



February 21, 2012

Thomas John Quinn
President
Kirtland Community College
10775 North St. Helen Road
Roscommon, MI 48653

Dear President Quinn:

Enclosed is a copy of Kirtland Community College's *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*. It begins with a concise Executive Summary, intended for those general readers that do not require a high level of detail. Your Systems Appraisal Team of quality experts provided extensive detail in the full report by identifying nine distinct groups of what they view as your institution's *strengths* and *opportunities for improvement*, one group for each of the nine AQIP Categories. We are also emailing your institution's AQIP Liaison a copy of this full *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*.

To receive maximum benefit from your Systems Appraisal, you and your colleagues should plan to invest substantial time in discussing it, considering the team's observations and advice, and identifying which actions will best advance your institution. The enclosed *After Your Appraisal* details what lies ahead and how to use your Feedback Report most effectively, and explains when and how to register for your next Strategy Forum.

To comply with federal requirements, we need the CEO of the institution formally to acknowledge receipt of this report within the next two weeks, and to provide us with any comments you wish to make about it. Please read the enclosed *After Your Appraisal* suggestions *before* you decide how to respond. Limit your acknowledgement and comments to a maximum of two typewritten pages, and understand that your response will become part of your institution's permanent HLC file, to be shared with future peer reviewers who review your institution (including the next Systems Appraisal team, the next Quality Checkup visit team, and the next Reaffirmation of Accreditation panel). Email your response to AQIP@hlcommission.org; call me or Mary Green (at 800-621-7440 x130) if you have any questions about it.

We know you will gain real value from the Systems Appraisal Feedback and the activities it will stimulate within your institution, and we are proud to be working with you as you continue along the never-ending path to improvement.

Sincerely,

Stephen D. Spanghel
Vice President

SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

KIRTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

February 21,2012



**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.

Category One: Helping Students Learn

- KCC has begun to develop a culture of assessment in relation to Helping Students Learn with processes in place to assess student learning. KCC has actively involved faculty in the development of the assessment processes and in the selection of core competencies. Further the results of assessment are shared publically on the institutional website with at least one general education outcome assessed a year. There is an opportunity for KCC to set targets for improvement and to evaluate the effectiveness of the current processes and approaches as well as to integrate support for additional groups or populations of students served.

Category Two: Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives

- KCC has outlined specific other distinctive objectives and has begun to gather data on several of them. In addition, KCC serves the community by providing opportunities and activities that would not otherwise be available. KCC has embraced the concept of Service Learning with a nationally recognized program, and has made it an integral part of the curriculum, ensuring that the students from KCC are embedded in the communities and agencies that KCC serves. However, several of the processes are informal and ad hoc, and several of the other distinctive objectives lack results and benchmarking as well as processes to identify the needs of constituents. Opportunities to further refine and develop the processes and measurements used to determine the effectiveness of other distinctive objectives exist, as well as to use the results to improve. KCC may decide to utilize the AQIP action project mentioned in the portfolio to address some of these opportunities.

Category Three: Understanding Student's and Other Stakeholders' Needs

- KCC is striving to foster and create a "culture of assessment"; however, although the college collects a great deal of data, there is little evidence the college routinely reviews, analyzes, communicates and plans for improvement based on the results. KCC has an

opportunity to connect the analysis of performance results with planning processes and implementation of process improvements. Further developing a systematic process for the communication and participation of employees from different levels and functional areas of the organization may be beneficial in improving relations with students and other stakeholders, as well as ensuring greater participation and understanding of the changes required under current financial constraints.

Category Four: Valuing People

- KCC is developing its measurement system of Valuing People and it is evident there are many devoted and committed employees and administrators who are working diligently to move the institution forward. However, many of KCC's processes are not formalized nor aligned with the organization's goals. There is an opportunity to set targets for improvement tied to strategic planning processes and address the issues raised by the results of the *Great Places to Work For Survey* as well as other comparative data. As KCC faces continued financial constraints, it may be beneficial to expand and formalize employee recognition systems such as the "Celebrating Champions" initiative to recognize those who are doing more with less. Furthermore, as employee morale has been strained according to recent employee surveys, it may be beneficial to review processes for communicating with employees, as well as reviewing structures for decision-making and training, to better ensure employees are informed, understand the necessity of change and create greater "buy in" from employees as the organization continues to operate with a significant amount of change and fiscal uncertainty.

Category Five: Leading and Communicating

- KCC has developed some strategic and operational planning and budgeting processes, but it is not evident that the processes are systematic and comprehensive. KCC has an opportunity to build on its many improvement efforts by regularly collecting and analyzing data and implementing improvement efforts. KCC's president is working to create a culture which distributes decision-making and promotes team collaboration and use of data. Enhanced communication may help KCC to determine how to address the results of the *Great Place to Work For Survey*. An additional opportunity is in the leadership succession planning which may be strengthened by further refining the selection of potential leaders for essential positions and by creating training and

development plans aligned with the responsibilities of key positions and the development needs.

Category Six: Supporting Institutional Operations

- KCC is developing a broad range of formal and informal measures and methods to identify the support needs of its stakeholders. In relation to supporting student learner needs, KCC has begun to implement the underlying processes that tie analysis of performance results to the identification of priority areas for improvement and the implementation of action plans to address these areas of concern. KCC has an opportunity to systematically apply a similar process across all administrative and organizational support services. For example, in addressing the issues of deferred maintenance and compliance with environmental regulations, KCC may benefit from setting similar targets for improvement and action plans to address issues that KCC has identified as critically important to the organization. Continuing to improve the connection between the assessment, planning and budgeting processes in relation to supporting institutional operations will help facilitate continued improvement in this area.

Category Seven: Measuring Effectiveness

- KCC recognizes the importance of information by adopting the guiding principle of consistent use of appropriate data in all decision-making. The college has identified several measures of effectiveness and collected performance data on many, including selection of comparative data. The work of the Institutional Research department has improved data collection and increased access to information for the college community. KCC has an opportunity to further measurement efforts by increasing understanding and analysis of the results to create strategies to improve institutional effectiveness. Of particular note for category seven is that the portfolio does not include responses for items 7R3 or 7I1-7I2. As such, there are no reviewer comments for those items.

