Category 4 – Valuing People

4P1 – Identification of Credentials, Skills and Values Required of Employees
All personnel issues are handled through our Human Resources office. They work closely with individual administrators in formulating postings for job openings. Minimum required credentials are determined by comparing required duties and responsibilities with industry standards and associated degree expectations, in addition to federal (FLSA, funding, licensure), and state (program accreditation, funding, licensure) requirements.

Duties for faculty members are aligned with standard accepted criteria for pedagogy, the stipulations of the Master Agreement, and consideration for any new delivery methods that the college is working with, such as for online instruction.

Duties for staff are assessed against industry standards, routinely obtained by survey of like-type colleges and periodic review of standard and typical job descriptions maintained by organizations such as the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). Consideration is given to newly developing requirements. If there are new duties and responsibilities associated with the position, it is reviewed by the college’s Classification Committee. The committee uses a point-factor classification system, developed in partnership with Michigan State University School of Labor and Industrial Relations, for the purpose of fair and equal compensation for similar levels of work and responsibilities.

Administrative duties are determined and assigned by the college president.

4P2 – Hiring Processes
Kirtland Community College uses broad-based search committees, with either the participation or advice and counsel of human resource professionals. The committee reviews, selects, interviews, and recommends individuals who are deemed to possess the required credentials, skills, and values. Job postings are prepared so as to present a clear picture to the prospective applicant of what is expected for fulfillment of the position. Selection of candidates for interview is based on how closely the applicant meets the skill sets and credentials stipulated in the job description and minimum position requirements.

Interview questions are designed to solicit whether the individual actually has the knowledge claimed, and to evaluate values and behaviors. Reference-check forms rate the applicant’s knowledge of work, planning and organizing, self-reliance, sensitivity, attention to detail, work standards, initiative, stress tolerance, technical/professional self-development, analysis/judgment, commitment, teamwork, dependability, and communications, and, if included on the job description, may include questions on such dimensions as persuasiveness and decisiveness.

Official transcripts of professional staff are reviewed and confirmed with the registrar of the college where issued. If proof of licensure is required, as for certain occupational faculty under the requirements for Federal Perkins funding, a copy of the current license must be provided. Only after satisfactorily meeting the requirements of all of the above is recommendation made to the president to approve conditional hire. Acceptance of the offer to hire is followed by a criminal background check on all new employees and for professional promotions such as to full-time faculty or administrative contracts.
4P3 – Recruitment and Retention of Employees
All positions are posted on the college website, and are available to all with internet access. An email notification is sent to all employees and a paper posting is placed on the college bulletin boards so that all employees may be aware of the position opportunity, both for their own benefit, and so that employees may also serve as recruiters among professional colleagues.

The decision on what other media should be used for job postings is made in accordance with an assessment of how far it is worthwhile to drive, or whether it may be worthwhile to relocate, and a desire to inform diverse populations of position availability.

- Part-time entry level hourly positions are posted in local media, and Michigan Works! offices.
- Full-time support positions are also posted in regional media including the nearest major urban area, are sent to the placement offices of state colleges and universities, and may be posted on CollegeJobs.com.
- Professional and executive positions are further posted with newspapers in major state urban areas, in select professional/trade journals, and in the Chronicle of Higher Education.
- We have taken ads of a general nature in the National Minority Update to alert potentially interested minority candidates to visit our job posting website.

The college’s Hire Procedure is on the Kirtland website at: http://www.kirtland.edu/policies/hireprocedure.htm.

To retain employees, we seek to maintain equity in pay and benefits with regional employers and like-size Michigan community colleges, provide opportunities for professional development, career growth, and personal interest activities, and to recognize employees for actions “above and beyond” the routine requirements of their position. All employees are further encouraged to engage in the college decision-making process by participation on college committees.

