

# **SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT**

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

## **KIRTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**March 24, 2008**



**Academic  
Quality Improvement  
Program**

The Higher Learning Commission **NCA**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR KIRTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

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

### **Helping Students Learn**

- Kirtland sets the context for common student learning outcomes in its General Education program. The use of core courses and threaded competencies will ensure student attainment. With assessment on the core beginning this academic year, the college will have data upon which to base and target its improvements.
- Engaging in benchmarking opportunities might provide a means for building Kirtland's results database. This type of involvement could also lead to a better understanding of where Kirtland stands relative to other institutions of higher learning. Furthermore, this opportunity could help Kirtland determine whether it is meeting the needs of its students and incorporating best practices related to continuous quality improvement.

### **Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives**

- Kirtland demonstrates engagement in the community across six different areas. The institution's active involvement in other distinctive objectives activities within the community appears to have forged a strong bond between the institution and the local community for the betterment of the community. Considering the rural nature of the college, the value of the bond between the institution and the local community serves as a critical connection.
- The institution has a nationally recognized service learning program. Drawing on the successes of this program the institution has the opportunity to grow.
- The institution recognizes the need to establish a formal process to determine other distinctive objectives. Successful approaches and processes are in place to support and evaluate new objectives.

### **Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs**

- The institution maintains a close working relationship with the local school district and college representatives are active in the community. The College has developed survey instruments for identifying satisfaction inventories. There is some importance in knowing stakeholder satisfaction, particularly for public relations purposes. However, satisfaction inventories have limited usefulness for continuous improvement criteria.
- Better use of assessment resources could be made in identifying analytical methods which provide workforce needs trends, community leadership needs skills, and faculty/staff development needs which are congruent with the College's strategic plan. The institution is in the preliminary stages of using comparable data to identify internal and external stakeholder improvement opportunities. The addition of IR, marketing, and senior citizen surveys will broaden the base of understanding for student and stakeholder needs. Kirtland may benefit from a more systematic presentation of results to provide feedback to key stakeholders and decision makers.

### **Valuing People**

- The College demonstrates the over-use of satisfaction surveys which give no apparent analysis to why people feel satisfied or not. If criteria are provided in the surveys by which to test for alignment between the College's strategic plan and the queries of satisfaction, the College will have a stronger system of processes by which to gather valid data. In addition, the portfolio will be greatly strengthened by consistently addressing the "how," "what," and "why" questions for this category.

### **Leading and Communicating**

- The College has demonstrated a commitment to improving communications through all levels of the institution with the creation of a "communications council." Little data and no results are available for assessing effectiveness of the commitment, however. With a new president, the College has an opportunity for change in leadership style. Analyzing leadership styles (both overt and covert) in the institution could provide data for where change is needed for implementing processes for continuous improvement. No processes are available to compare the institution's results with other institutions.

### **Supporting Institutional Operations**

- Some support system areas have extensive use of surveys to measure satisfaction. Other areas rely primarily on anecdotal evidence. The data do not appear to be stored in a centralized location. A more consistent approach to gathering data and centralized storage will improve the ability of decision makers to ground continuous improvement efforts on empirical evidence.

### **Measuring Effectiveness**

- KCC acknowledges the need to improve data analysis. Its guiding principles position the institution for this opportunity.

### **Planning Continuous Improvement**

- Even though the institution's use of three AQIP Action Projects and movement away from "management by objectives" have positioned it for developing a cultural of continuous process improvement, the leadership change appears to have left the institution with minimal planning. The budgeting process appears to drive the institutional planning. The new president could lead the strategic planning process.
- Two accreditation approaches are available to the College: PEAQ and AQIP. The question must be raised as to whether the existing culture of Kirtland Community College better fits with the PEAQ or the AQIP process. The PEAQ process may be more helpful to the College in establishing processes for future planning. Regardless of which process the institution selects, significant work needs to be undertaken to establish a culture supportive of continuous process improvement.

### **Building Collaborative Relationships**

- The strong relationships with community institutions, both within education and with local industries, have made the college a powerful positive force in the community. In 911, the College captures the challenges its faces in meeting this AQIP category. The statement illustrates a repeated "opportunity" in the Portfolio, i.e., that while a process has been identified in multiple areas, there is little or no validation that the process links to other processes in a systematic fashion or that the process(es) can provide meaningful data for decision making.

Accreditation issues and Strategic challenges for **Kirtland Community College** are listed in detail within the Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis section of the Appraisal Feedback Report.

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## **ELEMENTS OF Kirtland Community College's FEEDBACK REPORT**

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

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

**Executive Summary.** Summative statements agreed upon by the Systems Appraisal Team based upon the institution's achievements and challenges in regards to each of the nine AQIP Categories. Strategic challenges for the institution are listed in detail within the Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis section of the Appraisal Feedback Report.

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

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

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

## STRATEGIC AND ACCREDITATION ISSUES

In conducting the Systems Appraisal, the team attempted to identify the broader issues that present the greatest challenges and opportunities for your institution in the coming years. These are all strategic issues, ones you need to grapple with as you identify your institution's strategies for confronting the future and becoming the institution you want to be. The team also examined whether any of these strategic issues put your institution into jeopardy of not meeting the Higher Learning Commission's accreditation expectations.

**Issues Affecting Compliance with the *Criteria for Accreditation*.** An important goal for the Systems Appraisal was to review your institution's compliance with the Higher Learning Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*. The peer quality experts who served on the team were all trained in evaluating colleges and universities using the Commission's *Criteria*, and the Systems Appraisal process they followed included careful steps to ensure the team used the *Criteria* as a major factor in their review. As the team reviewed your presentation of your institutions under each AQIP Category, it searched for accreditation-related issues and concerns. In addition, the team used the *Index to the Criteria for Accreditation* that you provided with your Portfolio to perform a comprehensive review of the *Criteria* and each Core Component to ascertain whether you presented compelling evidence that your institution complies with each of these Commission expectations.