Category Eight: Planning Continuous Improvement

- KCC has implemented planning processes but has yet to measure the effectiveness of those processes or outline performance results, targets, and comparative data related to

Planning Continuous Improvement. KCC has an opportunity to develop systems and processes for data gathering, analysis, and evaluation of results to guide its planning and decision-making processes. Further, there is an opportunity to engage the entire institution in selecting processes and targets for improvement. KCC may benefit from a planning cycle that clearly defines the timing of involvement of its constituents at different levels in the planning process. An additional opportunity is the assessment of risks and their consideration in developing future plans and goals in relation to the current environment of competitors for online education, declining revenues, increasing costs, decreasing enrollments and lower employee morale.

Category Nine: Building Collaborative Relationships

- KCC is invested in local community and businesses due to the rural nature of the institution. However, there are several opportunities to add formality to the processes employed in creating, prioritizing, and building relationships with the multiple groups discussed in the portfolio. Better measures on relationships and effectiveness of internal collaborations, as well as comparative data and performance targets could enhance planning and improvement efforts. In the current economic condition, the college may want to think about partnerships that can bring something to it. For example, are there 4-yr institutions that would be open to expanded transfer opportunities or joint programming? In the Service Learning Program and internship programs, are there local businesses and organizations that could provide donations or in-kind services? KCC has an opportunity to identify partnerships with mutual benefit and prioritize its efforts in that regard.

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.

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 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 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.

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 institution's systems and processes 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:

- Closing the Loop: KCC appears reactive in its quality initiatives as opposed to utilizing systematic processes of feedback to determine future direction and priorities. Further integration and analysis, whether of results, institutional goals, or even embedding the strategic plan throughout the institution, will allow the institution to move from gathering data to using the data to improve processes and results. Moving towards taking results and closing the loop or moving to action, supported by commitment from administration

and faculty alike, will allow KCC to move beyond responding solely to accreditation demands and instead will allow the institution to be responsive to identified needs and priorities as they emerge and shift over time.

- Improving Processes and Results: KCC outlines several ad hoc and systematic processes throughout the portfolio related to its operational processes, but lacks formal systems and processes for gathering systematic feedback on the effectiveness of those processes. Further, the institution has yet to analyze the collected data and integrate the results into setting targets for improvement, outlining performance results, or discussing comparative data. Without processes to analyze performance results and set targets to improve, KCC will be unable to validate if it is being effective, supporting institutional goals and objectives, or continuously improving as an institution.

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

OV1a Kirtland Community College (KCC) is a public, not-for-profit, rural community college which serves the largest geographic community college district in Michigan. It includes a main campus located in Roscommon, MI with two off-campus sites. The average commute for students is 56 miles round trip. Further, KCC's service area is economically disadvantaged and underserved with 20.4% of families below poverty level.

- OV1b KCC has a comprehensive community college mission and an average enrollment of 2,200 with the largest enrollments in health career, transfer programs and general interest. The College is supported by seven major educational services: eLEarning, eService, Tutoring, Library, Testing Center, Student Support Services, and Counseling and Career Services.
- OV2 KCC's collaboration with the local ISD (COOR) provides local school districts with facilities and support for career education opportunities and the Center for the Performing Arts and Youth Theater provide cultural enrichment to its service area. In addition, the Workforce Development program serves area businesses and industry to promote economic development.
- OV3a Students at KCC are defined by individual academic goals and not by area of academic study. The seven academic goal areas are: Degree Seeking Transfer, Degree Seeking Career Technical, Certificate Seeking Career Technical, Special Interest, Community Education, Workforce Development, and Dual Enrollment.
- OV3b The College received a Title III grant to increase online courses and program quality to grow online programs. Area private colleges, Mid-Michigan Community College as well as online education offerings from outside providers such as the University Center (UC) in Gaylord are primary competitors to KCC.
- OV4 KCC has a unionized full-time faculty of 38, and partially unionized full-time staff of 64. Part-time employees account for 61% of the total number of employed. KCC reports it has a very low turnover rate other than retirements.
- OV5 KCC is governed by a seven member board and the President serves as CEO and leads the Executive Council and College Administrative team (CAT). In addition, KCC has seven major standing committees that have direct influence and impact on institutional strategic and operational decision-making.
- OV6a KCC has consistently invested in and deployed technologies to support its mission which is evidenced in its top ten ranking in the American Association of Community College's Digital Community College Survey in 2005, 2007, 2008 and 2010.
- OV6b KCC continues to be confronted with deferred maintenance issues with aging facilities and compliance with new environmental regulations which poses a financial challenge.

- OV7a Consistent use of appropriate data in all decision-making is a stated guiding principle of KCC. Further, the primary driver for institutional data collection and analysis is the College's strategic plan.
- OV7b KCC utilizes a centralized administrative/student information system and several other parallel systems to collect, analyze, and report data and information. The Office of Institutional Research provides leadership and oversight for a de-centralized approach for collection of data, reporting and data integrity.
- OV8a KCC's three main revenue sources of the college are declining: state appropriations, property taxes and student enrollment. At the same time, major expenses such as health care and contributions to pension funds have increased.
- OV8b The College has increased a focus on enrolling both traditional high school graduates and older students seeking retraining or skill enhancement as a primary means to offset the financial challenge in the current economic conditions of the State and local area.
- OV9a KCC has strong strategic partnerships with local area high schools and the COOR Intermediate School District. The COOR ISD Career Technical Education Center is located on the KCC campus and provides both career exploration courses and opportunities for college-level courses.
- OV9b KCC is an active member in the Michigan Community College Virtual Learning Collaborative (MCCVLC) which is designed to allow current Michigan community college students to take courses from other member colleges while still receiving support services at a convenient "home" college.

CATEGORY FEEDBACK

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

your thoughtful consideration. Comments marked SS or OO may need immediate attention, either to ensure the institution preserves and maximizes the value of its greatest strengths, or to devote immediate attention to its greatest opportunities for improvement.

AQIP CATEGORY 1: HELPING STUDENTS LEARN

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

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of [Institution] 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

OV1a Kirtland Community College (KCC) is a public, not-for-profit, rural community college which serves the largest geographic community college district in Michigan. It includes a main campus located in Roscommon, MI with two off-campus sites. The average commute for students is 56 miles round trip. Further, KCC's service area is economically disadvantaged and underserved with 20.4% of families below poverty level.

