategic challenges, give priority to those it concludes are most critical, and take action promptly, the Systems Appraisal Team identified the following:

- WSCC has improved data collections since the last portfolio as evidenced by results provided in many Categories. However, it is unclear if the College has identified key performance indicators or how the institution establishes improvement targets during its decision-making. It is the team's opinion that doing so is vital to WSCC's progress as an AQIP institution. It is with some concern the team notes a similar directive in the last Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. It is the expectation that this issue would have been addressed in the last four years.
- WSCC is concluding its 2008-13 Strategic Plan and notes that a new Strategic Plan is to be developed during the upcoming academic year. This provides the College an excellent opportunity to review its prior methodology, establish a revised and comprehensive process including environmental scanning and stakeholder involvement, and develop new strategies as it sets future direction. Important components of the process will include establishing key performance indicators, assigning pertinent data elements for measurement and setting targets to chart progress.
- WSCC is working to formalize approaches to assessing student learning. At present, several layers of student learning outcomes exist, including institutional, program and course levels as well as student service areas. How these outcomes are defined and how data and analyses guide the selection of outcomes is not well articulated, nor are essential areas related to assessment, program and curricular review, the role of advisory committees, and the placement of student into courses. Further, in comparison to occupational programs, little information is provided in the

portfolio on the learning needs of students in liberal arts/transfer programs. More attention to formalization of these assessment practices could provide WSCC the evidence it needs to assure that the work being done to date is beneficial.

AQIP CATEGORY FEEDBACK

In the following section, the Systems Appraisal Team delineates institutional strengths along with opportunities for improvement within the nine AQIP Categories. As explained above, the symbols used in this section are **SS** for outstanding strength, **S** for strength, **O** for opportunity for improvement, and **OO** for outstanding opportunity for improvement. The choice of symbol for each item represents the consensus evaluation of the team members and deserves the institution's 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: This category identifies the shared purpose of all higher education organizations and is accordingly the pivot of any institutional analysis. It focuses on the teaching-learning process within a formal instructional context, yet it also addresses how the entire institution contributes to helping students learn and overall student development. It examines the 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. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **West Shore Community College** for Category 1.

WSCC identifies their greatest need in Category One to be in the area of assessment and evaluation of core ability/outcomes progress.

WSCC is participating in CCSSE and NCCBP for the first time.

1P1, S. WSCC employed a centralized, college-wide process to review and revise general outcomes. The process was developed as part of an AQIP Action Project and involved significant community and internal stakeholder input. Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLOs) or

Core Abilities were crafted to reflect cross-disciplinary competencies and are monitored by the Curriculum and Academic Policy Team (CAPT). General education goals were adopted from the State of Michigan's transfer agreement principles.

1P2a, S. Program learning outcomes (PLOs) are linked at appropriate, multiple levels including institutional, program, course, and service areas. Determination of the outcomes involved faculty, advisory committees, business and industry as well as educational partners. PLOs are reviewed annually.

1P2b, O. The assessment of student learning outcomes, although identified to be a systematic process, is not detailed. Delineation of the process could assist the college in determining the effectiveness of student learning as well as its processes.

1P3a, S. The design of new programs and improvement of existing occupational programs and courses appears robust and includes multi-source idea generation with input from external constituencies such as industry professionals and advisory committees. New programs and courses within liberal arts are developed by discipline faculty. After development, new courses and program proposals require approval by the Curriculum and Academic Policy Team (CAPT) prior to Board approval.

1P3b, O. In comparison to occupational programs, little information is provided on how needs are determined for liberal arts/transfer programs. While the portfolio identifies *who* is involved in setting or reviewing learning outcomes, the institution does not describe *how* the year-end review/reporting process operates or what it entails. Although Figure 1.3 presents the curriculum approval process, it is unclear what action(s) occur if the Board denies curriculum approval after its review. Creating a feedback loop from the Board could also clarify next steps in this institutional process.

1P4a, S. WSCC employs several processes to ensure the quality of its academic programming, which is designed to be responsive to student career needs as well as economic and employment factors. The College conducts regular reviews of CTE programs in conjunction with state mandates and developed an internal program review process to supplement the state process. Transfer credits, CLEP, dual-credit programs, graduate surveys, and transfer information support institutional efforts to ensure program quality.

1P4b, S. The College's "Book of the Year" or "Book of the Semester" program provides an institutional arena for students to explore diversity and globalization in support of its Student

Learning Outcomes.

1P5, O. WSCC has mandatory assessment for placement in reading, writing and mathematics courses. While course prerequisites and admissions requirements are determined during program reviews, it is unclear how the institution monitors and ensures the fulfillment of other course prerequisites, and how preparation for specific programs of study is determined. Detailing this process could ensure student success through appropriate placement in a course sequence and/or an academic program.

1P6, S. WSCC employs a multi-faceted approach to communicating preparation requirements to students for its learning and development objectives. A variety of print and electronic methods, new student orientation and advising sessions, and the use of information technology provide an integrated approach to its communications strategy.

1P7, S. For an institution its size, WSCC appears very responsive to local communities and assumes responsibility for addressing the needs of potential students, particularly women from rural communities. Extensive support services for new students are in place, including many that benefit students and reinforce college efforts. In particular, using the combination of ACT scores and COMPASS Skills Inventory as evaluative tools is a unique and innovative approach to addressing academic placement.

1P8, SS. WSCC deploys many services to support students who are academically unprepared for college. The Women's Support Center is a distinctive feature of the institution, particularly given the unique issues of women within the service area of the institution.

1P9, O. WSCC offers faculty development to facilitate addressing differences in students' learning styles, and student learning styles are formally assessed for those referred to the STaRS program. While the College identifies these approaches, there does not appear to be an integrated methodology for determining the most effective way of assessing differences in learning styles for all students. Given the broad scope of student-centered activity at the institution, this might be an area where faculty could collaboratively work to determine more rigorous methods to approach this issue. Enabling all students to assess their preferred learning style can enhance student retention and success.

1P10, S. The WSCC Survey Team applied lessons learned through a gap analysis of the CCSSE data to determine how best to meet student needs. The College then developed services to target

identified needs.

1P11, S. WSCC's vision, mission and strategic goals frame the foundation for effective teaching and learning. The hiring process, collective bargaining agreement, and Board policies outline and communicate expectations. Faculty Professional Development Plans (PDP's) also reinforce this. Various measures such as student classroom evaluations and classroom observations by the supervisor are both formative and constructive by design to provide feedback regarding effectiveness. In future Systems Portfolios, the College could articulate the process and identify criteria used for defining effective teaching and learning.

1P12, S. The College responds to stakeholder course delivery needs with multiple on- and off-campus offerings including traditional, hybrid, and online formats as well as evening and weekend scheduling. Using a standard scheduling structure for in-seat class times provides significant benefits for both students and faculty as they plan their teaching and learning activities. The institution actively engaged the student community in determining optimum scheduling options for students.

1P13a, S. WSCC regularly conducts general education and occupational program assessment reviews informed by assessment data, advisory committee reports, external accreditation and licensing reports, and core indicator data related to retention, completion and graduation. Reviews help ensure that programs and courses are current and effective.

1P14a, S. A process to review programs and courses for change and/or discontinuation is in place and involves a review of data and outcomes at multiple levels. Input from stakeholders and program advisory committees are also part of the decision-making process.

1P13b-14b, O. Occupational programs are formally reviewed every five years as part of the Carl Perkins mandate. WSCC might consider if a shorter review cycle could improve its response time to changing stakeholders' and students' needs and adapting to changing economic and labor market skill demands. Mapping the review process linking state and institutional processes for CTE programs could also clarify how systematic processes are and improve efficiencies. A process map could differentiate evaluation models for occupational and transfer programs and demonstrate decision-points as well as the feedback loop for further institutional action. The institution could also clarify its program improvement process and identify action steps for program remediation. Program improvement plans can benefit the institution as well as students and stakeholders integrating CQI into the review process.