The Systems Appraisal team concluded that Kirtland Community College has presented evidence that it complies with each of the Five *Criteria for Accreditation* and each of their Core Components. Although the Systems Appraisal does not in itself constitute a review for continued accreditation, the team's conclusion upon reviewing your Portfolio against the *Criteria* will serve as a telling piece of evidence during the Commission's next scheduled AQIP review of your institution for Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

**Issues Affecting Future Institutional Strategies.** The Systems Appraisal Team identified the following strategic issues to assist Kirtland Community College in prioritizing and taking action on the important broad challenges and opportunities it faces. From these you may discover your vital immediate priorities, shaping strategies that can lead to a quantum leap in the performance

of your institution. Implementing these strategies may call for specific actions, so AQIP's expectation that your institution be engaged in three or four vital Action Projects at all times will help encourage your administrators, faculty, and staff to turn these strategic goals into real accomplishments. Knowing that Kirtland Community College will discuss these strategic issues, give priority to those it concludes are most critical, and take action promptly, the Systems Appraisal Team identified:

### **Leadership and Planning**

- The Appraisal team recommends that development of the strategic plan be given top priority and that action steps be implemented to align the processes outlined in the Portfolio with the strategic plan. The strategic planning process needs to be developed to enable the institution to plan such concerns as aging facilities, an increase in online student offerings, decision as to whether to remain a small community college, and budgetary appropriations from the State of Michigan.
- Because the importance of establishing a strategic plan is acknowledged by the College, it may be in the institution's best interests to take another look at the adequacy of succession leadership processes and Category 5 questions. Much of the reporting in the Systems Portfolio is qualified by noting the change in leadership and the need for a strategic plan. There appears to be an absence of a planning model culture at Kirtland currently. While the role of a new president will certainly impact the planning model, Kirtland should be working on establishing a planning system and processes that permeate the institution.

### **Measuring Effectiveness**

- Satisfaction surveys are identified as the primary instruments of measuring effectiveness at Kirtland Community College. The College would be well served to investigate the possibilities and limitations of such measures and consider implementing more sophisticated and valid measures for analyses of data, particularly for addressing how students learn.
- Kirtland uses anecdotal evidence frequently to demonstrate effectiveness. Anecdotal measures are highly problematic because they vary so extensively

and provide no recurring metrics to assess the accuracy of the claims. This pattern suggests more serious problems, such as undeveloped and/or clearly articulated goals, measurable objectives, and processes that are put in place to measure effectiveness in reliable ways. When these processes are not in place, the only evidence available is anecdotal. Relying on anecdotal evidence will keep the institution from accurately assessing the situation and inhibit the ability of the institution to improve in intentional ways. While there is evidence that processes are in place to measure effectiveness in some areas; equally strong evidence in other areas suggests otherwise. This suggests a lack of institutional buy-in to a continuous improvement model and/or a lack of systematic training for key leaders. In either case, there needs to be a push to put continuous improvement processes in place throughout the institution so that good data can be received, reviewed, and used in decision making.

### **Evidence of Student Learning**

- Kirtland currently relies heavily on accrediting bodies to ensure that students are prepared for future education or employment. The process results in several important problems. First, there are programs that are not adequately evaluated. Second, the outcomes are not consistently connected to the mission and education goals. The locus of thought is placed outside of the institution so that the internal capacity to operate an effective assessment system will be underdeveloped. For example, since the online enrollment is increasing, a comprehensive assessment process needs to be undertaken to study the effect on student learning, quality of online offerings, and adequacy of teaching effectiveness/preparation of online faculty.

### **Valuing People through Communication**

- Kirtland is encouraged to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of how its communication processes value faculty, staff, and students as outlined in the “Retooling Trust through Effective Communication” Action Project.

## USING THE FEEDBACK REPORT

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

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

How an organization interprets, communicates, and uses its feedback for improvement ought to support AQIP's core values, encouraging involvement, learning, collaboration and integrity. Based solely upon an organization's *Systems Portfolio*, the Report reflects a disciplined, external review of what an organization says about itself. The report should help an organization identify ways to improve its *Systems Portfolio* so it functions better to communicate accurately to internal and external audiences. But the Report's chief purpose is to help you to identify areas for improvement, and to act so that these areas actually improve. These improvements can then be incorporated into an updated *Systems Portfolio*, guaranteeing that future Systems Appraisals will reflect the progress an institution has made.

Within a year following the Systems Appraisal, an institution participates in another AQIP Strategy Forum, where the focus will be on what the institution has learned from its Appraisal (and from its other methods of identifying and prioritizing improvement opportunities, and what it has concluded are its major strategic priorities for the next few years. 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 through Action Projects that will make a difference in institutional performance.

## CRITICAL CHARACTERISTICS ANALYSIS

The purpose of this section is to identify what team members understood to be the critical and distinguishing characteristics of your institution. They are the shared understanding of the most important aspects of Kirtland Community College, its current dynamics and the forces surrounding it, and its internal momentum and aspirations, at least as team members understood them. This section also demonstrates that the Systems Appraisal Team recognized and knew what makes Kirtland Community College distinctive. Should you find some characteristics that you think are critical and missing from this list, you may want to clarify and highlight these items when you revise your *Systems Portfolio* and other literature explaining your institution to the public.

### Item Critical Characteristic

- O1a Kirtland Community College is part of the COOR Intermediate School District in Michigan and is a public, not-for-profit, tax supported institution. Its main campus is situated in Roscommon with an additional campus at Gaylord (M-TEC).
- O1b Demographic data indicate that the district is located in an economically disadvantaged and under-served area.
- O1c Kirtland Community College is a small public rural institution. The community college district, however, is the largest in Michigan totaling 2,500 square miles and serving an approximate population of 72,000.
- O1d Kirtland's vision and mission reflect a commitment to providing a wide range of educational opportunities to the local community and neighboring counties of northern Michigan through open access, workforce development, and cultural enrichment.
- O2 The scope of educational offerings is heavily weighted to programs in applied science and certificates of completion with emphasis on workforce development and training.
- O3a The student demographics are primarily white and non-traditional. The college would like to attract more traditional aged students (24 years and below). Many students need remedial math, writing, and reading.