Non-unionized staff have the Target Specific Problem Solving (TSPS) process to address issues that may impact staff morale. Unionized staff and faculty participate in Target Specific Bargaining (TSB) process to address non-contractual issues and to negotiate contracts. In part to foster shared identity, the college has all-staff activities and luncheons at least twice annually, at the beginning of the academic semesters, and an all-staff holiday luncheon prior to the Christmas break.

4P4 - Employee Orientation
All new employees receive an orientation including information on procedural, cultural, and value expectations. New, “regular” (other than short-term & temporary) employees are assigned a peer mentor to assist in conveying the “unwritten” expectations and mores of the organization. Components of the orientation include:

- Provision and assistance with required IRS, verification of identity and national origin forms
- Information on employee benefits, and on payroll procedures
- How to access information, such as the Employee Handbook online, where to find Policies & Procedures, and Forms Central
- Information on the job classification structure and process
• Procedures for taking vacation, sick leave, bereavement, leave without pay, and information on general attendance expectations
• Emergency and safety procedures
• Confidentiality requirements
• Mail room procedures and requirements
• ADA, Section 504, and other non-discrimination requirements
• General budget process and academic year
• General expectations of behavior towards colleagues and clientele, and procedures in the event of harassment or grievance
• General items; i.e. personal phone use, lunch and break periods, cafeteria and cafeteria cards, college vehicles, internet accounts and personal use of computers, keys, coffee and snack rooms, Bookstore, Child Care Center, and employee use of Cosmetology facilities, the college firing range, and exercise room
• Opportunity and procedures for professional development
• Employee review and evaluation
• Review and signature of the Summary of KCC Work Rules
• Employee Assistance Plan (EAP)
• AQIP and TSPS, and the employees role
• Institutional mission statement, and the role of the individual employee

Beyond the initial orientation, the college hosts a fall and winter convocation where all staff are informed of significant matters of interest to the institution. Periodic staff in-services are also provided to bring employees up to date in such matters as emergency procedures, harassment and discrimination, retirement planning, and other matters of law and personal interest.

4P5 – Planning for Changes in Personnel
Kirtland Community College has typically had a low annual turnover in staff, with failed hires of less than 10% and modest turnover to seek better positions. The college is a destination point for individuals seeking employment in a rural, outdoor setting. Employees are compensated well relative to the surrounding region. Many individuals remain until retirement.

Regular review is made of individuals eligible for retirement, but this has proven a very imperfect predictor of when individuals may actually do so. The faculty contract requires notification of intent to retire by November 1 prior to the year of actual retirement, effective the following June 30, which generally provides adequate notice to post and fill full-time faculty positions. The greatest challenge has come when a faculty member has left for other employment, generally at a 4-year college or university, which may provide for very little advance notice. In this event, the college has reapportioned affected classes to other qualified part and full-time faculty for up to an academic year until a search and selection can be made.

Supervisors of support staff are responsible for cross-training staff in the event of extended leave including Family Medical Leave or separation. The college maintains a pool of cross-trained part-time staff and “call-ins” (retirees and support staff hired and trained for the express purpose of filling in during peak times and absences) to be available for vacancies until the absent individual returns or can be replaced.

The college’s generous provisions for staff professional development assist in maintaining a pool of qualified individuals. Roughly half of all vacated positions are filled by promotion or transfer of internal candidates, creating a “ripple effect” of employee turnover, ultimately closed
by hire of an external candidate into a typically entry-level position, to begin the process of training and cross-training to potentially prepare them for succession.

4P6 – Work Processes and Activities that Contribute to Organizational Productivity and Employee Satisfaction

The college’s Point-Factor Classification Review Process for hourly and professional support staff reviews 1/3 of classified positions each year. Supervisors are ultimately responsible for the design and maintenance of effective work processes, and the routine, periodic classification process typically triggers work-process review between supervisors and their staff. Such review also typically takes place when a position become vacant, as the supervisor must justify to the administration and president of the college any request to fill a vacant position.