1P15, S. WSCC uses multiple inputs to determine and address the learning support needs of students and faculty. The annual service review utilizes survey data and outcomes assessment as well as retention and completion data. Collaboration with internal stakeholders guides the library in determining its services.

1P16, O. Although WSCC aligns many co-curricular activities with curriculum learning objectives (Figure 1-7) and has sought to expand its focus on campus engagement, the process that the institution employs to align co-curricular activities is not articulated. It is also unclear whether the College has established goals for co-curricular learning, how they link with student learning outcomes, and how co-curricular learning is assessed. This alignment can strengthen the co-curricular program and provide feedback for improvement.

1P17a, S. The use of NOCTI assessment and licensing exams provides external validation that CTE graduates possess technical skills required for their occupational discipline. Competency checks and indirect measures such as survey data complement this process.

1P17b, O. For students in transfer (AA/AS) programs, successful completion is monitored for achievement of learning expectations. Acceptance of student coursework at transfer institutions is another criterion. WSCC does not articulate its process for assessing attainment of general education or learning goals for transfer programs. Although the College uses course grades as an indicator of transfer student learning, multiple assessments of core ability outcomes and other direct measures of institutional student learning outcomes appear to be in development. WSCC has the opportunity to clarify and implement its comprehensive assessment of learning outcomes process.

1P18, O. The process to assess core student learning outcomes is not clearly articulated (Figure 1-8) and only states “Develop methods...” The College has limited data collection and assessment related to institutional learning outcomes and recognizes this through the establishment of an AQIP Action Project intended to develop its assessment plan for Core Abilities. Through this project, WSCC has an opportunity to fully delineate and implement a robust, comprehensive process with multiple direct and indirect measures, assessment data, benchmarks, and targets for improvement in its next (fourth) Systems Portfolio. The planned next steps are critical to designing valid and reliable assessment processes.

1R1, O. WSCC collects and analyzes data for several measures of student learning and development. Emphasis is placed on college entrance and placement scores as well as success in

developmental and subsequent coursework. Indirect measures include completion and withdrawal rates. The institution recognizes the need to expand its assessment of student learning outcomes at program and college completion in order to provide a comprehensive picture of learning growth and attainment. As WSCC moves toward a more data-driven culture, identifying critical success factors may enable the institution to focus on what is important to the organization and facilitate systematic review and analysis.

1R2a, S. WSCC provides assessment data for its developmental education program and is using analysis of data to adapt current approaches. Examples include initial placement data from COMPASS as well as performance data in developmental and subsequent program courses to pilot a new accelerated learning program (ALP). The College appears committed to reviewing data and creating meaningful dialogue to drive future improvements.

1R2b, O. Although the College used results from the CCSSE to map and benchmark perceptions of Institutional Core Abilities, a comparison with peer institutions provided insight for how students view their attainment of Core Abilities. The institution is challenged to improve academic rigor and performance in accordance with its goals. Employing continuous quality improvement tools and student focus groups to analyze results may generate ideas for improvement.

1R2c, O. WSCC's student performance on the written communication pilot project and increase in attainment for developmental Reading and Writing is commendable. However, the decline in pre-algebra performance is a source of significant concern. The institution may consider a focused follow-up to determine causes for this negative trend and identify strategies to improve performance.

1R3, O. Although WSCC provides documented performance results for learning objectives in two programs using nationally-normed assessments, it is unclear whether a systematic process and multiple measures exist to assess PLOs in all programs. Expanding assessments and analysis of such data for all programs could enable the institution to develop a comprehensive system of assessment leading to data-driven decision-making and continuous improvement in student learning.

1R4, S. Nationally normed NOCTI assessments are used as evidence of CTE student learning and attainment of knowledge and skills. Indirect measures such as graduate follow-up and employer survey data provide additional feedback. Transfer data to Ferris State University indicates that

WSCC students perform as well or better than peers as measured by GPA after transfer.

1R5, O. WSCC relies solely on one-year results from CCSSE to determine its performance results. While acknowledging this, benchmarking based upon one survey and data set may not provide broad-based multiple measures to fully inform the institution.

1R6, O. WSCC recognizes the opportunity to improve its completion/graduation rate in comparison to other Michigan community colleges. Data from follow-up surveys, analysis of GPAs and programs of study of non-completers, goal analysis at entrance/exit, and other variables might provide insight to address student retention.

1I1a, S. WSCC embraces change and appears willing to devote or reassign institutional resources based upon data analysis. Since the review of CCSSE data in 2011, for example, the institution created a new assessment coordinator position, reassigned faculty time to explore the integration of core abilities into curricula, implemented additional in-service training, hired a consultant to help develop the CARE team, joined other colleges in developing an accelerated learning program (ALP), and plans to transition to a new learning management system based upon faculty input. These efforts can support improved student retention and learning success.

1I1b, O. While WSCC identified several improvements made in Helping Students Learn, it has an opportunity to show results that illustrate how systematic or comprehensive the processes and performance results are for this category and the impact of decision-making for improvement. For example, the adjustment of the institution's writing cut score to that of comparable institutions was a reasonable decision to help improve student achievement and completion rates. The College may want to make similar adjustments in math cut scores based upon student performance in pre-algebra.

1I2, S. The institution describes a culture of "students first" that supports assessment processes and documents an infrastructure receptive to systemic and long-term improvements in Helping Students Learn.

AQIP Category 2: Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives: This category addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of the institution's major objectives that complement student learning and fulfill other portions of its mission. Depending on the institution's character, it examines the 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. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **West Shore Community College** for Category 2.

WSCC is focusing chiefly on four distinctive areas of community engagement: workforce development, wellness services, Performing Arts Series, and career-technical education partnerships with the West Shore Educational Service District.

2P1, S. WSCC serves key stakeholder groups through programs in workforce training, recreation and wellness, performing arts, and a 25-year partnership with the West Shore Educational Service District (WSESD) to offer career-technical education. The College's recent development of a multi-year economic development plan demonstrates strong collaboration with area businesses.

2P2, S. Major goals for non-instructional programs were crafted through a data-driven process involving external stakeholder groups. The institution employed a SWOT analysis as part of the goal-setting process. WSCC also utilizes industry focus groups as well as data and feedback to aid in decision-making.

2P3. Reviewed with no comment.

2P4. Reviewed with no comment.

2P5-6, O. Processes used to determine faculty and staff needs related to non-instructional objectives are not explained in detail. Although WSCC relies on team meetings and open communication, these do not appear to entail systematic processes with stated criteria. Identifying processes and criteria may help the institution formalize feedback so that recommendations for improvement are not lost.

2R1, O. The institution recognizes an opportunity to identify additional measures for assessing non-instructional objectives. In addition to measures of enrollment and satisfaction mentioned in 2R1, the institution may also consider financial ratios as noted in the response to 2P4. Establishing measures and a consistent system for review will allow the institution to engage in more accurate decision-making.

2R2, S. Results in this category point to increases in participation and attendance over the last several years in the music program and Business Opportunity Center. While the college is encouraged to further develop targets to contextualize this growth, these two programs in particular have garnered outside recognition and clearly serve the institution and its stakeholders

well.

2R3, O. No comparative data are available to benchmark WSCC's performance in this area against peer institutions. The use of such benchmarks could aid the institution in setting targets for improvement.

2R4. Reviewed with no comment.

2I1, S. WSCC appears to be making solid progress with its distinctive non-instructional objectives. Although processes and performance results are not as systematic as they could be, a number of recent improvements from restructuring business training classes to securing funding indicate that WSCC is leveraging resources and relationships wisely to position itself for future growth in this category.

2I2, O. WSCC takes seriously its role to provide intellectual and cultural programs for the region it serves. However, it is unclear how these programs are supported through a larger organizational infrastructure and culture of continuous improvement. Defining this context may provide the institution with a greater understanding of its performance as well as potential areas of concern.

AQIP Category 3: Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs: This category 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. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **West Shore Community College** for Category 3.

Processes are in place to collect and analyze data relating to stakeholder needs.