- O3b Kirtland's student base includes a headcount of 2,132. Student population statistics from fall 2006 and winter 2007 reflect a general decline in most areas with the exception of online offerings.
- O4a The College is an active member of the Michigan Community College Virtual Learning Collaborative which allows current Michigan community college students to take courses from member colleges. The nursing program, for example, is an online curriculum.
- O4b Kirtland employees number 109 full-time and 136 part-time including 34 full-time and 101 part-time faculty; 64 full-time and 35 part-time staff members; and 11 administrators.
- O5a Kirtland is governed by a seven-member Board of Trustees. The president assumes the position of CEO and oversees a cross-constituency team of academic and operational administrators (CAT).
- O5b Presidential leadership of the College changed in July 2007 and the Systems Portfolio reflects transition.
- O6a The College embraces technology and ranked in the top-ten for American Association of Community College's Digital Community College survey in 2005 and 2007.
- O6b The College is challenged by maintenance issues involving aging facilities and complying with environmental regulations.
- O7a The College identifies its major competition as The University Center in Gaylord, online college course offerings and degree programs through the Virtual Learning Collaborative, and Mid Michigan Community College.
- O7b Kirtland divides its key measures for tracking effectiveness into Teaching and Student Learning, Other Distinctive Objectives, and Finances.
- O8 Areas of vulnerability include uncertain budgetary appropriations from the State of Michigan, the faculty/staff cultural climate, and deferred-maintenance issues.

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## **CATEGORY FEEDBACK**

In the following sections, each of which deals with strengths and opportunities for improvement for one of the nine AQIP Categories, selected *Critical Characteristics* are again highlighted,

those the Systems Appraisal Team believed were critical keys to reviewing that particular AQIP Category. The symbols used in these “strengths and opportunities” sections for each Category stand for *outstanding strength* (SS), *strength* (S), *opportunity for improvement* (O) and *pressing or outstanding opportunity for improvement* (OO). The choice of symbol for each item represents the consensus evaluation of the Systems Appraisal Team members, and deserves your thoughtful consideration. Comments marked SS or OO may need immediate attention, either to ensure the institution preserves and maximizes the value of its greatest strengths, or to devote immediate attention to its greatest opportunities for improvement.

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## **AQIP CATEGORY 1: HELPING STUDENTS LEARN**

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

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

***Item Critical Characteristic***

- O1c Kirtland Community College is a small public rural institution. The community college district, however, is the largest in Michigan totaling 2,500 square miles and serving an approximate population of 72,000.
- O1d Kirtland's vision and mission reflect a commitment to providing a wide range of educational opportunities to the local community and neighboring counties of northern Michigan through open access, workforce development, and cultural enrichment.

- O2 The scope of educational offerings is heavily weighted to programs in applied science and certificates of completion with emphasis on workforce development and training.
- O3a The student demographics are primarily white and non-traditional. The college would like to attract more traditional aged students (24 years and below). Many students need remedial math, writing, and reading.
- O4a The College is an active member of the Michigan Community College Virtual Learning Collaborative which allows current Michigan community college students to take courses from member colleges. The nursing program, for example, is an online curriculum.
- O6a The College embraces technology and ranked in the top-ten for American Association of Community College's Digital Community College survey in 2005 and 2007.
- O7b Kirtland divides its key measures for tracking effectiveness into Teaching and Student Learning, Other Distinctive Objectives, and Finances.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1P1	S	Kirtland has a system in place for developing student learning and program objectives. These objectives were developed by faculty, reviewed and modified by the Instructional Council, and approved by the Curriculum and Instruction committee.
1P2	S	Kirtland communicates with the community, local industry, and transfer institutions in order to gauge the needs of students. Furthermore, the institution is a member of two local Workforce Development Boards which allows it to understand and respond appropriately to educational market needs.
1P3	S	Kirtland uses COMPASS, Workkeys, and ACT testing to ensure student success in curricula, recalibrating cut scores by studying success data in developmental and entry level courses. Prerequisite skills are determined

- at the department level for courses and requirements for entrance into programs are identified in consultation with advisory committees.
- 1P4 S Communications with prospective students is handled through the Admissions Office. Communication is also maintained through the online Course Catalog, web site, and between students and their assigned advisors. Course-level objectives are included on course syllabi.
- 1P5 S The institution uses a two-fold approach to advising and placing students with students unsure of which major to pursue being referred to a career counselor while students who know what they want to study being referred directly to an academic advisor. Career and Technical Education programs have first-level survey courses to help with proper program placement of students.
- 1P6a OO The institution only conducts a full performance appraisal on full time faculty once every three years thus missing the opportunity to assess and improve instruction in intervening periods. While several teaching-learning evaluation activities are described, no clear process to embed and assess outcomes in order to close the loop is evident. For example, with the increase of its online courses, special consideration should be taken for assessment related to distance learning and teaching effectiveness in an online environment.
- 1P6b OO Kirtland has an opportunity to obtain, analyze and improve the evidence of effective teaching and learning. Guidelines/objectives are listed; however, it is unclear as to how the process really works.
- 1P7 O Although Kirtland has implemented guidelines to assist in the process of determining course offerings, it does not appear to have a means for determining whether its course delivery system is effective and efficient. By developing a system, the College will gain insight into whether it is balancing the needs of the institution with those of the students.