In 2008-2009, the College implemented a Quality Project Initiative (AQIP Action Project) which targeted the institutionalization of continuous quality improvement processes into the workplace. All employees were trained on basic quality improvement techniques such as flowcharting and the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle. Each employee was asked to identify a project that they had control over and then improve it. Projects were tracked by administrators for a year, data was collected and studied and improvements were made. Final reports were collected during the summer of 2009 and reviewed. At the completion of the Action Project, the institutionalization of the process was to incorporate into the employee evaluation process a review of what individuals have been doing to continuously improve their work processes using the PDSA cycle.

Employee satisfaction derives from being both regularly heard and individually considered in the work-flow process review. To further encourage open employee participation, the college practice is to raise the compensation grade for positions with sufficiently enhanced institutional impact under point factor analysis, but to “hold harmless” occupants of downgraded positions, so long as performance is otherwise acceptable.

4P7 – Ethical Practices of All Employees

The college takes a number to steps to recruit, inform, assist, and monitor employees to establish and maintain ethical standards and practices. During the hiring process, ethical behaviors are assessed during interview and reference checks, and background checks are performed on all new employees. Ethical practices and expectations are a part of employee orientation.

The human resource office continuously receives information on best practices in law and at other institutions, and recommends updates to policy and practice accordingly. Employees are periodically reminded in workshop and training of the need to perform ethically and all employees are encouraged to report behavior perceived as unethical. Non-unionized staff have an elected representative who can serve this function, and relay the information anonymously to human resources, should the employee not wish to communicate directly. There is an Institutional Review Board established in accordance with federal guidelines to assure that the rights of human research subjects be protected. The college’s Code of Employee Conduct, POL 5.005, at http://www.kirtland.edu/policies/pol5005.htm provides guidelines to employees on ethical conduct and decisions.

The Office of Human Resources is readily available to answer questions and provide guidance to employees unsure if an action would be considered in violation of the employee code of conduct. The small size of the institution would make it difficult for an individual to act unethically without coming to the attention of other employees, and yet the college has sufficient
staff to establish appropriate checks and balances in the handling of funds, products, and services, and undergoes a comprehensive 3rd-party audit annually, in addition to periodic state and federal program reviews.

4P8 – Determining Training Needs
Employee training needs are identified by the Office of Human Resources in accordance with general federal and state legislative and rule requirements, by supervisors in accordance with specific program requirements and individual employee skill sets, and by employees self-identifying areas in which they would value skill enhancements.

Alignment with short- and long-range organizational plans takes place in the discussion between HR (the funding source for all non-faculty), the supervisor, and the division administrator, the signatories of professional development funding authorizations. Desired professional development and training objectives are typically discussed with employees during performance evaluations, and may be mandated under conditions of “improvement required.” Employees are encouraged to take advantage of professional development opportunities by the generous availability of funds, and liberal policies which enable funding for a wide variety of professional development activities ranging from classes, both at Kirtland and from other institutions, and workshops, seminars and conferences which are not restricted to professional-level staff. Such opportunities are deemed to better position faculty, staff and administration for improving individual productivity, enhancing instructional and non-instructional programs and services, better enabling student success, and providing for smooth transition when personnel changes occur.

In the academic year of 2011-2012, the instructional division will implement a new Action Project called Design Specification for Learning which emphasizes teaching and learning techniques in an active learning environment. In addition, all faculty professional development requests will be evaluated, by a committee of peers, against established criteria that promotes better teaching and learning in classroom activities.

4P9 - Training and Developing Faculty and Staff
Kirtland provides a variety of training and professional development options, from individual training modules and on-site workshops, to funding for professional-level classes, to memberships in professional organizations, and the opportunity to attend local, regional, and national conferences.

In the past, each faculty member had an allocation of $1,000 for spending on personal professional development activities, and were able, like staff, to request additional funding from the Human Resources office for additional job-related professional development assistance. A new process for faculty to access professional development funds was described in 4P8 and will be implemented this year.