3P1, S. WSCC relies on multiple mechanisms to identify the needs of prospective, transfer, current, and non-returning students. The institution has developed a new dashboard with goals for retention, graduation, and transfer; has hired a new Director of Student Success Services; and has recently modified its First Year Experience program.

3P2. Reviewed with no comment.

3P3, O. WSCC utilizes a number of initiatives to build and maintain relationships with key

stakeholders, appropriately driven by stakeholder demographics and the uniqueness of their relationships with the college. However, the portfolio does not explain how larger community or institutional strategies inform these initiatives. Important next steps for WSCC may include the articulation of strategies and criteria necessary for determining how to launch, scale and maintain such initiatives.

3P4. Reviewed with no comment.

3P5, S. Importantly, a number of separate mechanisms such as advisory committees and focus groups are used to determine how to target new students and new programs. In implementing these channels, WSCC may benefit from greater attention to systematically allow for measurement and evaluation.

3P6. Reviewed with no comment.

3R1. Reviewed with no comment.

3R2, O. While satisfaction data from the last several years shows stable and high levels of satisfaction, little context or analysis is provided to ascertain how these results meaningfully relate to the key questions WSCC is trying to understand in this area. WSCC may benefit from articulating key performance indicators or targets for student satisfaction which will allow the college to reflect upon these results more strategically.

3R3-4, O. WSCC has noted an opportunity to develop non-student stakeholder satisfaction measures. As the institution's most significant stakeholder group, K-12 school partnerships may provide a key opportunity to gather numerical results to ensure students' needs are being addressed.

3R5. Reviewed with no comment.

3R6. Reviewed with no comment.

3I1, S. WSCC has a student-focused and community-focused mission and culture which guides its operations. Changes in organizational structure illustrate the institution's clear commitment to understanding and improving student and stakeholder needs. Expanded efforts with external partners in K-12 and industry can further solidify WSCC's role as the post-secondary provider of credit and non-credit training for the region.

3I2, O. WSCC has identified major stakeholders and collaborates closely with them to provide

outstanding educational and cultural programming. Important next steps for WSCC are first, to use the data being gathered from students and stakeholders to identify key performance indicators and targets; and then, to engage in critical reflection and analysis of results to ensure that performance results in this category align to the institution's overall mission and strategy.

AQIP Category 4: Valuing People: This category explores the institution's commitment to the development of its employees since the efforts of all faculty, staff, and administrators are required for institutional success. It examines the 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. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **West Shore Community College** for Category 4.

The recent reorganization has been met with mixed reviews. The institution will have a better idea of on-going acceptance of the new structure after the PACE survey in 2014.

4P1, SS. WSCC has a well-defined process for strategic staffing and hiring. The hiring manager and respective administrator use a job evaluation process based on a point system to determine a specific job classification. Appropriate credentials, skills, and values that place students first frame the parameters for open positions. The staffing process includes broad-based involvement across the college.

4P2a, S. The hiring process is applied consistently at all staffing levels. Candidates are asked to demonstrate required skills appropriate to the position. Interviewing involves behavioral-based questions, and the College is currently piloting a personality assessment as part of this process. In a recent Action Project to research best practices in hiring, WSCC completed a comprehensive review of its hiring practices and compared them to other institutions.

4P2b, O. The institution reports that it occasionally has difficulty in finding qualified adjunct faculty applicants and indicates that persons with lesser qualifications are hired. It is not clear what the institution is doing to rectify this situation. The institution is strongly encouraged to investigate the factors that result in the hiring of faculty with lesser qualifications and address them. Failure to do this may have a negative impact on student learning.

4P3, S. A systematic process, clearly outlined in Figure 4-3, is followed to recruit and hire new employees. The College integrates its mission, vision, and core values into the recruiting and hiring process. New employee orientation is standardized, and the small size of the college and demographic area contributes to a sense of community in staffing that aids retention, along with competitive salaries and benefits. The recruiting process includes cross-functional search teams working with the area supervisor and human resources department. Good faith effort is made to hire a staff that holds the values of the institution.

4P4, S. Orientation for new employees includes involvement by several departments and offices. A College Engagement Team defines experiences for new employees that include individual meetings with the President and other staff as well as group orientation sessions. Orientation occurs throughout the first year of employment and appears to be tailored to the position, including part-time adjunct faculty.

4P5a, S. Divisions review all positions in consultation with the President and Human Resources. The needs and priorities of the college are considered before replacing positions, and restructuring is done when and where appropriate. The institution is becoming more intentional about cross-training employees in similar positions to encourage overlap of knowledge and skills. The recent administrative restructure aligns with procedures also identified in a Board policy of Presidential succession. Additionally, the college encourages the use of departmental operating manuals.

4P5b, O. A succession plan exists for only the President's position. Other positions are posted and filled following the standard review process. Although departments may document operational processes and cross-train employees, it is unclear whether systematic institutional processes exist to enable the College to prepare for and respond to unexpected changes in personnel. A more fully-developed talent management process, along with formalized succession planning, could lead to more seamless talent transitions.

4P6. Reviewed without comment.

4P7a, S. WSCC employs multiple methods to ensure ethical practices. These include Board policies, annual reviews, and segregation of duties. The Board of Trustees has recently ratified a new policy on governance, which outlines professional expectations for board members. The two-week time period in which executive administrators are required to be out of the office to provide a window to investigate any questionable practices is interesting.

4P7b, O. While the Board crafted a new governance policy detailing professional expectations for the Board members, the College acknowledges its opportunity to expand this framework to outline corresponding expectations for all college staff. Metrics to evaluate the maturity of ethical decision-making throughout the organization could lead to a more nuanced understanding of ethical issues and their impact on administrative responses.

4P8, S. The professional development process includes the identification of needs, resource availability, and assessment of activities that ensure continuous improvement. The College employs multiple, data-driven factors to determine training needs. Cross-training as well as offering open seats during Business Opportunity Center (BOC) programming leverages training and development funds. Training needs and professional development for faculty and staff are aligned with the Strategic Plan and departmental goals.

4P9, S. WSCC employed quality improvement tools and an AQIP Action Project to enhance its professional development program. A cross-functional team schedules employee development sessions each semester using input from staff on what is most necessary to remain effective. Training goals align with institutional needs and support employee skill and knowledge growth.

4P10a, O. Although WSCC discusses its evaluation process for each classification of employee, delineating the process with timelines, a feedback loop and decision points could demonstrate that processes are aligned and systematic and inform continuous improvement.

4P10b, S. The personnel evaluation system is used to align personal and institutional goals and identify professional development needs. The process allows for two-way communication related to performance and expectations.

4P11. Reviewed without comment.

4P12, S. WSCC uses the PACE survey to address key issues related to the motivation of faculty and staff. The Institutional Effectiveness Team reviews the results and identifies areas for improvement. PACE has been used by WSCC for a number of years for analyzing and planning improvements. While follow-up steps are listed, the College could benefit from developing a systematic process to review and analyze the results to ensure action is taken as needed and to indicate progress in successive surveys.

4P13. Reviewed with no comment.

4R1, S. WSCC uses the PACE survey to regularly measure employee satisfaction as well as

participation in the newly-formed wellness program. The factors used to assess the wellness aspect of workplace culture appear unique and reinforce the college's focus on the health of its human resources. Developing trend-lines for these factors could demonstrate the long-term benefit to employees and the institution.

4R1, O. The institution does not make a case for how reporting on the results from medical tests in a wellness program is a demonstrable measure of valuing people.

4R2a, SS. PACE and Employee Wellness results are well documented and the College has conducted comparative analysis. Results remained strong in 2012 during the recent reorganization. Data reflects that the institution rates very high in collaboration. The institution is to be commended for establishing a positive work environment, enabling employees to be creative and productive. Importantly, the College is able to explain its relatively lower ratings for full-time faculty in terms of discomfort with organizational restructuring. This could provide an essential benchmark for future surveys.

4R2b, O. The overall PACE survey scores presented in Figure 4.6 indicate that full- and part-time faculty's perceptions have declined from 2007 to 2012. Although the College notes that the ratings drop may be due to the new administrative structure, the institution has an opportunity to address concerns, and plan additional strategies for continuous improvement.