- 1P8a        S        The institution uses a very structured process for monitoring the currency of the technical aspects of career programs through Program Review of Occupational Education (PROE) on a three year rotational basis.
- 1P8b        O        Kirtland is in the process of evaluating the general education competencies. These general educational competencies are considered to be at the institutional level and thus need to be threaded throughout the programs at the college.
- 1P9         SS        Student and faculty needs relative to learning support are determined by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee and the Instructional Council which are composed of faculty, instructional administrators, and learning support individuals. Additionally, faculty is asked to make recommendations for library adoptions, COMPASS placement testing is used to determine needs of students, and referrals are made through the Tutoring Center. Learning support is provided through the Writing Center and Online Writing Lab (OWL) and the eServices department.
- 1P10        O        Alignment of curricular and co-curricular goals appears to be informal by course. Meeting this objective may be strengthened by more formal processes which, at the course development and administrative levels, inquire how each set of course objectives could be improved by exposure to co-curricular opportunities. The institution has an opportunity to define co-curricular goals beyond just service learning programs and community service activities to include other activities such as the sports program, student clubs, etc.
- 1P11        O        Kirtland's student assessment process does not indicate how course-level assessments are collected, analyzed, and used for improvement. While individual assessments take place at the faculty and/or department level, it is not clear how the collective assessment analysis takes place. The College would benefit by creating a formal process of student assessment incorporating what is in place while expanding general education assessment and utilizing the information to improve teaching and learning.



- 1R2            O       Results for Ferris State University students who transferred from Kirtland indicate a drop in grade point average between years listed (2004-2005, 2005-2006), lower grade point averages than those of all Michigan CC transfer students, and most recently (2005-2006) lower than average for all FSU students. Results also indicate that although more former Kirtland students enrolled during the 2005-2006 academic year, few were enrolled one year into the program. These results should be analyzed in order to better understand how to meet the needs of students.
- 1R4a           S       The Michigan Total Quality Improvement Program (MiTQIP) indicates that Kirtland has scored high in areas of developmental Writing, Reading, and Math when compared to other Michigan community colleges.
- 1R4b           O       Kirtland should identify trends from the results of nursing licensure exams, especially when compared to other institutions, and use this information to improve processes.
- 111            O       By collecting and analyzing data on general education core competencies and reviewing all instructional policies and procedures with continuous quality improvement in mind, Kirtland will be moving toward accomplishing its mission goals. Kirtland recognizes that the Program Review needs to be institutionalized and become a part of the culture of assessment.

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## **AQIP CATEGORY 2: ACCOMPLISHING OTHER DISTINCTIVE OBJECTIVES**

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

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

***Item Critical Characteristic***

- O1a Kirtland Community College is part of the COOR Intermediate School District. Its main campus is situated in Roscommon with an additional campus at Gaylord (M-TEC).
- O1c Kirtland Community College is a small public rural institution. The community college district, however, is the largest in Michigan totaling 2,500 square miles and serving an approximate population of 72,000.
- O1d Kirtland's vision and mission reflect a commitment to providing a wide range of educational opportunities to the local community and neighboring counties of northern Michigan through open access, workforce development, and cultural enrichment.

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

<b><i>Item</i></b>	<b><i>S/O</i></b>	<b><i>Comment</i></b>
2P1a	S	The College has developed collaborative processes with Workforce Development/Economic Development boards, Intermediate School districts and the Kirtland Center for Performing Arts for determining "other distinctive objectives."
2P1b	O	Kirtland acknowledges the absence of a formal process for determining other distinctive objectives. Establishing a formal process to determine other distinctive objectives aligning with the institutional vision, mission, and guiding principles could create growth opportunities for the organization.
2P2a	S	Each objective has a full-time director/coordinator who is responsible for communication and personnel. Expectations regarding these objectives

are communicated through budget discussions, the director of Workforce Development, the liaison between Kirtland and COOR ISD, the Service Learning coordinator, and other means.

- 2P2b      O      Only anecdotal processes used to communicate expectations about other distinctive objectives have been identified. Greater attention to the processes that communicate expectations will allow for improved continuous improvement to take place with respect to distinctive objectives.
- 2P3        O      Significant emphasis is placed on the role of the director for the various distinctive objectives. The processes used to determine need have not been identified. Greater focus on the processes will reduce the variability in how needs are determined when there are changes in directors.
- 2P5a      S      Use of a variety of assessment measures such as the use of the “Self Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Service Learning in Higher Education” by Andrew Furio is helpful. Data collected from this measure are used to determine the focus of future efforts. Also, the workforce development activity is evaluated by the participants through various means. Classroom evaluations are conducted for the Criminal Justice In-service and Waiver of training activities. Results from these evaluations inform decisions for future training offerings. Further, the Kirtland Center for Performing Arts and the Kirtland Youth Theater conduct surveys and personal interviews to determine success.
- 2P5b      O      The college should consider some measurement of the COOR-ISD collaboration and develop a formal evaluation of the Kirtland’s Warbler Festival.
- 2R1a      S      The Workforce Development Annual Report results ranged from “satisfied to very satisfied.” The results from the Self Assessment Report for the Service Learning area were mixed, with the recognition that the “College needs to do more to include the community.” The results for the Criminal Justice In-Service and Waiver of Training Report indicate a high rate of overall satisfaction.

- 2R1b            O        While the results of measurements indicate that assessment processes seem to be functioning, references throughout the Portfolio to the “nationally recognized service learning program” lack supporting evidence. A more complete list of results that would be available to those responsible for continuous improvement will allow for the results to impact decision making. Further, it is unclear how the collected data is being linked to decision making about the programs assessed.
- 2R2             O        Other than comparing results for Student Learning, Kirtland does not compare its other distinctive objectives with peer institutions. Developing comparisons with other institutions will provide greater ability to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the distinctive objectives. This should provide the institution with an improved ability to identify improvement targets.
- 2R3a            SS        The institution’s active involvement in the variety of other distinctive objectives listed appears to have forged a strong bond between the institution and the local community.
- 2R3b            S        A result of accomplishing other distinct objectives is national recognition of the institution’s Warbler Festival and Service Learning and local community support of the millage vote.
- 2I1             O        There is no reportable information from the institution at this time.
- 2I2             O        The institution has an opportunity to further improve its other distinctive objectives activities by defining a formal improvement process. This will assure that continuous improvement is a proactive process.