OV1b KCC has a comprehensive community college mission and an average enrollment of 2,200 with the largest enrollments in health career, transfer programs and general interest. The College is supported by seven major educational services: eLearning, eService, Tutoring, Library, Testing Center, Student Support Services, and Counseling and Career Services.

- OV2 KCC's collaboration with the local ISD (COOR) provides local school districts with facilities and support for career education opportunities and the Center for the Performing Arts and Youth Theater provide cultural enrichment to its service area. In addition, the Workforce Development program serves area businesses and industry to promote economic development.
- OV3a Students at KCC are defined by individual academic goals and not by area of academic study. The seven academic goal areas are: Degree Seeking Transfer, Degree Seeking Career Technical, Certificate Seeking Career Technical, Special Interest, Community Education, Workforce Development, and Dual Enrollment.
- OV3b The College received a Title III grant to increase online courses and program quality to grow online programs. Area private colleges, Mid-Michigan Community College as well as online education offerings from outside providers such as the University Center (UC) in Gaylord are primary competitors to KCC.
- OV6a KCC has consistently invested in and deployed technologies to support its mission which is evidenced in its top ten ranking in the American Association of Community College's Digital Community College Survey in 2005, 2007, 2008 and 2010.
- OV8b The College has increased a focus on enrolling both traditional high school graduates and older students seeking retraining or skill enhancement as a primary means to offset the financial challenge in the current economic conditions of the State and local area.
- OV9a KCC has strong strategic partnerships with local area high schools and the COOR Intermediate School District. The COOR ISD Career Technical Education Center is located on the KCC campus and provides both career exploration courses and opportunities for college-level courses.
- OV9b KCC is an active member in the Michigan Community College Virtual Learning Collaborative (MCCVLC) which is designed to allow current Michigan community college students to take courses from other member colleges while still receiving support services at a convenient "home" 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 1, Helping Students Learn.

Item	S/O	Comment
1P1	S	KCC's common core competencies were developed by the faculty, reviewed and modified by the Instructional Council, and approved by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee. The college is currently in the process of reviewing the objectives as part of an Action Project.
1P2	S	KCC assesses a different learning objective each year with the results reported to the Dean of Instruction. The College has identified specific objectives in career and technical programs that correspond to licensure and certification exams.
1P3	S	KCC has a systematic process for collecting information from various stakeholders in documenting the need for new programs and courses.
1P4a	S	KCC relies on advisory committee members to provide valuable input on the needs of industry and the employment opportunities for students. The process is embedded in the workforce development area which provides environmental scans of local employment needs.
1P4b	O	There is an opportunity to assess the effectiveness of this process which will be critical to the success of responding to student academic programming needs.
1P5	S	KCC determines preparation requirements for courses and programs using a systematic process for detecting and addressing discrepancies between the necessary skill sets and the actual preparation of students and their different learning styles.
1P6	S	KCC uses a variety of approaches to inform students about expectations for learning including publications, mandatory orientation, advising, and program-specific information both in class and through the website.
1P7	S	KCC has a clear process to facilitate appropriate selection of programs of study for students, including career planning workshops and survey courses for each major. These are in addition to College literature, support services, orientations, clubs, and exam placements.

- 1P8 O Underprepared students are identified through initial testing and relevant assessments which help to place students into appropriate courses based on the results. However, it is unclear if KCC provides any additional support beyond developmental courses for students who are underprepared for academic programs. Further, KCC has an opportunity to investigate the range of academic needs of its students, such as academic alert systems or other interventions, to support student success.
- 1P9 O Although KCC provides professional development opportunities for its faculty in relation to different learning styles, it is unclear how teaching and learning are in turn impacted.
- 1P10 O KCC outlines meeting the needs of students with special needs as defined in the Perkins Grant and students that may require tutoring; it is unclear if these groups address the full array of sub-groups of students with special needs including the large populations of commuter students.
- 1P11a S KCC describes various operations to promote effective teaching and learning using newly implemented active learning classrooms.
- 1P11b O KCC initiates many activities to create incentives for effective teaching. However, the portfolio does not indicate that there is a process in place for defining, documenting, and communicating the College's expectations for effective teaching and learning.
- 1P12 S Faced with the challenge of a rural service area with a small population base, KCC has developed a process to ensure courses are delivered in as timely and efficient manner as possible. Proactive course scheduling and alternative delivery methods are essential components of this process.
- 1P13a S KCC has processes in place to ensure that its programming is up-to-date and effective including reviewing data and developing action plans.

1P13b	O	KCC has the opportunity to develop a comprehensive assessment plan that ties the various processes together along with the PROE program review process and the institutional annual program review process.
1P14	S	Processes are in place for curriculum review, modification and elimination that incorporates feedback from various stakeholders. The decision to change or discontinue a program is determined by conducting cost-benefit analysis utilizing five-year trend data.
1P15	S	KCC has well established processes to determine and address the learning support needs of both students and faculty.
1P16	S	KCC has a nationally recognized Service Learning program and has an honors program to meet the needs of high academic students.
1P17	S	Program outcomes are defined for all programs and are assessed annually to determine if students are meeting the learning outcomes for particular degrees.
1P18	O	The essential elements of an effective student assessment design are in place. However, the establishment of consistent program specific and general education learning outcome assessments that allow for benchmarking over time may help strengthen the continuous improvement process.
1R1	SS	KCC analyzes at least one general education outcome each year with the results compared to state averages. The college also collect data on the Perkins Core Indicators and compare the outcomes to statewide data. In addition, KCC uses licensure/credentialing exams to show how well students are progressing in their chosen programs.
1R2a	S	KCC publishes its performance results on its assessment webpages.
1R2b	O	Significant progress has been made over the past three years in the assessment of common learning outcomes with improvements noted in several areas. Consistent documentation of results across all assessments, similar to what was collected and analyzed in the math courses, may provide clearer benchmarking for improvement.