4R3a, OO. While WSCC identifies evidence that addresses the productivity and effectiveness of faculty and staff, satisfaction rates, customer satisfaction rates, and the accomplishment of goals, accounts of strategic accomplishments are indirect and largely anecdotal measures. These may not adequately reflect the productivity of faculty, staff and administrators. WSCC might consider more direct measures of department performance such as input-output measures or peer review to provide a richer context for assessing whether employees achieve their goals.

4R4, S. Utilization of the PACE instrument allows WSCC to compare scores to the community college norm base. WSCC was higher than the norm in all categories and also analyzes the level of results which are typically considered the collaborative level (4.0). This provides evidence that the efforts to improve processes that value people are effective and are recognized by employees.

4I1, S. The College has made numerous improvements in Valuing People since its last portfolio. The employee-centric philosophy mirrors its students-first culture. Expanding faculty involvement on the President's Leadership Team, empowering employees through the Institutional Effectiveness and AQIP teams, and expanded professional development

opportunities are actions that the institution employs to encourage involvement and contributes to the fabric of the College. Implementing a regular cycle of administering PACE should help measure progress and provide valuable trend data for review and analysis.

4I2a, S. The strong scores of the PACE and the focus on a series of improvements in this category speak well of WSCC's commitment to valuing its staff. These results, within a challenging reorganization, are evidence of this commitment.

4I2b, O. Although WSCC follows a continuous improvement process and has identified improvement priorities for valuing people, no defined processes are provided to inform how the institution selects processes to improve or sets improvement targets. Important next steps as WSCC continues its quality journey could be to use the data gathered to identify key performance indicators and set targets for performance. A defined process for setting improvement targets may help ensure that identified targets support strategic priorities.

AQIP Category 5: Leading and Communicating: This category addresses how the institution's leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide planning, decision-making, seeking future opportunities, and building and sustaining a learning environment. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to leading activities, communicating activities, alignment of leadership system practices, institutional values and expectations, direction-setting, use of data, analysis of results, leadership development and sharing, succession planning, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **West Shore Community College** for Category 5.

WSCC states that the mission, plan, priorities, and assessment are formally aligned for the first time. A major update to the strategic plan is scheduled for 2013-2014.

5P1, S. The College has a systematic process to define and review the mission, vision, and values that involves people across campus and includes external stakeholders. This process could be strengthened by ensuring that a systematic cycle of review is conducted on a regular basis, i.e. every two years, every three years, etc.

5P2, S. The strategies set by the WSCC leaders and the budgetary priorities align with the mission, vision, and values of the institution.

5P3, S. Policies of the institution as well as multiple types of feedback data are used to ensure

that the concerns of institutional stakeholders are considered as strategic decisions are made.

5P4, S. The institution demonstrates its commitment to a focus on student learning through its centralized planning processes led by the cross-functional Institutional Effectiveness team.

5P5a, S. WSCC has a decision-making structure that provides multiple levels of the organization with the power to make decisions.

5P5b, O. It is not clear how decision-making authority is actually distributed throughout the institution. While teams and taskforces work cross-functionally, it is not clear what level of autonomy they have. Although the operating procedures and team charters are documented, the functions of teams are not described nor is it clear how they interact to carry out their work. Providing greater clarity related to these issues would help external constituents and reviewers better understand the decision-making process at the institution.

5P6a, S. WSCC has clearly moved from a reactive to a more systematic approach in the collection and use of data. Several kinds of data sources, including instruments used at a national level, have been implemented and are used in the decision-making process.

5P6b, O. WSCC has an opportunity for further improvement by both formalizing the process by which data requests are made as well as how priorities are set for fulfilling requests for data.

5P7. Reviewed with no comment.

5P8. Reviewed with no comment.

5P9, S. WSCC has a clear process and procedure for defining the scope of positions within the college. Professional development is valued and encouraged as demonstrated by the leadership development programs.

5P10, O. The new administrative structure is currently staffed and provides the avenue for seamless administration in the event of the President's absence. However, it is not clear that a specific plan of succession is established or in place. Having such a plan will help ensure smoother transitions during future changes in leadership.

5R1, O. Use of the PACE survey provides valuable feedback; however, it is only one measurement and does not provide information on external stakeholders. Incorporating other measures may serve the institution by broadening the scope as well as providing validity and reliability to the response results.

5R2. Reviewed with no comment.

5R3, O. The institution utilizes one comparative instrument and this instrument does not apply to external constituencies. Furthermore, it is unclear how WSCC compares to other institutions. Using additional instruments and measures can aid in evaluation and may help focus and define areas for additional improvements.

5I1a, S. WSCC has made progress in Leading and Communicating since its last systems portfolio including the new organizational hierarchy, an AQIP Action Project addressing adjunct faculty processes, and delineating roles and responsibilities of teams and workgroups.

5I1b, O. While the College has chosen not to set numerical values for continuous improvement, some criteria or standards could be established in order to know with some certainty whether improvements implemented since the last portfolio (e.g., the teams' model, etc.) are, in fact, meeting institutional goals.

5I2, O. WSCC has a history of continuous improvement and the culture appears to be receptive to input and responding by implementing best practices. However, specific targets for improvement are not explained; therefore, it is difficult to know how or whether these enacted changes meet intended outcomes which inhibits the continuous improvement cycle from being fulfilled.

AQIP Category 6: Supporting Institutional Operations: This category addresses the variety of institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive. It examines the 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. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **West Shore Community College** for Category 6.

The institution has implemented a new SIS (student information system) that has allowed them to both capture and disseminate information more quickly providing enhanced registration services for students and reporting capabilities for staff and faculty.

6P1, S. WSCC has planning and related feedback processes in place to identify the support service needs of students and stakeholder groups. Input from surveys, faculty and student focus groups, external occupational interests, and advisory boards provide insight concerning specific

needs for services as well as technology. The institution appears to have a systematic process to analyze and prioritize the feedback to support actionable decision making

6P2a, S. WSCC has informal processes in place to identify the administrative support service needs of internal stakeholders, as evidenced by the examples given in professional development, safety and technology.

6P2b, O. Identification of employee support needs at WSCC appears to require employees to step forward and articulate a need or complaint. As such, the process does not appear as proactive or strategic as it could be. The development of a more systematic, formal process to ascertain support needs for internal stakeholders may improve the efficiency and alignment of strategic actions and provide a platform for assessing continuous improvement in this area.

6P3, S. WSCC has well-defined and implemented processes for assuring safety, using a variety of support processes, systems including the new RAVE Mobile Safety system, and training manuals to maintain physical safety and security on campus. These processes are updated in a systematic way. The institution is commended on their collaboration with other local entities in the area to ensure a more comprehensive plan.

6P4, S. WSCC is commended on their transition to the new student information system JENZABAR EX. Commitment to and implementation of a project of this caliber has significant impact throughout the institution and has contributed to the improvements in this category.

6P4, O. It is unclear how WSCC manages the key support services to ensure that they are addressing the intended needs. It would help others understand the processes in place if more details were provided in future portfolios. Being specific and intentional in the identification of how the response fits the needs may help the institution identify areas that need improvement, and where gaps exist.

6P5, S. The use of electronic means to document and communicate support processes to stakeholders is becoming more defined. It is encouraging to see the professional development action project utilized in such a positive way as evidenced by the professional development week each February.

6R1, S. WSCC has identified several measures to assess the quality and effectiveness of its support services. The CCSSE and departmental surveys provide insight regarding student satisfaction, while the PACE survey assesses employee feedback. Multiple measures including

graduate and transfer student feedback provide additional insight for analysis.

6R2, O. The portfolio provides limited performance results for student support services. Gathering and analyzing even more performance data could enhance the institution's efforts to improve.