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### **AQIP CATEGORY 3: UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS’ AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS’ NEEDS**

*Understanding Students’ and Other Stakeholders’ Needs* examines how your institution works actively to understand student and other stakeholder needs. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student and stakeholder identification, student and stakeholder requirements, analysis of student and stakeholder needs, relationship building with

students and stakeholders, complaint collection, analysis, and resolution, determining satisfaction of students and stakeholders, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

**Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Kirtland Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 3, Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs:**

***Item    Critical Characteristic***

- O1b    Demographic data indicate that the district is located in an economically disadvantaged and under-served area.
- O1c    Kirtland Community College is a small public rural institution. The community college district, however, is the largest in Michigan totaling 2,500 square miles and serving approximate population of 72,000.
- O1d    Kirtland's vision and mission reflect a commitment to providing a wide range of educational opportunities to the local community and neighboring counties of northern Michigan through open access, workforce development, and cultural enrichment.
- O3a    The student demographics are primarily white and non-traditional. The college would like to attract more traditional aged students (24 years and below). Many students need remedial math, writing, and reading.
- O3b    Kirtland's student base includes a headcount of 2,132. Student population statistics from fall 2006 and winter 2007 reflect a general decline in most areas with the exception of online offerings.

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

<b><i>Item</i></b>	<b><i>S/O</i></b>	<b><i>Comment</i></b>
3P1a	S	The College has processes in place for surveying student perceptions. A combination of student evaluations, the Community College Survey of

- Student Engagement (CCSSE), and an in-house online student survey provides the institution with a wealth of information on changing student needs.
- 3P1b      O      Results from the recent participation in the CCSSE are being analyzed and could be utilized in the development of action plans to address deficiencies. The methods chosen by the College seem to limit identification of “changing needs of students.”
- 3P2      S      There are several processes to build and maintain student relationships, including intercollegiate athletics, Phi Theta Kappa, and assigning academic advisors, and the small size of the institution fosters relationship building.
- 3P3      O      Kirtland’s IR and Marketing departments are developing surveys to identify needs of prospective students; similarly, senior citizen surveys are under development. Administration and results of these new surveys could provide the institution with actionable data upon which to base improvements.
- 3P4      S      The College reports processes in place, primarily through stakeholder advisory groups, for building and maintaining relationships.
- 3P6a      S      The College reports that written complaints from students are logged and addressed; meeting agendas posted ahead of time, and surveys of communication effectiveness are analyzed.
- 3P6b      O      Although Kirtland has processes in place for collecting complaints, it has not illustrated that there is a means for analyzing feedback and selecting and communicating a course of action. Establishing a general process which encapsulates all aspects of administering complaints could help Kirkland to ensure that it is responsive to the needs of students and key stakeholders.
- 3P7      S      Student satisfaction is measured in every class, the CCSSE is administered every three years, along with an annual student survey.

- Other stakeholder satisfaction is measured through employer surveys, college audits by regulatory agencies, and other survey results.
- 3P7 O Although Kirtland demonstrates that it collects feedback through CCSSE and other survey methods, the College does not mention how it analyzes this information to make informed decisions. Establishing and implementing a process for analyzing data could help the College to close the feedback loop.
- 3R1 O Baseline data has been collected on student satisfaction of support services through the CCSSE, data on student satisfaction within the classroom was not reported.
- 3R2a S Kirtland students rated their relationships with faculty, staff, and students higher than comparable colleges.
- 3R2b O Although results of CCSSE were high in a number of areas, others fell below the mean. By addressing areas that fell below the mean, such as those that focus on diversity, Kirtland could be helping the students to understand the importance of building relationships.
- 3R3 O Although Kirtland uses qualitative indicators to demonstrate satisfaction, there are no measurable means for understanding this factor. By collecting data from environmental scans and other surveys, the College might be able to measure performance levels and degree of satisfaction.
- 3R4 O The community supported the levee and attend the performing arts events, other than this there is little relevant data presented.
- 3R5 O Results from the CCSSE survey are compared to small colleges and a 2007 CCSSE cohort. Comparisons of the results in other areas outside of CCSSE are needed to strengthen the college's commitment to continuous improvement. These data could be useful to the College for determining strategies for institutional planning.
- 3I1 O Following through on results from subsequent administrations of CCSSE and newly developed IR and Marketing surveys will provide the institution with additional data to focus future improvement targets.

312 No data reported.

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#### **AQIP CATEGORY 4: VALUING PEOPLE**

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

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

***Item Critical Characteristic***

- O1a Kirtland Community College is part of the COOR Intermediate School District in Michigan and is a public, not-for-profit, tax supported institution. Its main campus is situated in Roscommon with an additional campus at Gaylord (M-TEC).
- O4b Kirtland employees number 109 full-time and 136 part-time including 34 full-time and 101 part-time faculty; 64 full-time and 35 part-time staff members; and 11 administrators.
- O5a Kirtland is governed by a seven-member Board of Trustees. The president assumes the position of CEO and oversees a cross-constituency team of academic and operational administrators (CAT).
- O5b Presidential leadership of the College changed in July 2007 and the Systems Portfolio reflects transition.
- O8 Areas of vulnerability include uncertain budgetary appropriations from the State of Michigan, the faculty/staff cultural climate, and deferred-maintenance issues.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
4P1	S	The College reports that processes are in place for the recruiting, hiring and retaining of employees. Seven criteria have been identified to help classify employees.
4P2	O	<p>The College reports that it has processes in place for recruiting and hiring internally and externally. While examples of strategies are evident, describing the overall system that guides recruitment, retention, and orientation of employees would provide a better basis for evaluation of the processes. The College acknowledges that it has no succession plan by which to establish processes for handling changes in personnel at any level.</p> <p>Consciously hiring staff and faculty on a part-time basis to avoid paying employee benefits appears to cause turnover among part-time employees seeking benefits. Reevaluating this practice may provide the institution the opportunity to achieve more stability in the workforce.</p>
4P3	O	While the College reports that processes are in place for ensuring collaborative and ethical behavior, being more explicit about the processes will allow for focused assessment of alignment with mission goals and objectives.
4P4	O	Given the rural setting of the College, professional development is reported to be given a high priority both in on-the-job training and well-funded off-campus development opportunities. However, defining expectations and goals for professional development will make assessment more effective about the intentions of professional development processes and use of resources.