- 1R3 O Results in 5 out of 6 programs of student requiring licensure showed improvement in 2009-2010 vs. 2008-2009. Where data is available, benchmarking pass rates against national pass rates or pass rates of students at comparative institutions as well as quantitative results that can be tracked over time may further support continued improvement.
- 1R4 O The state-wide P-20 initiative is beginning to provide data on performance of transfer students. KCC has a plan for further analysis of data to understand how transfer students are performing.
- 1R5 O KCC relies on CCSSE data to determine student satisfaction with services, but does not address plans for improvement in the areas in which students report the lowest levels of engagement. KCC might consider developing internal surveys for each area of student support services to better pinpoint where opportunities for improvement might lie.
- 1R6a S KCC presents statewide comparison data on the Perkins Core Indicators, showing that KCC exceeds state and expected data in many categories.
- 1R6b O KCC has an opportunity to conduct trend analysis as well as acquire comparable data through the previously mentioned P-20 initiative to help with the lack of comparative data currently available.
- 1I1 O KCC has done much in regards to developing student learning outcomes assessment processes. Formalizing assessments for program specific learning outcomes that provide results that can be compared over time may help increase the effectiveness of continuous improvement in this area.
- 1I2 O The “Design Specification for Learning” action project appears to be aligned with areas in need of improvement based upon CCSSE results. However, it is not clear how the College selects targets for the project. KCC has an opportunity to define and implement processes that involve more staff and faculty within the institution to strengthen its culture of improvement.

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

- OV1a Kirtland Community College (KCC) is a public, not-for-profit, rural community college which serves the largest geographic community college district in Michigan. It includes a main campus located in Roscommon, MI with two off-campus sites. The average commute for students is 56 miles round trip. Further, KCC's service area is economically disadvantaged and underserved with 20.4% of families below poverty level.
- OV2 KCC's collaboration with the local ISD (COOR) provides local school districts with facilities and support for career education opportunities and the Center for the Performing Arts and Youth Theater provide cultural enrichment to its service area. In addition, the Workforce Development program serves area businesses and industry to promote economic development.
- OV9a KCC has strong strategic partnerships with local area high schools and the COOR Intermediate School District. The COOR ISD Career Technical Education Center is located on the KCC campus and provides both career exploration courses and opportunities for college-level courses.

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.

Item	S/O	Comment
2P1	S	KCC has developed and designed strong collaborative programs with Workforce/Economic Development, the local Intermediate School District (COOR ISD), the Kirtland Center for Performing Arts and led the establishment of the Criminal Justice Training Consortium. In addition the college has established a process for incorporating Service Learning into the curriculum.
2P2	O	Kirtland's Local Education Authority (LEA) Outreach initiative provides a proactive means to expand and strengthen relations with regional school districts. However, KCC may benefit from developing a more intentional and comprehensive process for identifying other distinctive objectives which could create growth opportunities for the institution.
2P3	O	KCC may benefit from developing a more systematic means of communicating other distinctive objectives using clear processes, goals, responsible parties and reporting mechanisms. In addition, it is unclear how the budget process communicates other distinctive objectives.
2P4	O	While KCC has stated some measures and means to assess the value of the non-distinctive objectives to the college, there is benefit in more in-depth development of these measures. It also might be helpful to develop measures to more fully assess the value to employers, secondary students and districts, and the community.
2P5	S	KCC has designated directors and coordinators for each of the non-instructional objectives. This structure was designed to provide oversight and accountability for each project.
2P6	O	While it is clear that there are many activities and outreaches that KCC does quite well, it is not clear the extent to which they constitute reaching the entire campus. Further development of formal processes and venues to assess faculty and staff needs may be beneficial.
2R1	S	KCC has developed a set of assessment measures and metrics for its various non-learning objectives. The data is collected and analyzed

- against these metrics. Feedback loops have been developed to incorporate the data into the decision-making process.
- 2R2 O In evaluating the efficacy and performance of non-instructional objectives, the College might consider stressing quality over quantity in its programming, particularly with respect to workforce development programming. While KCC collects satisfaction data from training participants, there may be benefit to also gather information from employers to validate successful application of training on the job or to identify any potential gaps.
- 2R3 OO As mentioned in the response to the previous system portfolio, KCC could benchmark with peers or develop peer comparisons to address the opportunity to compare results with other institutions.
- 2R4 S KCC has strengthened its relationship with other constituents in its service area through its Workforce Development, Service Learning and Criminal Justice Training Collaborations.
- 2I1 S Kirtland's Service Learning program has established clear objectives it would like to accomplish over the next two years based upon review of performance results. Furthermore, KCPA has made adjustments to its offerings based upon recent feedback. The Workforce Development initiative is expanding its needs analysis assessment for training.
- 2I2 O KCC has an opportunity to develop more formal processes to determine other distinctive objectives as well as to determine if it is effective in meeting those objectives. Further, KCC could benefit from more clearly defining how its culture and organizational structure align to select processes to improve and establish targets for performance results in the area of other distinctive objectives.

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

OV1a Kirtland Community College (KCC) is a public, not-for-profit, rural community college which serves the largest geographic community college district in Michigan. It includes a main campus located in Roscommon, MI with two off-campus sites. The average commute for students is 56 miles round trip. Further, KCC's service area is economically disadvantaged and underserved with 20.4% of families below poverty level.

OV3a Students at KCC are defined by individual academic goals and not by area of academic study. The seven academic goal areas are: Degree Seeking Transfer, Degree Seeking Career Technical, Certificate Seeking Career Technical, Special Interest, Community Education, Workforce Development, and Dual Enrollment.

OV3b The College received a Title III grant to increase online courses and program quality to grow online programs. Area private colleges, Mid-Michigan Community College as well as online education offerings from outside providers such as the University Center (UC) in Gaylord are primary competitors to KCC.

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.

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
3P1	SS	KCC uses a variety of formal and informal processes and assessment measures to identify student needs. These have included national

- standardized assessments such as CCSSE as well as end of course surveys and other internally developed measures.
- 3P2 S KCC utilizes a variety of approaches to building and maintaining relationships with students. This includes hosting events to build relationships and a sense of community among its students. In addition, the college uses multiple communication channels to reach its students - many of whom must travel a significant distance to attend classes - such as social networking, academic advising, and postings.
- 3P3 O KCC has an opportunity to develop more formal processes for analyzing the changing needs of its key stakeholders as well as determining the process for selecting courses of action to respond to student needs. While KCC has a systematic process for identifying stakeholder needs, it is unclear the mechanisms by which these communicated needs result in systematic changes. A more formalized process between needs identification and action to correct and improve may help ensure greater alignment with the College's mission and goals.
- 3P4 O While KCC clearly encourages building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders by sharing relevant information, quality responsive service, and promoting involvement with the college, it is not evident a systematic process exists to build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders or indicate how effective these methods are in leading to tangible results. The current Local Educational Authority Outreach action project may provide the template of a more formal relationship management and development process that may prove useful in maintaining and improving relationships with other key stakeholders.
- 3P5 O Although KCC effectively leverages faculty, staff, and administration participation on community boards and committees to help identify new student and stakeholder groups that may be served by the institution, KCC has an opportunity to further identify new markets for its offerings and services through the implementation of a more formalized process,