6R3, O. WSCC recognizes the importance and acknowledges an opportunity to improve employee satisfaction by clarifying, formalizing and clearly communicating administrative processes. Several indicators in the institution's PACE survey results have trended downward between 2007 and 2012. However, the institution has not provided analysis to indicate whether these are statistically significant variations or not. It would be helpful in the future to utilize quality improvement tools such as root cause analysis to determine whether these changes are indicative of a trend or just normal variation.

6R4, S. WSCC has processes in place for using information and results from CCSSE and PACE to improve services using a quality improvement model.

6R5, S. WSCC uses a variety of tools for comparing their support services to other institutions, including some national benchmarking in areas such as PACE and IPEDS. Data from the state of Michigan providing comparison to the "Small Ten" community colleges provides valuable comparison with peers from within the state.

6I1, S. WSCC has made notable efforts since the last portfolio to be more data-driven. Numerous examples of using data to improve performance are provided. Significant improvements in administrative processes have also been made with college-wide impact. The culture and infrastructure of the institution supports their efforts to be deliberate in improvement efforts.

6I2, O. The portfolio does not provide a comprehensive description of how the institution sets targets for performance improvement or how these targets are met. The identification of targets and the related processes may assist the institution in determining where improvements are needed.

AQIP Category 7: Measuring Effectiveness: This category examines how the institution collects, analyzes, and uses information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to collection, storage, management, and use of information and data both at the institutional and departmental/unit levels. It considers institutional measures of

effectiveness; information and 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. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **West Shore Community College** for Category 7.

A culture of evidence and data-based decision making is developing at WSCC. This culture is supported by an increasingly sophisticated information technology infrastructure.

7P1, S. Recognizing the need to expand institutional data and performance information, WSCC has taken steps in this area to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Since its last Systems Portfolio, the College has hired a registrar and institutional researcher to implement a key Institutional Research Model. This provides a base for systematic centralized data collection, management, and dissemination which will assist in moving to a consistent framework for decision-making. This underscores WSCC's commitment to Measuring Effectiveness. The multiple sources of data shown in Figure 7.1 can provide valuable insight when doing comparisons and analysis.

7P2a, S. The College is commended for creating a cross-functional Institutional Effectiveness (IE) team to identify and coordinate key performance indicators and data needs of various teams.

7P2b, O. Since the research office and IE team are relatively new, WSCC recognizes that it has the opportunity to further evolve its measurement activities by strengthening the data collected, improving procedures and reporting systems, and embedding program plans into overall college strategies.

7P3, S. Identifying and coordinating data needs and requests is essential for a new research office to be effective. That office is currently developing a formal data request process that maps requests to institutional vision and strategic planning.

7P4, S. WSCC utilizes both internal and external measures to analyze performance. The data is analyzed by senior administrators and the newly-formed IR office. These are analyzed comparatively to previous years, to state cohorts, or nationally. Program review and student learning assessment data offer insight into student achievement and program viability. These analyses are shared through reports on a employee shared drive (U:), reports to the Board of Trustees, campus newsletters, and press releases when appropriate.

7P5, O. The College makes use of readily available comparative data; however, it is not clear

about the intentionality of the data selected for comparisons. The institution does not address the criteria and methods it uses to select these sources. Additionally, use of readily available comparative data does not allow for analysis on the broader and sometimes more difficult areas. Expanding the collected and compared data points may assist the institution in identifying areas for improvement.

7P6, O. The institution indicates that alignment of data is the responsibility of the institutional research department, but it is not clear what functions IR actually performs in this role. Clarification of how the data analysis is aligned with organizational goals would be important, since such alignment could be important in fulfilling the institutional mission.

7P7, O. The College mentions multiple ways it maintains the timeliness, accuracy, reliability, and security of its information systems; however, it does not indicate what policies, procedures or guidelines it has in place to assure consistency in maintaining the integrity of the data. In addition, training appears to only be available on demand at this time with plans being made to implement further user training.

7R1, O. WSCC has recently established measures to evaluate the effectiveness of some areas using the PACE data. While the PACE survey is helpful in assessing the general nature of institutional culture and relationships, the College has an opportunity to seek out other sources of data with more direct measures for information and knowledge management. Error reports, support desk needs, and similar tools could provide additional data regarding the internal performance of the information and knowledge management system.

7R2-3, O. While the response in this section indicates employees believe they are getting the information they need, it is not clear how the evidence provided aligns with the question. The PACE items may not be specific enough to assess how the institution should analyze, prioritize and create plans from these results. The College has an opportunity to seek out other sources of data with more direct measures for this category which could help support a focus on continuous improvement and effectiveness. *(The results provided in this response refer to PACE in the narrative, but Figure 7.2 references CCSSE.)*

7I1, S. WSCC is continuously improving processes that support Measuring Effectiveness. Of particular note is the development of an Institutional Research Model, reorganization of the IE team, and the development of a dashboard. These actions demonstrate the importance of valid and reliable data to the institution for decision-making and future planning and are paramount steps to

continuous process and organizational improvement.

7I2, O. Although WSCC is making efforts to move towards its strategic goal of building an evidence-based culture, the College may be relying on readily available data rather than the most appropriate data. Important next steps would be identifying true measures for Category Seven and setting targets accordingly.

AQIP Category 8: Planning Continuous Improvement: This category examines the institution's planning processes and how strategies and action plans are helping to achieve the institution's mission and vision. It examines coordination and alignment of strategies and action plans; measures and performance projections; resource needs; faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities; analysis of performance projections and results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **West Shore Community College** for Category 8.

The College has fully completed an annual prioritizing/reporting cycle for several years, whereby departments and teams monitor progress at mid-year and end-of-year.

8P1a, S. WSCC has been intentional in identifying key planning processes including strategic planning, AQIP accreditation, facilities master planning, and financial planning. The planning processes include input from both internal and external stakeholders, align with the institutional mission, and flow logically into work plans and budgets.

8P1b, O. It is not clear what type of review cycle the planning processes identified in 8P1 use. It would be helpful in future portfolios to outline the review cycles in order to demonstrate that there is, in fact, a cycle of continuous improvement.

8P2, O. During the 2008 - 2013 strategic plan review and implementation, the College recognized the need to modify team structures and strategy planning. Based upon lessons learned from this experience, WSCC has an opportunity to evaluate and revise its planning process in preparation for the next rendition of its strategic plan, and in alignment with its current organizational structure. And, in doing so, it would be helpful in future portfolios to graphically outline which processes or groups contribute to the development of these strategies, as it is not clear from the portfolio narrative how this actually works. Being intentional and clear about processes and planning may assist the institution in identifying areas that might need to

systematically and strategically improve.

8P3-4, S. A central planning committee identifies institutional priorities, monitors planning, and strategy selection, implementation, and reporting. This model appears to facilitate major planning activities for WSCC and ensures that activities progress and align with planning for continuous improvement. Having the Institutional Effectiveness Team serve as the planning body for planning, strategy, and implementation appears to serve the institution well by providing a single entity that ensures coordination among these different types of activities.

8P5, O. WSCC recognizes the opportunity to assure strong alignment between institutional outcomes, strategies, and its dashboard measures. However, it is not clear how the institution currently defines and selects measures, and set targets for the organizational strategies. By clarifying this process, the College can evaluate the merit of selected measures and plan for improvement in allied processes. Also, a clearly outlined process may serve the institution in achieving the targets set for the objectives.

8P6, O. The portfolio does not explain how future needs are accounted for when selecting strategies and action plans. For example, the linkage between current needs and resources and the recent adoption of a foundation leadership plan is not explained in sufficient detail to determine how this became a priority for WSCC. In addition to this, the metrics used in 8P6 do not address the appropriateness of action planning given the institution's needs. For example, higher staff FTE compared to other institutions (Figure 8.6) does not necessarily demonstrate WSCC's prudent use of resources. Identifying and understanding the linkages between systems, action plans, and strategies may help the institution identify efficiencies.

8P7, O. Although WSCC assigns the Institutional Effectiveness team with the responsibility of assessing and addressing risk, it is unclear what process the team employs for this purpose. Articulating various risk factors that the College assesses annually as well as strategies and/or feasibility studies may ensure that the College minimizes financial, social and similar potential losses.