- 4P5            O        The College has identified factors to be considered for establishing training needs, but is challenged to develop a process which aligns planning with training.
- 4P6            S        The College reports that a system for evaluating employees is in place, and that evaluation of faculty members aligns with objectives for effective teaching and learning.
- 4P7a          S        The College reports that processes are in place for recognizing, rewarding and compensating quality performance. In addition, employees are allowed flexibility in work hours.
- 4P7b          O        Although several rewards and recognitions are discussed, the processes used and alignment to goals are not apparent.
- 4P8            O        Action projects have been initiated and continually evaluated to determine and resolve employee issues. These action projects are being developed to improve communication and trust at the institutional level. Continual surveying of employees will provide data to determine whether there is trust.
- 4P9            S        The College reports that AQIP Action Projects have been used to align administrative practices with employee concerns for health, safety, personal well-being and employee satisfaction.
- 4P10          O        Kirtland reports that it uses results from the first three action projects as a measure for valuing people. Otherwise, it does not have a means for collecting and analyzing on a regular basis. By developing a process for collecting and analyzing data on a regular basis, the College will be implementing best practices associated with continuous quality improvement.
- 4R1a          S        The results from three AQIP Action Projects outlined in the portfolio were generally positive and reinforces the institution's dedication to these areas.
- 4R1b          O        While some results associated with measurements indicate satisfaction, and that employees believe the results are used in decision making, no

evidence is provided about how the data are analyzed. The use of results would be more informative for making decisions were there evidence of analysis of the data, awareness of limitations of satisfaction surveys, and possibilities of using the data to establish trends or comparisons.

- 4R2            O     The evidence presented does not link to the processes associated with valuing people.
- 4R3            O     While the College reports evidence of better efficiencies as a result of using measurements set forth above, the portfolio will be strengthened by graphs, tables, and summary data of “effectiveness.” Identifying what ways rates demonstrate alignment with student learning (in contrast to student satisfaction) and what ways reported data provide evidence for addressing the question of “what” will strengthen the portfolio.
- 4R4            O     The College reports that no data are available for comparisons.
- 4I1            O     The College reports that the evaluation measures identified above are not being conducted consistently.
- 4I2            O     The College answers this set of questions with the identification of a need “to identify and routinely administer a national standardized survey instrument to capture how well it is doing in valuing its employees. These results would be comparable to other colleges in the state and across the country.” While the “need” is realistic, the portfolio will be stronger by addressing the questions of “how” and “what.”

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## **AQIP CATEGORY 5: LEADING AND COMMUNICATING**

*Leading And Communicating* addresses how your institution’s leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide your institution in setting directions, making decisions, seeking future opportunities, and building and sustaining a learning environment. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to leading activities, communicating activities, alignment of leadership system practices, institutional values and expectations, direction setting, future opportunity seeking, decision making, use of data, leadership

development and sharing, succession planning, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

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

***Item Critical Characteristic***

- O1d Kirtland's vision and mission reflect a commitment to providing a wide range of educational opportunities to the local community and neighboring counties of northern Michigan through open access, workforce development, and cultural enrichment.
- O5a Kirtland is governed by a seven-member Board of Trustees. The president assumes the position of CEO and oversees a cross-constituency team of academic and operational administrators.
- O5b Presidential leadership of the College changed in July 2007 and the Systems Portfolio reflects the transition.
- O8 Areas of vulnerability include uncertain budgetary appropriations from the State of Michigan, the faculty/staff cultural climate, and deferred-maintenance issues.

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

<b><i>Item</i></b>	<b><i>S/O</i></b>	<b><i>Comment</i></b>
5P1	O	The College claims that directions that align with vision, mission and values of the institution will be set by the president (who is new) and members of the administrative team. Leadership opportunities are available to employees through College committees.
5P2	O	While the College identifies participation of administrators in state leadership associations as evidence of building and sustaining a learning environment, a "continuous-improvement process" is not described.

Kirtland maintains that it abides by guiding principles and uses networking strategies and other resources as a means for building a learning environment. However, the College does not mention a process whereby leaders can ensure sustainability in this area.

- 5P3 S The College reports a process for three levels of implementing decisions: recommendations to the Board of Trustees, negotiations through the Target Specific Problem Solving and Target Specific Bargaining processes, and operational decisions implemented by administrators and faculty.
- 5P4 S Both the Target Specific Bargaining and Problem Solving processes are data driven supporting one of the institution's guiding principles that they "strive for consistent use of appropriate data in all decision making."
- 5P5 S As a result of the action project specifically targeting communication issues, Kirtland has implemented a process for ensuring communication between and among institutional levels. A "communications council" provides new avenues for communication between levels at the College.
- 5P6 O The College communicates values through the policy manual. Additional material is provided to new employees through the orientation processes. However, communicating these values on a broader and integrated basis and repeatedly to larger audiences will help to embed the values in the learning community.
- 5P7 S The College uses the Facilitative Leadership Educational Series conducted by Alignment Associates in a systematic effort to develop leadership skills.
- 5P8 OO The College identifies a need to develop processes for succession planning.
- 5P9 O Performance reviews of all employees, at all levels, have been the only means of collecting and measuring leadership abilities. But in the fall of 2007, a new Employee Survey was to be administered which will provide a more sophisticated analysis of satisfaction surveys.

- 5R1            O     The College reports a general lack of data.
- 5R2            O     The College reports the need to develop more and better measurements for obtaining results.
- 5I1            O     The College plans to implement the Employee Survey and continue to administer it annually to be able to look at longitudinal data on improvement or decline.
- 5I2            O     The College identifies these areas as opportunities for improvement.