- including formal external environmental scanning processes and data analysis, to identify and quantify the potential of additional opportunities.
- 3P6 S KCC has an intentional, institution-wide system for soliciting, processing and resolving both academic and non-academic complaints that is clearly stated in the student handbook and college catalog. KCC's internal communication process of required posting of all committee meeting agendas and minutes is a process that is transparent in ensuring all constituents are well informed.
- 3R1 S KCC utilizes a variety of standardized national, state and institutional surveys administered to students and other key stakeholders to aid the institution in assessing its programs.
- 3R2 O While KCC uses end of course evaluations and the PROE surveys to measure performance results for student satisfaction, KCC may get a clearer picture of overall student satisfaction by analyzing performance results for student satisfaction from the other student survey tools indicated in Table 3a.
- 3R3 S The results of the Annual Student Survey and the CCSSE indicate that KCC is responsive, and in many cases proactive, in building and more effectively developing relationships with its students.
- 3R4 O While KCC has a regular set of surveys it administers to collect satisfaction data from employees and advisory committee members, performance results from the 2010 and 2011 Chronicle of Higher Education-*Great Colleges to Work For Survey*, related to satisfaction among employees, indicate that there are several areas below benchmarks with other institutions which KCC has identified, need to improve. As indicated in the report, the financial constraints the college is under may require increased focus on employee morale and stronger communication and dialogue of required changes.
- 3R5 O KCC's economic impact study and successful passage of millage requests are previous positive indicators of the value the college brings to the community it serves. However, a more regularized and systematic

process for the collection and analysis of timely and relevant data and information from its various external stakeholders may be beneficial in ensuring that the college is continuing to strengthen and improve its relationships with these constituents.

- 3R6 O KCC has been proactive in assessing its relationship with its employees through the administration of the Chronicle of Higher Education's *Great Colleges to Work For Survey*. However, the college is challenged with financial constraints which are not atypical of the current environment that many higher education institutions face. As a result, performance results in relationships with employees have diminished from 2010 to 2011 in many areas and are below benchmarked standards with other institutions. The development of formal strategies to improve employee morale that recognizes those who are doing more with less, as well as communicating required changes to employees to help facilitate a deeper understanding of the need for these changes, may be beneficial to the college.
- 3I1 S KCC has recently changed its orientation, advising and registration processes to facilitate a more successful transition of new students into the college. While the recent timing of this change did not allow for data analysis, KCC feels that the new processes should positively impact student understanding of college processes in this area.
- 3I2 O KCC has developed a culture of assessment that it should be commended for. However, in respect to selecting processes to improve relationships with all of its stakeholders, it may be beneficial to KCC to take the next step in developing a more comprehensive process for analyzing results, identifying processes to improve, and setting targets for improvement in performance results, that is inclusive of the different levels of the organization. Additional attention should be given to the development of a more inclusive strategy to disseminate the results of analysis, process improvement identification, and performance results and targets to institutional stakeholders and constituents.

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

- OV4 KCC has a unionized full-time faculty of 38, and partially unionized full-time staff of 64. Part-time employees account for 61% of the total number of employed. KCC reports it has a very low turnover rate other than retirements.
- OV5 KCC is governed by a seven member board and the President serves as CEO and leads the Executive Council and College Administrative team (CAT). In addition, KCC has seven major standing committees that have direct influence and impact on institutional strategic and operational decision-making.
- OV7a Consistent use of appropriate data in all decision-making is a stated guiding principle of KCC. Further, the primary driver for institutional data collection and analysis is the College's strategic plan.

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	KCC has developed a process for identifying the credentials, skills and values required of employees. This process was developed in conjunction

- with Michigan State University and involves a Classification Committee. Positions are graded using a point-factor classification system which serves as the basis for its compensation model.
- 4P2 S KCC uses standardized hiring practices to ensure that the people it employs possess the credentials, skills, and values required.
- 4P3a S KCC employs a variety of methods to announce employment positions and tailors announcement venues to position type.
- 4P3b O While KCC does some general informational ads to inform potential minority applicants of positions, the college may benefit from more targeted efforts to recruit minorities for specific positions.
- 4P4 O While KCC has established a comprehensive new employee orientation and assigns a peer mentor to each new hire to further ensure new employees are oriented successfully into the organization, it is unclear how the college ensures consistency of information and measures effectiveness of processes.
- 4P5 O While KCC provides cross-training to promote continuity of services to students and stakeholders and has made noticeable progress in this area since 2008, it appears that a more formalized process for succession planning and planning for unanticipated changes in personnel across the organization would be beneficial to ensure core institutional objectives are maintained during periods of transition. The remote location of KCC creates a limited pool of candidates to source from, particularly in times of short notice, thus requiring strong proactive personnel management, cross-training and development.
- 4P6 O Although KCC has implemented a Point-Factor Classification Review and Process Quality Project Initiative, there appear to be no processes for faculty and administrators to evaluate and design work processes and activities that contribute to organizational productivity and employee satisfaction.

- 4P7 S KCC promotes the ethical practices of employees through interviews, background checks and reference checks. The Code of Employee Conduct provides guidelines and policies for employees.
- 4P8 O The college has identified an Action Project to promote active learning, yet it is unclear if this is aligned with the criteria of the peer review committee that evaluates requests for faculty professional development funds. KCC may benefit from a more systematized approach to the collection of information with regard to training needs. It is not clear how the current system aligns employee training with short- and long- range organizational plans, and how it strengthens the instructional and non-instructional programs and services.
- 4P9 O While KCC describes a variety of informal activities tied to professional development monies to train and develop all faculty, staff, and administrators. It is not clear how the college reinforces these training activities or connects it to employee evaluation.
- 4P10 O While KCC has defined its process for employee evaluation, it is unclear how the college measures the effectiveness and consistency of methods and uses the results to identify trends and influence training.
- 4P11a S KCC implemented “Celebrating Champions” which was an idea for employee recognition created by staff members. Employees are nominated for this award by their peers.
- 4P11b O It is not clear overall how recognition programs are designed to align with objectives or if there are processes in place to foster such alignment and move employee recognition from ad hoc to more formal processes.
- 4P12a S KCC uses two mechanisms: the Target-Specific Bargaining (TSB - unionized employees) and the Target-Specific Problem Solving (TSPS - non-unionized staff) to determine key issues related to faculty, staff, and administrators.