8P8, S. WSCC develops and nurtures faculty and staff through communication of the Planning Manual and professional development aligned to the strategies supported by the Strategic Plan, Mission, and Vision. The institution commits funds to professional development both through departmental budgets as well as shared funds available to all employees through a professional development team.

8R1, S. WSCC has developed a Dashboard that aligns well with the Mission statement and indicates what is being measured to demonstrate performance. The institution uses PACE and CCSSE results to measure effectiveness as well as a locally developed quality survey. WSCC is encouraged to continue the use of this data and to expand the pool of data resources from which it may draw effectiveness data.

8R2, O. While WSCC has integrated key performance indicators into an institutional dashboard, it recognizes the opportunity to continue to identify improvements, measure outcomes, and to assess how it conducts all planning processes. The continuous evolution of strategies and action plans to improve key operational areas of the College can provide significant insight into the validity of its dashboard elements in measuring institutional effectiveness.

8R3, OO. Though WSCC indicates that they intend to improve every key indicator, no projections or targets are provided. The development of performance targets and expansion to other areas may allow for increased effectiveness of performance monitoring. Clearly outlining the process may serve the institution in achieving the targets set for the objectives, and help define areas for improvement.

8R4, S. WSCC's performance results based on the PACE Survey are statistically significantly higher in 10 of 12 measures for student focus, and 5 of 5 for institutional planning. Although this is based on only one measure, the results are significant and indicate that this is an area of strength the WSCC. Additional data from environmental scanning and other sources may inform decision-making for improvement targets for retention, graduation, student enrollment, etc.

8R5, O. The focus of the institution's response is directed on whether the staff feels they are or are not effectively part of the process. However, it does not address the question of whether the process itself is effective. The response provided in the last paragraph in this section does not provide enough level of detail to determine whether or not the institution meets the standard. WSCC has an opportunity to seek additional evidence to support this category.

8I1, S. WSCC has committed to improvement in this area as evidenced by the creation of an IR office, filling key staffing vacancies, and the development of an institutional effectiveness team to coordinate all planning efforts. The College has plans to continue to strengthen this area including current organizational and data improvements. WSCC is to be commended for the improvements they have made and is encouraged to continue on their quality improvement journey.

8I2, O. WSCC states that their culture is supportive of meeting targets; however, throughout the

category, targets for key performance indicators were not identified. Setting targets and identifying key data points for evidence provide a focus point for identifying improvements and are vital components for continuous quality improvement.

AQIP Category 9: Building Collaborative Relationships: This category 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. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **West Shore Community College** for Category 9.

WSSC collaborative relationships are person-centered rather than process-centered.

9P1a, S. Listed as a key relationship, WSSC's collaboration with its area public schools is wide-ranging and long-standing. This is evidenced by the sharing of resources in the CTE area, ASM Tech, the Literacy Network, and the VP of Academic Affairs attending monthly Superintendent meetings. These activities help to provide more seamless transitions for the students that emanate from the public schools.

9P1b, O. Although WSSC states that they create, prioritize, and build relationships with entities that send them students, it does not articulate the process by which this happens. The portfolio describes a variety of initiatives and activities that facilitate relationship building with WSESD and MISD. Developing processes could facilitate consistency, provide evaluative feedback for relationship building, and frame improvement efforts.

9P2, S. WSSC has a clearly articulated statement on how it creates, prioritizes, and builds relationships with the educational institutions and employers that depend on the institution, notably with transfer institutions and through connections with the area employers. WSSC discusses several activities that promote relationships with external organizations such as senior colleges and universities as well as the business community. Activities incorporate on-campus as well as state-wide events that facilitate information-sharing, transfer, articulation, and employment opportunities. The College prioritizes such relationships predicated upon increasing opportunities for its graduates.

9P3, S. WSCC creates and builds relationships with organizations providing services to students predicated by student needs. The College partners with government and non-profit social agencies to offer diverse services to meet the varying needs of its special populations and to provide assistance in the areas of mental health, rehabilitation services, transportation, workforce development, and similar social programs.

9P4, S. The Office of Administrative Services coordinates most external vendor relationships. A public, competitive process is used for significant projects. Recently, the procurement, accounts payable, and contract management processes were all integrated with the enterprise system. This allows for more efficient, seamless processes, and could allow the institution to further leverage technology to the institution's advantage.

9P5a, S. WSCC prioritizes its relationship with external agencies, consortia partners, and its service area within the construct of its mission and vision. The supported relationships are mutually beneficial and serve as a communication avenue to keep the institution informed. Membership in national educational organizations, service on local boards and social agencies, community service, outreach with performing arts, and collaboration with business and industry enable WSCC to link and promote its support and partnership with external stakeholders.

9P5b, O. The College appears to play an active, symbiotic role in promoting the economic growth and vitality of the region. Brief descriptions are provided of several partnership opportunities; however, the portfolio lacks discussion of intentionality or strategy behind the selection of these opportunities. Developing a systematic process for the selection of partnership opportunities may assist the College in the most efficient use of its resources.

9P6a, S. Initially, the College strives to ensure that partnership needs are addressed as the relationship is crafted. To ensure the on-going value and merit of its partnership relationships, WSCC then employs formal and informal communication as well as evaluative feedback.

9P6b, O. In the dynamics of today's society, relationships evolve and needs change. Although WSCC says they ensure they are meeting needs through a continuous evaluation process, that process is not defined. The College might also articulate its process for terminating those partnerships that no longer serve a purpose. A clearly defined process understood by all partners in the relationship could provide transparency and ensure a smooth transition when a partnership ends.

9P7, S. WSCC's new organizational structure, its team-based model (Figure 9.1) which

encourages employees to serve on at least one team, and cross-representation at meetings led by academic, student services, and finance areas, help to assure integration and communication across departments and units of the college. This model encourages communication and participation in college initiatives. The College's relatively small size also encourages camaraderie, collaboration and professional support. Numerous campus and social activities reinforce relationships.

9R1, S. The College identifies several tools that measure its success in building collaborative relationships. Internal climate surveys as well as quantitative enrollment data provide evaluative feedback regarding WSCC's relationships with internal and external stakeholders. Though some measures are indicating a decline, it appears that the qualitative relationship remains strong.

9R2a, S. WSCC appears to have several well-defined metrics and measures related to key collaborative relationships, with the strongest evidence provided on the external front. WSCC's relationship building with its K-12 partners has resulted in increasing enrollment in various dual enrollment and CTE programs. As the College continues to meet this growing educational need, it may also realize growth in the number of students who attend WSCC post high school as a direct result of these partnerships.

9R2b, O. While data indicates perceptions of collaboration within departments and teams as an opportunity, the institution could also focus comparatively more attention on securing survey data on external relationships to supplement the performance data (e.g., enrollments, market share, foundation and scholarship funds, etc.) being collected now. Employing quality improvement tools such as a SWOT analysis, departmental and cross-functional focus groups, and similar strategies may provide insight for improvement.

9R3, O. WSCC acknowledges that it needs to identify measures to assess its external relationships. State-wide associations and participation in the NCCBP may offer insight and opportunities for comparative assessments.

9I1, S. WSCC has made a significant number of improvements in this category and should be commended on efforts to strengthen educational, community, and internal relationships. The reorganized administrative structure facilitated internal relationship re-building, and the team model has benefited the organization's internal culture in many arenas. In building collaborative relationships, WSCC remains focused on their mission and vision and how each partnership could benefit students.

9I2, O. While the response provided offers insight as to the culture and infrastructure at WSCC, the absence of specific targets and collection of relevant data to measure progress makes it difficult for the reviewers to ascertain evidence of intentional and strategic continuous improvement in this category.

ACCREDITATION ISSUES WEST SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The following section identifies any areas in the judgment of the Systems Appraisal Team where the institution either has not provided sufficient evidence that it currently meets the Commission’s *Criteria for Accreditation* (and the core components therein) or that it may face difficulty in meeting the *Criteria* and core components in the future. Identification of any such deficiencies as part of the Systems Appraisal process affords the institution the opportunity to remedy the problem prior to Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

No accreditation issues were noted by the team.