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## **AQIP CATEGORY 6: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS**

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

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

***Item    Critical Characteristic***

- O1a    Kirtland Community College is part of the COOR Intermediate School District. Its main campus is situated in Roscommon with an additional campus at Gaylord (M-TEC).
- O1c    Kirtland Community College is a small public rural institution. The community college district, however, is the largest in Michigan totaling 2,500 square miles and serving an approximate population of 72,000.
- O3b    Kirtland's student base includes a headcount of 2,132. Student population statistics from fall 2006 and winter 2007 reflect a general decline in most areas with the exception of online offerings.

- O6a The College embraces technology and ranked in the top-ten for American Association of Community College's Digital Community College survey in 2005 and 2007.
- O6b The College is challenged by maintenance issues involving aging facilities and complying with environmental regulations.
- O8 Areas of vulnerability include uncertain budgetary appropriations from the State of Michigan, the faculty/staff cultural climate, and deferred-maintenance issues.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
6P1	S	Kirtland identifies support service needs for students by considering trends such as enrollment patterns and demands for increased attention to certain areas. Classroom evaluations, PROE, enrollment demands, and CCSSE have all been used to identify student support service needs.
6P2a	S	The Target Specific Bargaining and Target Specific Problem Solving processes (for union and non-union employees) provides a well defined avenue for employees to express administrative support service needs.
6P2b	O	Although Kirtland employs means for establishing staff needs, it does not mention how it addresses the needs of key stakeholders, such as alumni. Addressing the needs of these groups will help the College to ensure that it is being responsive to all community members.
6P3	O	Although Kirtland demonstrates that it has the means for collecting feedback, there does not appear to be a centralized method for documenting this information. Documenting feedback would enable informed decision making regarding changes in process. Collecting data in a centralized area would help to facilitate and encourage knowledge sharing, innovation, and empowerment.

- 6P4            S        Kirtland collects surveys, evaluations, and suggestions for improvement in a number of service areas including Tutoring, the Print Shop, and Counseling. This information is analyzed by key personnel in individual areas.
- 6P5            O        While satisfaction surveys are given as examples of measuring and using information for improvement, there is no mention as to what process has been developed to loop these data to learning objectives and student performance indicators. There is no evidence that the feedback is reviewed and results used to improve services. A process that ensures that feedback is reviewed and used to improve services could be utilized to impact day-to-day operations as well as long term planning.
- 6R1            S        The tutoring appears to have had a positive impact on classroom performance. Furthermore, positive responses to questions on the 2005 Counseling Survey indicated success in this area.
- 6R2            O        Other than anecdotal information and results for the Cafeteria and Print Shop, Kirtland has not collected data regarding administrative support services. The lack of results for measuring administrative support service processes may indicate that the processes, themselves, are inadequate.
- 6R3            S        Comparison of data from other institutions on the CCSSE demonstrates the College is achieving objects in a comparable level as benchmarked institutions. CCSSE data provided baseline results established that will supply trend analysis over time.
- 6I1            O        Kirtland is aware of the value of improved surveys as a means to move from anecdotal evidence to a more data-driven basis for decision making. The implementation of the Zoomerang-based student and employee satisfaction surveys which will provide the College with data-driven information about the performance of support services

## **AQIP CATEGORY 7: MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS**

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

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

***Item Critical Characteristic***

- O1d Kirtland's vision and mission reflect a commitment to providing a wide range of educational opportunities to the local community and neighboring counties of northern Michigan through open access, workforce development, and cultural enrichment.
- O7a The College identifies its major competition as the University Center in Gaylord, online college course offerings and degree programs through the Virtual Learning Collaborative, and Mid-Michigan Community College.
- O7b Kirtland divides its key measures for tracking effectiveness into Teaching and Learning, Other Distinctive objectives, and Finances.

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

<b><i>Item</i></b>	<b><i>S/O</i></b>	<b><i>Comment</i></b>
7P1	S	The process of measuring effectiveness is divided into 3 areas: (a) Teaching and Student Learning, (b) Other distinctive objectives, and (c) Financials. This division of target areas provides an organizing method of collecting data.

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| 7P2 | S  | Kirtland uses Jenzabar EX as its primary means for data collection and storage. Accessibility is determined by the staff member's position, need for the information, and responsibilities within the College.                                  |
| 7P3 | O  | Kirtland has no formal process for determining the needs and priorities for comparative information and data.   |
| 7P4 | O  | The college acknowledges that improvement of analytical processes are needed. By establishing and implementing a process for data analysis, Kirtland will be able to use information collected to better understand its level of performance.   |
| 7P6 | S  | Kirtland has insured the effectiveness of its information systems by adopting the Jenzebar computing system. The college has also updated hardware and software and provided all full-time faculty members with laptop computers.               |
| 7P7 | O  | Kirtland does not have a formal process for measuring effectiveness of data. By establishing a process for measuring effectiveness, the College will be implementing practices associated with continuous quality improvement.                  |
| 7R1 | OO | While the college acknowledges that their measurement results are "basically ad hoc," the Portfolio team recommends that addressing measurement processes and results should be made the highest priority in all future institutional planning. |
| 7I1 | O  | As quality improvement becomes more engrained in the college culture the data and analysis can provide the institution with information to assist with decision making.   |

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## **AQIP CATEGORY 8: PLANNING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

*Planning Continuous Improvement* examines your institution's planning processes and how your strategies and action plans are helping you achieve your mission and vision. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to institutional vision; planning; strategies and action

plans; coordination and alignment of strategies and action plans; measures and performance projections; resource needs; faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities; measures; analysis of performance projections and results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

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

***Item Critical Characteristic***

- O1d Kirtland's vision and mission reflect a commitment to providing a wide range of educational opportunities to the local community and neighboring counties of northern Michigan through open access, workforce development, and cultural enrichment.
- O5a Kirtland is governed by a seven-member Board of Trustees. The president assumes the position of CEO and oversees a cross-constituency team of academic and operational administrators (CAT).
- O5b Presidential leadership of the College changed in July 2007 and the Systems Portfolio reflects transition.
- O7b Kirtland divides its key measures for tracking effectiveness into Teaching and Student Learning, Other Distinctive Objectives, and Finances.
- O8 Areas of vulnerability include uncertain budgetary appropriations from the State of Michigan, the faculty/staff cultural climate, and deferred-maintenance issues.