Some training is mandatory, ranging from sexual harassment for all staff, to programs like blood borne pathogens, and alignment training for select staff. The value of continuous training and personal development is reinforced through the performance evaluation process and the faculty compensation grade advancement process. Incentives are reinforced by providing paid time to participate in job-related workshops and seminars. Promotion for non-faculty may be facilitated by acquiring credentials beyond what is required for one’s current position.
4P10 – Personnel Evaluation System
The performance of each employee is important to the College’s success. The evaluation system for classified staff members is designed to facilitate alignment with institutional program objectives by meeting the following appraisal objectives:

- Encourage communication between employee and supervisor.
- Identify and document individual contributions to the goals and objectives of the college.
- Establish clear and mutually agreeable standards of performance.
- Motivate employees to improve performance.
- Ensure that all decisions affecting job status are based on job-related factors.

Administrators are requested to complete at least one performance review of the people who report to them each year. The college has a standard evaluation form used for formal evaluations which are used by supervising personnel to critique specific job characteristics. These job characteristics are: knowledge of work, planning and organizing, self-reliance, sensitivity, attention to detail, work standards, initiative, stress tolerance, technical/professional self development, analysis/judgment, commitment to the college, teamwork, dependability, and communication. Each of these job characteristics are evaluated on the employee’s ability to indirectly assist the College in meeting its objectives of helping students learn and accomplishing other distinctive objectives.

The instructional division of the College adheres to the following guidelines for performance reviews of faculty members:

**Frequency:** Each non-probationary faculty member (both full and part time) will be evaluated on their instruction every three years at a minimum. It is recommended that probationary faculty members be evaluated twice a semester for the duration of their probation.

**Method:** Full-time faculty members will have input into the method of evaluation. The members of a department, in consultation with their dean, will determine the method of evaluation for part-time instructors within that department. Currently, Kirtland uses a variety of evaluation methods: classroom visits, Small-Group-Instructional-Diagnosis (SGID), standard student evaluations, and customized evaluation forms. Other methods should continually be investigated.

**Scope:** In recognition that teaching is the foundation and primary focus of faculty members at the community college level and other instructional related activities are necessary for an instructor to perform his/her job professionally, any evaluation must include these related activities as stated in the faculty master agreement (Article X – A).

It is also recognized that non-instructional contributions are vital to the success of the institution, may or may not be needed to support direct instruction, are often discipline specific, and can be shared among the faculty members. Specific duties will be assigned on a fair and equitable basis by administration following consideration of the college’s needs along with the strengths and interest of each faculty member. It is expected that all faculty members will assist the college to meet these needs as described in the faculty master agreement (Article X- B). A thorough evaluation should also include these activities where appropriate.
During the performance review process, a faculty member meets with his or her instructional dean to view the information that has been collected and assessed. A plan of action is jointly determined and both parties are required to sign-off on the performance review. The evaluation of faculty members aligns with sections 1P11 in determining and documenting effective teaching and learning.

The president typically utilizes a similar process and format to the one used for classified staff for administrators. The president reviews, with each administrator, his/her accomplishments as outlined in the Operation Plan and Administrative Objective as described in Category #8. Occasionally, a 360 review, including staff, colleagues, and members of the Board of Trustees in the appraisal team has been used for administrative staff.

4P11 – Employee Recognition, Reward, Compensation and Benefit Systems
Recognition, reward, and compensation systems have focused primarily on building skill, knowledge, and expertise by encouraging longevity and reducing employee turnover. It may be stated employee turnover at Kirtland Community College has been low. Pins for years of service are distributed at the all-staff winter convocation luncheon, and all regular employee groups have longevity payments for years of service beyond the length of the standard salary schedules, which is, itself, a reward system.

A new initiative started by two staff members, in the spirit of continuous quality improvement is called “Celebrating Champions.” This project is a means for Kirtland employees to recognize co-workers for a job well-done, for going above and beyond regular job responsibilities. The first two “KCC Champions” were recognized and rewarded for the winter semester 2011. These employees went above their usual job duties to provide outstanding service to all aspects of the college. Nomination forms are available on the college’s website. New champions are recognized every semester.