- 4P12b O Beyond the bargaining processes discussed, there is no mention of how KCC selects courses of action, particularly when scores are low from the *Great Place to Work For Survey* results.
- 4P13 S KCC has broad-based participation on committees individually focused on wellness, safety and security. Each committee uses a variety of activities in partnership with internal and external parties to increase awareness and compliance with applicable rules and regulations.
- 4R1 O KCC in 2010-2011 transitioned from one employee survey to the Chronicle of Higher Education's *Great Place to Work For Survey*. KCC has identified that it has an opportunity in this area and that it is working on collecting more measures. It is unclear what other measures of valuing people are collected and analyzed regularly.
- 4R2 O Although KCC has low employee turnover rates and provides a safe and secure environment for its employees; recent results from the *Great Places to Work For Survey* indicate there are several areas that have declined over the past two years and in comparison with other institutions.
- 4R3 OO KCC did not provide evidence of productivity and effectiveness of employees in relation to helping the organization achieve its goals. Defining and developing these measures may help provide an overarching evaluation of institutional effectiveness and organizational alignment with strategic objectives.
- 4R4 O Beyond KCC's data collected through the *Great Place to Work For Survey*, there does not appear to be any data discussed that is specific or relevant to any of the information supplied in categories P1 – P13. It is also not clear how collected data is used for improvement.
- 4I1 OO KCC provides no evidence of recent improvements it has made in this category. Without evidence it is unlikely that KCC has systematic and comprehensive processes and performance results for Valuing People.

- 412 OO It is unclear how KCC selects processes and targets to improve. With the lack of effective data, it is difficult to ascertain how these improvement opportunities were identified or what improvements have been made.

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

- OV5 KCC is governed by a seven member board and the President serves as CEO and leads the Executive Council and College Administrative team (CAT). In addition, KCC has seven major standing committees that have direct influence and impact on institutional strategic and operational decision-making.
- OV7a Consistent use of appropriate data in all decision-making is a stated guiding principle of KCC. Further, the primary driver for institutional data collection and analysis is the College's strategic plan.
- OV8a KCC's three main revenue sources of the college are declining: state appropriations, property taxes and student enrollment. At the same time, major expenses such as health care and contributions to pension funds have increased.

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.

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
5P1	OO	KCC appears to be at a critical decision point regarding its mission. Board members have already developed options for a revised mission but involvement of other stakeholders appears to be limited at this time as there is not a formal review process for the mission.
5P2	S	KCC has processes through which the president and leadership team set directions in alignment with the mission, vision, and values of the institution.
5P3	O	While KCC has a variety of methods to seek input of stakeholders in the development of the strategic plan; it is unclear how the final plan, goals and results are communicated back to stakeholders. In addition, KCC has an opportunity to develop processes fostering better use of data to ensure that operational plans are meeting and addressing needs.
5P4	S	KCC has developed a multitude of processes to seek new opportunities with a focus on expanding opportunities for students and enhancing student learning.
5P5	O	It is not clear from the information provided how or who creates the team or the process to begin a team formation if necessary. Further, there is no discussion of the use of data.
5P6	O	While KCC collects a variety of data, information and performance results; there does not appear to be a set of processes on how data, information, and performance results are utilized on a regular basis in decision-making. As an example, KCC states that the Institutional Research Office is responsible to provide data for decisions; however, it is not clear how this office is actually involved with individual teams or departments.

- 5P7 O While KCC has some processes to communicate between and among the levels and units of the organization; it does not seem to have consistent communication procedures across all levels.

- 5P8 O While KCC has an informal process for communicating a shared mission, vision, and values across the organization, it would benefit from a set of formalized communication processes.

- 5P9 S KCC provides opportunities for the development of leadership abilities through professional development and training opportunities, committee appointments as well as AQIP Action Project training.

- 5P10 O KCC describes ad hoc activities that leaders use to ensure that the organization maintains and preserves its mission, vision, values, and commitment to high performance during leadership succession. KCC acknowledges that a much needed leadership succession plan is under development.

- 5R1 O While KCC has a number of surveys and activities that provide performance measures for effective leadership and communication, KCC may want to consider broadening the measures used to gather data beyond surveys in order to delve further into collecting data to inform why or what exactly to improve.

- 5R2 O KCC mentioned the 2007 *Great Places to Work For Survey* results in the portfolio, but the most recent results of the employee survey are more negative in nature in response to questions related to senior leadership and faculty, administration, and staff relations. KCC has an opportunity to set targets and determine what these results mean for the institution.

- 5R3 O KCC is aware that the organization struggles to measure how well its systems for leading and communicating are working. KCC has the opportunity to improve in leading and communicating by formalizing processes and responding to data collected.

- 5I1 S KCC has implemented quality circles/teams comprehensively across the organization. The college has proactively identified problem areas related

to communicating and leading and are developing action plans to address these areas of concern.

- 512 O KCC points to the strategic and operational planning processes as helping to identify specific processes for improvement. More fully integrating the assessment process with the strategic planning process may help KCC become even more effective and transparent in identifying and selecting high leverage processes for improvement.

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

- OV1a Kirtland Community College (KCC) is a public, not-for-profit, rural community college which serves the largest geographic community college district in Michigan. It includes a main campus located in Roscommon, MI with two off-campus sites. The average commute for students is 56 miles round trip. Further, KCC's service area is economically disadvantaged and underserved with 20.4% of families below poverty level.
- OV6a KCC has consistently invested in and deployed technologies to support its mission which is evidenced in its top ten ranking in the American Association of Community College's Digital Community College Survey in 2005, 2007, 2008 and 2010.
- OV6b KCC continues to be confronted with deferred maintenance issues with aging facilities and compliance with new environmental regulations which poses a financial challenge.