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

<b><i>Item</i></b>	<b><i>S/O</i></b>	<b><i>Comment</i></b>
8P1-3	OO	The College is in administrative transition without a strategic plan in place. Short-range planning has been focused by department or unit. Long-range planning has been limited due to changes in senior leadership positions over the past five years. In the meantime, decisions will be based on the previous president's "management by objective"

- model. It is uncertain how the College has used the AQIP-provided Strategy Forums and Action Projects to drive either system-wide objectives or continuous improvement decision-making processes.
- 8P4 O Currently, planning is driven by the budget and done on an individual basis at various institutional levels. Developing and implementing a college-wide strategic plan will help Kirtland establish a process which will contribute to continuous quality improvement at the college.
- 8P5 O The description of how measures are selected and performance projections are set are limited to action projects. A larger focus on measures and performance projections that embrace the vision of the entire institution is needed.
- 8P6 O A more robust set of processes for appropriating resource needs will be needed for the institution to respond to needs effectively.
- 8P7 S The College reports that a large professional development budget has been defined which provides opportunities for any professional development activity needed to support the College's initiatives.
- 8P8 OO While there are some strategies in place for measuring some of the institution's goals, there does not appear to be a strategy in place for evaluating the effectiveness of the system for planning continuous improvement.
- 8R1 S Along with the completion of three AQIP projects, the College reports results for a Deferred Maintenance Assessment and for fiscal soundness. Of significance is conversion from a cost-per-credit-hour based tuition to a cost-per-contact-hour base.
- 8R2-4 O Results for other continuous improvements await development of a strategic plan. Great expectations are being placed on the new president. This provides for an opportunity for needed development in planning. Attention should be given to developing planning processes beyond those which will come from a new president.

- 811, 812      O      Development of a more comprehensive strategic plan will help the institution focus efforts and resources toward improving the planning process as well as enhance the college's ability to meet its mission and vision.

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## **AQIP CATEGORY 9: BUILDING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS**

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

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

***Item      Critical Characteristic***

- O1a      Kirtland Community College is part of the COOR Intermediate School District. Its main campus is situated in Roscommon with an additional campus at Gaylord (M-TEC).
- O1c      Kirtland Community College is a small public rural institution. The community college district, however, is the largest in Michigan totaling 2,500 square miles and serving an approximate population of 72,000.
- O1d      Kirtland's vision and mission reflect a commitment to providing a wide range of educational opportunities to the local community and neighboring counties of northern Michigan through open access, workforce development, and cultural enrichment.
- O2      The scope of educational offerings is heavily weighted to programs in applied science and certificates of completion with emphasis on workforce development and training.
- O4a      The College is an active member of the Michigan Community College Virtual Learning Collaborative which allows current Michigan community college students to take courses from member colleges. The nursing program, for example, is an online curriculum.

O7a The College identifies its major competition as The University Center in Gaylord, online college course offerings and degree programs through the Virtual Learning Collaborative, and Mid-Michigan Community College.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
9P1a	S	The College has developed multiple processes for establishing, maintaining and communicating relationships with other northern Michigan stakeholders in the College's mission. This has resulted in strong relationships with a broad array of community institutions ranging from the local secondary education school district, senior colleges in their area of the state for student transfer, other community colleges, and local business and community leaders.
9P1b	O	While it is evident that Kirtland collaborates with a variety of schools and businesses, the processes that are used to create, prioritize, and build relationships are not clear. Greater attention should be given to the processes that are at work with respect to creating, prioritizing, and building relationships so that their best practices can be identified and used.
9P2a	S	Appointment of an individual, usually an administrator, as the liaison for each collaboration or partnership helps to ensure that the needs of that relationship are addressed.
9P2b	O	Processes that identify goals and have built in measurement strategies are needed so that data can be gathered routinely and areas for improvement are identified.
9P3	O	It is not clear if more robust strategies than Target Specific Bargaining (TSB) and Target Specific Problem Solving (TSPS) are needed to create strong relationships within the institution and to assure integration and

communication across systems. There may well be other processes at work that have not been identified. Doing a relationship building audit may reveal a much stronger set of processes than have been identified. It will also allow for gaps to be identified and action projects put in place to improve integration and communication across systems.

- 9P4a      S      Kirtland uses a number of means for measuring collaborative relationships including the number of students who come from local high schools; dual-enrollment statistics; partners participating in a Service Learning project; grant money; number of students attending the institution from Michigan School of Cardiovascular Sonography (MSOCS); and through advisory committee input.
- 9P4b      O      While the measures mentioned in 9P4a have been identified to assess some relationships, a more complete list of measures for all of the collaboratives are needed along with processes that are put in place to gather the data on a regular basis.
- 9R1      O      Kirtland shows mixed results in building key collaborative relationships. Some results of the data provided are not measurable. Determining the reason for mixed results and obtaining measurable results in other areas will help the College to understand how it can use these relationships to drive continuous quality improvement at Kirtland.
- 9R2      O      Comparison data from peer institutions have not been identified, nor does there seem to be identified feed-back from the local partners by which to contrast internal College data. The institution thus has the opportunity to better understand the results of its collaborative relationship through the comparison of those results with other like institutions.
- 9I1      O      More specific attention to the communication processes identified for improvement will be needed to be able to assess and respond to needs that may exist.

- 912b            O        The process for how results are set, priorities are established, and communicated is not evident. Greater attention should be paid to the processes involved than the results desired.