Benefits are greatest for employees who achieve full-time status, and additional rewards for long-serving employees include a sick-time payout for those who have been judicious over time in the utilization of that benefit. Employees are allowed flexibility in work hours, where appropriate, and early dismissal (with pay) before holiday weekends.

4P12 – Motivation Issues
Kirtland has long practiced an open door administration, whereby any employee may see any administrator and air concerns. Administrative staff may then meet formally or informally for the resolution of employee issues. More formal mechanisms include regular meetings under the auspices of Target-Specific Bargaining (TSB - unionized employees) and Target-Specific Problem Solving (TSPS - non-unionized staff) to review and discuss problems submitted by employees, form data-gathering teams, bring information back to the TSB and TSPS Teams, and take recommendations for resolution to the College Administration Team (CAT).

Periodically, the college queries staff on employee satisfaction, opinion, and matters of concern (3R4). The information is compiled and provided to the CAT for review, discussion, and action as deemed appropriate.

Informally, departments conduct weekly and monthly meetings with their administrators. Issues at a departmental level are handled in those meetings.
4P13 – Employee Satisfaction, Health, Safety and Well-being

Kirtland has very active Wellness, Safety, and Security committees with broad employee representation on each. They are charged with monitoring, evaluating, and making recommendations concerning employee health, safety, and well-being. There is also a Benefits Committee, charged primarily with evaluating and making recommendations concerning Medical Care Plan design and the plan carrier.

The Wellness Committee is active in promoting weight reduction (Weight Watcher’s at Work) and physical activity programs, works with food service staff to promote healthy eating choices, actively promotes tobacco cessation and drug and alcohol abuse awareness, sponsors employee flu vaccinations, and sponsors an annual Health Fair for students and employees. The committee was involved in the selection of a professional wellness provider to perform health risk assessments. The wellness provider coaches the committee in meeting its goals. The college is well aware that employee recruitment, well-being, on-the-job time utilization and productivity, morale, retention, and the controlling of soaring health care costs are all intrinsically related to employee wellness.

The Safety Committee is primarily focused on matters of occupational safety, such as slip, trip, and fall, meeting all OSHA and MIOSHA standards, emergency egress, ADA physical requirements, safety awareness, and safety training. Safety training, such as Hazard Communications, Respirator, Enclosed Space, Blood borne Pathogens, Emergency Life-Saving Procedures, and others as required by OSHA and other regulatory agencies is provided to all appropriate staff by OSHA trainers, certified in-house experts, exchange programs with other employers, and via computer modules, coordinated and provided by Human Resources. This committee also provides oversight for the tracking and safe disposal of hazardous chemical waste and assures compliance with regulations such as hazardous materials disposal, Right to Know, etc. The Director of Facilities performs regular inspections of campus buildings and environs, arranges for mitigating or eliminating potential physical injury hazards or barriers to passage, and reports progress and concerns to the committee for possible action at the CAT, if necessary.

The Security Committee is involved with campus public safety and emergency procedures and has prepared and periodically updates the college emergency preparedness plan and the pandemic disease response plan. The committee has initiated annual workshops for students and employees on stalking, assault, and rape prevention awareness. The committee works closely with area county Emergency Services offices to coordinate responses in the event of a broad-based emergency and coordinates with the Red Cross as an evacuation point. Periodic testing and drills, both tabletop and campus-wide physical exercises, including the involvement of state and regional emergency service professionals, have been undertaken and are being planned. There is a trained, professional Behavioral Intervention Team in place to evaluate and respond to reports of threatening statements or behaviors. A campus Public Safety office staffed with certified professional police officers and backed up by certified professional officers instructing in the college’s Law Enforcement Programs is in place to protect students, employees, and visitors to the campus, as well as assist in local emergencies as necessary.