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	KCC uses both formal and informal methods of determining support needs for student and stakeholders. These methods include a variety of tools, including the CCSSE, social media, regularly scheduled meetings with the local school districts, focus groups and community forums.
6P2	S	KCC identifies administrative support needs through formal processes such as the TSPS and TSB as well as analysis of information and trends collected from the online work order tracking system for eServices and Facility departments to determine communication and training needs. In addition, informal processes such as open forums with the president, as well as broad based membership on the college administrative team, help identify functional area administrative support needs.
6P3	S	KCC has a cross-functional committee focused on safety and security and regularly communicates pertinent information through the Public Safety website to the college community.
6P4	O	KCC utilizes a variety of tools for the management of its key student, administrative and organizational support service processes. However, KCC may benefit from a college-wide system to assess these processes and ensure that they are addressing the needs they are intended to meet.
6P5	S	KCC has developed a system for documenting and sharing its administrative support service processes through a variety of web based tools and departmental procedure documents.
6R1	O	While KCC utilizes a variety of measures to monitor and evaluate the performance of organizational support services there is little to indicate how these results are used for improvement. Further, KCC may benefit from delineating what specific data collected and analyzed pertains to

- measuring student, administrative and organizational support service processes respectively and their use for improvement.
- 6R2 O KCC has shown improvement in overall CCSSE results for items related to Support for Learners. Improvement has been demonstrated against overall internal benchmarks and comparison to other similar CCSSE participating institutions. However, KCC has an opportunity to measure improvements related to specific categories and questions in order to further improve performance.
- 6R3a O While KCC should be commended for its ability to balance the operating budget and its continued improvement in performance results, as indicated by the overall CCSSE scores and support for learners in the midst of financial constraints, there is little more than anecdotal evidence of performance results provided for administrative support service processes. For example, the College stated that deferred maintenance and aging facilities were a critical issue yet there is no specific evidence that this is being addressed. In previous categories, there was reference to lowered employee morale and satisfaction with the cause attributed to financial constraints yet there is no discussion and no clear plan to improve these important processes in relation to the performance of administrative support services.
- 6R3b O Similarly, KCC has stated in the portfolio overview that three primary revenue sources are all declining while some major expenses are increasing. The college might benefit from developing more robust metrics for its financial performance and planning by utilizing available benchmarking resources in this area.
- 6R4 S In relation to student support services KCC has used CCSSE performance results and IPEDS data effectively to identify key areas to improve and has developed action plans to address these needs.
- 6R5 O Results from the Center for Digital Education Survey utilized by the eServices department in comparison to similar institutions have consistently been strong. KCC has an opportunity to provide similar

comparative performance results for other processes related to organizational operations.

- 611 O While the development of the strategic plan and connecting it to annual operational goals is a vital component of the overarching continuous quality improvement process, it is unclear from the information provided how systematic and comprehensive KCC's processes and performance results for supporting organizational operations are as a result of this process.
- 612 S KCC has identified a new structure of three overlapping committees to support the culture and infrastructure to select specific processes to improve and to set targets for improved performance results in supporting organizational operations. These changes have allowed for greater focus on specific areas by the respective committees.

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

OV1b KCC has a comprehensive community college mission and an average enrollment of 2,200 with the largest enrollments in health career, transfer programs and general interest. The College is supported by seven major educational services: eLearning,

eService, Tutoring, Library, Testing Center, Student Support Services, and Counseling and Career Services.

OV7a Consistent use of appropriate data in all decision-making is a stated guiding principle of KCC. Further, the primary driver for institutional data collection and analysis is the College's strategic plan.

OV7b KCC utilizes a centralized administrative/student information system and several other parallel systems to collect, analyze, and report data and information. The Office of Institutional Research provides leadership and oversight for a de-centralized approach for collection of data, reporting and data integrity.

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.

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
7P1	S	The Institutional Research Office at KCC serves as an aggregator of information and helps to fulfill the data needs of constituents. Much of the information is posted on the KCC website and is also provided in other forms such as spreadsheets that allow for departmental or individual analysis, as well as printed reports and presentations. The TSB and TSPS processes require the use of jointly selected and agreed upon data.
7P2	O	KCC has recently made progress in further establishing committee structures to facilitate the continuous improvement process and act upon data and performance information. However, KCC may benefit from further formalizing the process and linkage between the planning and improvement processes with the assessment process which will further enhance its continuous improvement efforts.
7P3	S	KCC has a centralized computing system, Jenzabar EX, as well as other decentralized departmental computing systems that have been developed to meet the information needs of the respective departments and units. The recently developed Jenzabar Operational Taskforce has been

established to further improve usage, effectiveness and efficiency of the Jenzabar system

- 7P4 O KCC has developed procedures to collect and share information on key institutional performance measures; however, the analysis of results and integration into college and department goals is a critical next step for improvement.
- 7P5 S KCC has required reports at the state level that provide comparative data and information. In addition, the CCSSE provides comparisons with like institutions and the TSB process allows for participants to identify comparable schools for use and comparison in data collection. It is evident that the college is seeking opportunities to gather comparative information where possible.
- 7P6 O KCC states that planning objectives are often formed from routine data collections; however, the college might benefit from a more formal process for scanning and analysis to inform the goals of the strategic plan.
- 7P7 S KCC has implemented tools to allow staff to extract data more easily from the administrative system resulting in improved timeliness of information and improved accuracy of data.
- 7R1 O Although KCC has made significant progress since 2008 in its measurement of effectiveness, it may benefit from developing a formal process for gathering feedback on the effectiveness of its information and knowledge management efforts to ensure that it is continually improving in support of meeting institutional, departmental, and unit goals and objectives.
- 7R2 O KCC has begun to collect results but have not yet shown evidence of improvement in institutional effectiveness, or fulfilling its mission and accomplishing its strategic or operational goals.

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

- OV1a Kirtland Community College (KCC) is a public, not-for-profit, rural community college which serves the largest geographic community college district in Michigan. It includes a main campus located in Roscommon, MI with two off-campus sites. The average commute for students is 56 miles round trip. Further, KCC's service area is economically disadvantaged and underserved with 20.4% of families below poverty level.
- OV1b KCC has a comprehensive community college mission and an average enrollment of 2,200 with the largest enrollments in health career, transfer programs and general interest. The College is supported by seven major educational services: eLearning, eService, Tutoring, Library, Testing Center, Student Support Services, and Counseling and Career Services.
- OV6b KCC continues to be confronted with deferred maintenance issues with aging facilities and compliance with new environmental regulations which poses a financial challenge.
- OV7a Consistent use of appropriate data in all decision-making is a stated guiding principle of KCC. Further, the primary driver for institutional data collection and analysis is the College's strategic plan.
- OV8a KCC's three main revenue sources of the college are declining: state appropriations, property taxes and student enrollment. At the same time, major expenses such as health care and contributions to pension funds have increased.