Criterion 1: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	1A	1B	1C	1D	
Strong, clear, and well-presented.		X	X	X	
Adequate but could be improved.	X				
Unclear or incomplete.					
Criterion 2: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	2A	2B	2C	2D	2E
Strong, clear, and well-presented.	X	X	X	X	X
Adequate but could be improved.					
Unclear or incomplete.					
Criterion 3: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	3A	3B	3C	3D	3E
Strong, clear, and well-presented.	X	X	X	X	X
Adequate but could be improved.					
Unclear or incomplete.					
Criterion 4: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	4A	4B	4C		
Strong, clear, and well-presented.	X				

Adequate but could be improved.		X	X		
Unclear or incomplete.					
Criterion 5: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	5A	5B	5C	5D	
Strong, clear, and well-presented.		X	X		
Adequate but could be improved.	X			X	
Unclear or incomplete.					

1P1 & 1P2. HLC Core Component **3.B.** *The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.*

Strong, clear, well-presented.

- WSCC has a strong, clearly articulated general education philosophy that meets State of Michigan Transfer agreement principles, is appropriate to its mission, and encompasses the breadth of knowledge and skills the institution deems important to a college education.
- WSCC utilizes two processes to determine common learning and development objectives for its students – Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (SLO’s) or Core Abilities and General Education Goals.
- The College’s General Education Goals include: 1. Communicate Effectively, 2. Think Critically and Creatively, and 3. Act Professionally.

1P2 & 1P18. HLC Core Component **4.B.** *The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.*

Adequate, but could be improved.

- Assessment of student learning outcomes integrates throughout multiple layers of the College including institutional, program/discipline, and course levels and links to other services areas.
- WSCC meets state and discipline-specific criteria for measuring student learning, including aligning faculty-designed student learning objectives with broader general education objectives developed by the College and measured through national benchmarking tools such as satisfaction surveys and standardized tests.

- Assessment of student learning outcomes throughout the curricular and co-curricular processes occurs through a systematic process for occupational programs which includes year-end review, reporting, and feedback. This includes NOCTI and licensure exams.

1P4 & 1P10. HLC Core Component 1.C. *The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.*

Strong, clear, well-presented.

- WSCC recognizes its responsibility to prepare its students to succeed in a diverse and global society through its strategic goal objective: “Create an awareness of diversity and the impact of globalization.”
- The College uses a “Book of the Year” or “Book of the Semester” program to introduce and reinforce concepts of diversity and globalization.
- WSCC offers educational programming to area high school students as well as Leisure and Enrichment programs and a variety of Performing Arts presentations to enable its students and stakeholders to explore an evolving global society.
- WSCC employs a variety of methods to ensure that academic programming balances learning goals, student needs, and employment opportunities including learning outcomes, discipline accreditation, national employment data, and surveys.

1P4 & 1P12. HLC Core Component 3.A. *The institution’s degree programs are appropriate to higher education.*

Strong, clear, well-presented.

- WSCC offers the associate of arts, associate of science, associate of applied arts and science, and the associate of general studies degree as well as diverse one- and two-year certificates in conjunction with the parameters of the State of Michigan.
- The College’s Curriculum and Academic Policy Team (CAPT) reviews and approves all program proposals before they are forwarded to WSCC’s Board for approval. The College uses the State Transfer Network to assist in program and course development. Learning goals are articulated in the curriculum guide, which differentiates requirements based on the degree.

- WSCC had mindfully developed effective and efficient course delivery systems. Once a course or program is approved, the outcomes specified are used in every course regardless of mode or location and all are evaluated to determine that they are of equivalent quality.
- Articulation and transfer agreements also guide new program development through faculty-to-faculty interactions to ensure curriculum alignment.

1P4 & 1P13. HLC Core Component 4.A. *The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.*

Strong, clear, well-presented.

- WSCC conducts a series of regular program reviews as mandated by the State of Michigan using the Program Review of Occupational Education document.
- WSCC's Curriculum and Academic Policy Team (CAPT) oversees the currency and effectiveness of the college's curricula by reviewing proposed changes to curriculum and academic policies.
- Faculty and instructional directors monitor transfer and placement data by program, with information accumulated through learning outcomes, discipline accreditation, national employment data, the graduate follow-up survey, and through transfer success information from postsecondary partners.
- Faculty members are engaged in discipline-specific state, regional and national meetings in order to stay current with evolving knowledge and skills relevant to their area of expertise.

1P6. HLC Core Component 2.B. *The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.*

Strong, clear, well-presented.

- WSCC communicates with students in a variety of communication formats including the college catalog, online course schedule, website, course syllabi, college portal, presentations, advisors, COMPASS placement messages, curriculum guide, Facebook, and email.

- The information from the Student Services Division that WSCC provides is relevant to enrollment decisions of prospective students and their families. Communications are well-aligned with the needs of constituent groups.
- Academic advisors and new student orientation provide relevant information to educate students on campus services, departments, program information, and other relevant topics.

1P7 & 1P15. HLC Core Component 3.D. *The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.*

Strong, clear, well-presented.

- The College provides a variety of support services to assist its diverse student population including tutoring, financial aid, services to students with disabilities, and services to women who may lack the familial and social support to pursue higher education.
- The College intentionally provides preparatory support for student learning from the point of matriculation via the Support, Tutoring, and Resource Services (STaRS) process.
- Facilities to support learning include campus-wide wireless access, computer access, and technologically equipped classrooms. A new library opened in 2008 and offers a computer lab, study spaces, and print/electronic resources.

1P11. HLC Core Component 2.D *The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.*

Strong, clear, well-presented.

- The WSCC Board supports the definitions of academic freedom and academic responsibility in the bargaining agreements as adapted from the 1940 AAUP statement on academic freedom.
- West Shore Community College Board Policy #2003 addresses expectations of integrity and honesty as well as avoidance of conflict of interest for faculty.
- Faculty members prepare Professional Development Plans every year which include goals for teaching and learning, professional development and service.
- Department reviews of teaching performance focused on the elements of good practice provide formative and summative data which is used to make improvements to teaching and student learning.

1P11. HLC Core Component 2.E. *The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.*

Strong, clear, well-presented.

- The Board of Trustees drafted a new policy regarding academic integrity for students and employees to be implemented fall 2013.
- The college catalog documents the policies related to plagiarism and academic dishonesty.
- “Teaching Circles” facilitate peer-to-peer classroom observations, critique, ongoing peer assessment, and other insight to promote continuous improvement of teaching and learning.
- There are published policies addressing plagiarism, academic integrity, conflict of interest, codes of ethics, and institutional research policies including a review board and policy for human test subjects.

1P16. HLC Core Component 3.E. *The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.*

Strong, clear, well-presented.

- Co-curricular development goals are aligned with curricular learning objectives through collaborative efforts between faculty and student services.
- Programs and campus clubs engage students in community service, internships, leadership, and campus engagement activities to expand learning beyond the classroom.
- WSCC’s Performing Arts Series is designed with a multi-cultural and co-curricular connection and often in partnership with various college-wide programs.

3P1. HLC Core Component 4.C. *The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.*

Adequate but could be improved.

- WSCC identifies students’ needs via surveys, evaluations, assessment processes, and individual contact with students. The Student Success Team uses data on retention, persistence and completion to decide which projects to select for maximum impact on student success.

- The institution conducts regular program reviews for the occupational and transfer programs which includes institutional outcomes assessment results and improvements, data review, and monitoring of their graduates.
- WSCC knows their current overall retention rate (60%), and occupational retention rate (70%). The institution would like to see its retention rates in the 80's and graduation/transfer rates in the 50's.

3P3 & 3P5. HLC Core Component 1.D. *The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.*

Strong, clear, well-presented.