Employee satisfaction with workplace health and safety has been and will be queried in periodic employee surveys. The relative success of the various programs can be accessed by the college’s low incidence of injuries, workman’s comp claims, and absence of incidents required to be filed in the college’s Campus Crimes Report.
4R1 – Measurements of Valuing People
The college has, periodically, collected data on employee satisfaction, turnover rates, health and safety, and wellness metrics, and has regularly collected data on comparable pay and benefits. In 2008, the Institutional Research department developed an Employee Satisfaction Survey, which was administered to 155 employees. In 2010 and 2011, the Employee Satisfaction Survey was replaced by the national Chronicle of Higher Education’s Great Place to Work For survey.

As staff interviewed wellness providers, they were interested in the experience and ability to assist the wellness committee in gathering baseline data on employee participation, aggregate biometric data, and long-term claims analysis. Staff have become aware that it is not only necessary to collect data on a perceived as-needed basis, but to systematically collect data to establish baselines and more accurately identify and assess trends.

4R2 – Performance Results of Valuing People
Employee retention has been consistently high, with turnover largely the result of retirement.

Overall, employee satisfaction as expressed in periodic surveys, has been considered positive, with typically fewer than 5% indicating a dissatisfied overall outlook. The results from recent Great Places to Work For surveys are synthesized in 3R6 and the website at http://www.kirtland.edu/about/institutional.htm.

The college has a safe and secure environment as reflected in low injury and almost nonexistent crime rates.

4R3 – Evidence of Productivity and Effectiveness through Employees Helping Achieve Institutional Goals
Employee performance evaluations are predominantly positive. There is a high degree of promotion from within. And, the primary reason for exit from employment is retirement.

The evidence that the afore mentioned staff evaluation process is not simply ingrown is attested to by the fact that an exception to internal promotion has been to the presidency, and Kirtland presidents, coming from other educational backgrounds, have been generally satisfied with the productivity and effectiveness of faculty, staff, and administrators.

Kirtland faculty, staff, and administrators have been active in their respective professional associations, both enhancing their professional skills and knowledge. A number of employees have been elected to leadership roles within their associations which reflect the respect and recognition of their professionalism and abilities by their peers at other colleges.

4R4 – Comparison of Results with Other Institutions
Kirtland has systematically compared compensation and benefits to other like-type colleges and such comparables as area K-12 school systems, hospitals, local units of government, and major regional employers like Weyerhaeuser and Lear Corporation. These comparisons indicate that entry-level hourly employees are generally well compensated relative to comparables, with the relative comparison falling such that support professionals are somewhat less well compensated, but the benefit packages are superior, and certain elements of the regional cost-of-living index, notably housing, are relatively modest.

3R6 provides comparison information of Kirtland’s employee satisfaction to other colleges in the Great Place to Work For survey results.
Discussions have been initiated within the Michigan Community College Human Resource Association (MCCHRA) concerning the establishment of common metrics for collection other than the standard comparisons of pay and benefits. And, agreement has been reached on the calculation of employee turnover, although implementation and collection of data has only just begun. Other data has only recently begun to be collected, and common standards of meaning are as yet not fully established.

4I1 – Recent Improvements
In September 2008, the college held a strategic planning summit including employees, work-studies, and members of the board of trustees. It was their mission to discuss and gather consensus on our joint mission, vision, values, goals, and strategic direction. In 2009, the college administration developed a detailed strategic plan with objective measures of success for the first time. We are initiating procedures to more systematically collect data, and to analyze data being collected, on employee satisfaction, health, and wellness. The implementation of the Great Colleges to Work For is just one example.

4I2 – Selection of Specific Processes to Improve
The college has a long history of broad employee participation in goal-setting and decision-making, with Target-Specific Bargaining and Target-Specific Problem Solving being initiated in the early 1990’s. Employees at all levels participate in the hiring process, the development of policy and procedure, problem resolution, goal-setting, and more recently in the development of the college’s strategic direction. Employees are encouraged and have been in-serviced in “plan, do, study, act,” and in participation in AQIP Action Projects, so they are attuned to the requirements for developing, assessing, and improving processes for improved performance results.