OV8b The College has increased a focus on enrolling both traditional high school graduates and older students seeking retraining or skill enhancement as a primary means to offset the financial challenge in the current economic conditions of the State and local area.

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.

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
8P1	S	KCC engages in a variety of planning process, including AQIP action projects and regular strategic and operational planning.
8P2	S	The use of appreciative inquiry methods to evaluate and prioritize short- and long-term institutional strategies assures broad involvement and engagement in planning activities.
8P3	O	KCC uses the College Administrative Team (CAT) to develop annual operational plans in a retreat situation. However, KCC may benefit from broadening and formalizing stakeholder involvement in developing and evaluating individual action plans.
8P4	O	It is unclear from the information provided how the holistic operational planning process and the timing of involvement of the various levels of the organization connect. KCC may benefit by more clearly defining the operational planning process.
8P5	O	KCC's response is specific to action projects. KCC has an opportunity to outline how the planning processes outside of the action projects for accreditation are used to define objectives, select measures, and set performance targets.
8P6	O	KCC has adopted several aggressive goals to expand offerings; however, it is not clear how the execution is planned within the college's current state of declining resources.
8P7	OO	There is little evidence provided that the college has assessed risks within its current environment and incorporated that assessment into its planning processes.

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| 8P8a | S | KCC employees have received training on continuous quality improvement principles and processes and the college continues to provide financial support for additional professional development. |
| 8P8b | O | It may benefit KCC to develop processes that tie approval and selection of professional development expenditures back to organizational strategies and action plans. |
| 8R1 | O | KCC could benefit from a review of its measures of effectiveness of planning processes and systems with the inclusion of direct measures of effectiveness. |
| 8R2 | O | While the college has stated that between 70-78% of annual operational strategies were completed in 2010 and 2011, it does not address whether targets for performance were achieved. Also, it does not explain why several strategies were apparently abandoned for the next year's planning. There may be some benefit to KCC in establishing a process to prioritize strategies and reduce the number of strategies for any one year. |
| 8R3 | OO | KCC did not provide any performance projections or targets for its strategies and action plans for the future. |
| 8R4 | OO | KCC is aware that it does not have comparative data. |
| 8R5 | OO | Although KCC indicates that objectives are becoming more measurable there is no evidence provided to support this claim. |
| 8I1 | S | KCC has made improvements in this category since its last system portfolio in 2007 related to implementing a strategic and annual operational planning process, as well as the Joint Strategy Forum Team that provides oversight of action projects. |
| 8I2 | OO | Although KCC has provided training throughout the organization on the continuous quality improvement process, beyond anecdotal descriptions, KCC does not provide evidence of how the culture and infrastructure support continuous improvement. |

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

- OV1a Kirtland Community College (KCC) is a public, not-for-profit, rural community college which serves the largest geographic community college district in Michigan. It includes a main campus located in Roscommon, MI with two off-campus sites. The average commute for students is 56 miles round trip. Further, KCC's service area is economically disadvantaged and underserved with 20.4% of families below poverty level.
- OV1b KCC has a comprehensive community college mission and an average enrollment of 2,200 with the largest enrollments in health career, transfer programs and general interest. The College is supported by seven major educational services: eLearning, eService, Tutoring, Library, Testing Center, Student Support Services, and Counseling and Career Services.
- OV9a KCC has strong strategic partnerships with local area high schools and the COOR Intermediate School District. The COOR ISD Career Technical Education Center is located on the KCC campus and provides both career exploration courses and opportunities for college-level courses.
- OV9b KCC is an active member in the Michigan Community College Virtual Learning Collaborative (MCCVLC) which is designed to allow current Michigan community college students to take courses from other member colleges while still receiving support services at a convenient "home" 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>
9P1	S	Kirtland has prioritized and established relationships with the COOR Intermediate School District and continues to expand the relationships with business and industry through Workforce Development. Kirtland has built strong relationships with other institutions.
9P2	O	KCC provides several examples of relationships with employers through service learning and internships and transfer institutions College Night and specialists; however, each is uniquely tied to an individual coordinator and it is not clear if the processes to create, prioritize, and build these relationships are consistently followed regardless of coordinator.
9P3	S	In light of its large service area, KCC continues to work to maximize services to its students.
9P4	O	KCC has created a variety of relationships that benefit the college including the Hospital Purchasing Service, the Kirtland Library, local vendors, and Web Study. However, the portfolio does not address institutional processes for creating and sustaining strategic relationships.
9P5	S	KCC uses a variety of institutional personnel in actively and strategically engaging with educational associations, external agencies consortia partners, and the general community with whom the college interacts.
9P6	O	While KCC has created methods for communicating with its partners, it would benefit from a more structured approach to assessing effectiveness and mutual benefit of each partnership.
9P7	S	The "Taste of Kirtland" Action Project is an innovative way of building relationships and awareness across different departments and functional areas within KCC. The plan to continue to repeat this event on a periodic

basis would appear to be beneficial in continuing to ensure interdepartmental relations are strengthened.

- 9R1 O Measures presented are limited in terms of identifying the effectiveness of relationships including identifying areas of improvement or determining if needs are being met. Additional measures would prove beneficial for decision-making around collaborative partnerships.
- 9R2 O While Kirtland has seen an overall increase in the number of dual enrollments attending Kirtland over the past 4 years, it has seen a decrease in overall enrollment of students from areas schools, coupled with declining state appropriation. With the expansion of high school enrollment identified as a high priority, it may benefit KCC to analyze why these numbers are declining and develop action plans to address this challenge.
- 9R3 OO The portfolio does not provide any results for the performance of its processes for Building Collaborative Relationships with other higher education institutions. KCC might benefit from common comparative data to facilitate the measurement and evaluation of the efficacy of its collaborative relationships.
- 9I1-2 S KCC has recognized and is working to implement an Action Project that addresses outreach and collaboration efforts culminating in a new associate degree program to address stakeholder needs. Further, KCC describes an institutional culture that is aware of and responsive to local communities and partnerships.