- The mission is “to make our community a better place in which to learn, live, work, and prosper.”
- The institution regularly engages with external constituencies in the design and development of programs and services. Many ideas for new programs come from occupational advisory committees.
- Board policy #1009, Board Governance, says, “To be effective, the Board of Trustees must represent the public good, know community needs, and trends, link with the community, debate and discuss issues in public and serve the public good.”
- The institution states in Category Two that it is a “center for workplace development and training, recreational services, and cultural enrichment” for the region.

4P2 & 4P10 HLC Core Component 3.C. *The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.*

Strong, clear, well-presented.

- The institution has 25 full-time faculty and 83 part time faculty to oversee a total student headcount of 1,518.
- All full-time faculty members have a minimum of a Master's degree, with nine holding a Doctorate. Adjunct faculty members are expected to adhere to the same standards, though persons with lesser qualifications are hired as an exception.
- Staff members in student support services are hired with credentials appropriate to the position.

Professional development is supported in time and available funds. [4P2]

- Hiring and performance review processes have been recently updated for all full-time faculty, administrators and support staff, and these processes align well to institutional strategic goals for employees.

4P7 HLC Core Component 2.A *The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows fair and ethical policies and processes for its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.*

Strong, clear, well-presented.

- The institution has well documented, public policies that address the issues of ethics for the governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.
- The business practices of the college are reviewed through three separate audits which are presented to the board, the State of Michigan, and federal agencies and made available to the public.
- Executive Administrators, by Board Policy, are away from the office each year for a two-week period which provides a window of opportunity for any questionable practices to surface that may need to be investigated.

4P7 HLC Core Component 2.E. *The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.*

Adequate but could be improved

- A student code of conduct which addresses academic misconduct is available in the college catalog and on the website, reviewed at new student orientations and in class. The College has a subscription to plagiarism checking software.
- Students are trained on research and academic honesty through library staff and instructors.
- The Board of Trustees' policy includes a conflict of interest policy for the board as well as a conflict of interest policy for employees; both policies cover ethical practices.

5P1 & 5P2. HLC Core Component 1.A *The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.*

Adequate, but could be improved.

- The institution's mission was publically and officially adopted by its governing board in 2008. The mission statement and core values are reviewed periodically by the Board, president, and Institutional Effectiveness (IE) team.
- The institution has a comprehensive mapping of the alignment of mission to strategies.
- WSCC is actively engaged in creating a new strategic plan with input from constituencies.

5P2 & 5P6. Comment on the evidence provided for Core Component **5.C. *The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.***

Strong, clear, well-presented

- The planning process encompasses the whole of the institution. The Board of Trustees had a visioning session and six different focus group sessions with constituent industries were held. Campus groups were involved in multiple planning and visioning sessions.
- The institution engages in operational planning on an annual basis. Yearly planning begins with a kick-off, data compilation, input and discussion from various constituencies, mid-year updates, and summary reporting. The Board of Trustees is called upon for particular reviews, as needed.
- Processes of assessment, evaluation, planning and budgeting are linked. Administrators and their leadership teams provide connections to link the work of disparate teams.

5P2. HLC Core Component **2.C. *The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.***

Strong, clear, well-presented.

- The Board recently adopted a new policy on governance that describes standards for their work, including provisions that the Board act collectively and not individually. Clearly delineated in policy is its delegation of authority to the President.
- The Board uses a three committee system to ensure there is a separation of duties between executive, policy, administrative, and academic decision making.
- In enacting state law (Michigan Community College Act), the Board complies with policies prohibiting remuneration, conflicts of interest, etc.

5P3 & 5P8. HLC Core Component **1.B. *The mission is articulated publicly.***

Strong, clear, well-presented.

- WSCC's mission, vision and values are present on the college's website, in all core documents (e.g., college catalog), and displayed on the wall of the boardroom.
- The website and core documents delineate West Shore's role as a community college, their focus on students, learning, service to business community, community as a whole, and their concept of pursuing greatness.
- The College produces an annual planning manual which is shared electronically via a shared drive to all employees.

5P5 & 5P9. HLC Core Component **5.B.** *The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.*

Strong, clear, well-presented.

- The Board practices a modified form of policy governance, which delineates authority to the college president. The president, in turn, shares responsibility for governance through a cross-functional team structure, which allows others to make decisions collaboratively or advance recommendations to the President's Leadership Team.
- WSCC has a strong team mindset that is documented and defines delegation of responsibility. Each operational team of the College has a charter with expectations aligned to the college's mission.
- Policies and procedures are written with input from multiple constituencies, being drafted and reviewed by the Policy and Procedure Committee of the Board, and are then reviewed by the appropriate college team
- The institution has clearly defined professional development and sabbatical policies.

7P2 & 7P4. HLC Core Component **5.D.** *The institution works systematically to improve its performance.*

Adequate but could be improved.

- A cross-functional Institutional Effectiveness (IE) team oversees operational teams and helps to define key performance indicators. The selection, management, and distribution of data and performance information for planning and improvement begin with the IE team.
- Data and information regarding overall performance are analyzed at the institutional level by the IR office and by the senior administrators both collectively and individually.
- In addition to building a dashboard of metrics, regular reports are solicited from key units and shared with the Board.

8P6. HLC Core Component 5.A. *The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.*

Adequate but could be improved.

- The institution has maintained a Composite Financial Index Score of between 5 and 7 for the last five years, indicating overall fiscal health
- Board Policy, Section 6 Business Services, establishes that the institution will prepare a budget annually and in alignment with the system of accounts adopted by the state of Michigan and the standards of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB).
- The most recent audit was approved by the Board in November 2012 and indicated a clean audit.
- The institution's Facilities Index Score is 3.9% indicating that facilities are in good condition, well-maintained and up-to-date.
- The 2011 IPEDS data on Core Expenses per FTE indicates that the institution focused more resources on instruction, academic support and student services than other similar institutions.

QUALITY OF SYSTEMS PORTFOLIO FOR WEST SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Because it stands as a reflection of the institution, the *Systems Portfolio* should be complete and coherent, and it should provide an open and honest self-analysis on the strengths and challenges facing the organization. In this section, the Systems Appraisal Team provides **West Shore Community College** with constructive feedback on the overall quality of the portfolio, along with suggestions for improvement of future portfolio submissions.

- *WSCC articulates many of its processes and notes alignment within several categories. Providing greater detail by developing and incorporating process maps in future portfolios would provide additional evidence that the College utilizes systematic processes with feedback evaluative loops for its continuous quality improvement initiatives. In addition, the College can describe or demonstrate alignment between processes within each Category. Clearly articulating processes in each of the nine categories will help the college establish a stronger foundation for continuous improvement efforts.*
- *By including evidence addressing each sub-component in addition to core components, WSCC can provide stronger evidence it is in compliance with all criteria. For example, the response provided for Core Component 2.E in 4P7 does not mention how ethical practices extend to scholarly or research practices conducted by college employees or faculty. Doing so would result in a “Strong, Clear and Well-Presented” rating.*
- *It is difficult for reviewers to ascertain evidence of meeting Criteria from qualitative statements such as (8P6) “WSCC is debt-free and enjoys a healthy operating fund balance while maintaining an affordable in-district rate that is 4th lowest of community colleges in Michigan.” Including quantitative data to support such statements would strengthen the portfolio.*
- *A thorough editing process could help alleviate presentation of data that is inconsistent throughout some categories.*

For example:

(Overview) 25 Fulltime Faculty
(4P2-4.1) 27 Fulltime Faculty
(5P5) 20 Fulltime Faculty

- *A thorough proofing process could help alleviate errors such as incomplete sentences, and duplicated paragraphs etc. Doing so would provide a more professional document that is easier to review.*

USING THE FEEDBACK REPORT

AQIP reminds institutions that the Systems Appraisal process is intended to initiate action for institutional improvement. Though decisions about specific actions rest with each institution, AQIP expects every

institution to use its feedback to stimulate cycles of continual improvement and to inform future AQIP processes.

Some key questions that may arise in careful examination of this report may include: 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.

AQIP's goal is to help an institution to clarify the strategic issues most vital to its success, and then to support the institution as it addresses these priorities in ways that will make a difference in institutional performance.