

SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

HIBBING COMMUNITY COLLEGE

September 30, 2010



**Academic
Quality Improvement
Program**

The Higher Learning Commission **NCA**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR HIBBING COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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

Category One

Although HCC uses various sources and methods to identify students' learning needs, a more systematic process that integrates these components to the institutional processes would enhance the HCC activities for continuous improvement. It is not evident in the portfolio that there is leadership support for developing processes related to documenting evidence of student learning. There appears to be collaboration with business and industry, educational partners (e.g., district, state) and use of curriculum committee structures to engage faculty and student stakeholders into the learning process. HCC acknowledges need for growth in taking fact-based information gathering and applying it to under-developed measurement of categories of student learning (e.g., Core Competency metrics). HCC values the integrity and viability of its transfer and career programs. The transfer function shows that students can move seamlessly to other institutions and can persist. The career function shows that job-related career tracks are needed by employers and that students are able to get jobs in the chosen field post graduation.

Category Two

While HCC utilizes a number of traditional processes for gathering and using information related to its non-instructional objectives, it is possible that more clearly defined survey instruments could be developed and utilized for the collection and analysis of data. More transparent means by which such data are analyzed and utilized might serve to strengthen this important aspect of the college.

Category Three

HCC has processes in place to understand student needs and build relationships. Developing systematic methods for determining satisfaction will enhance this system, as will expanding it to other stakeholders and comparable institutions through benchmarking.

Category Four

HCC provides new employees with valuable information that sets the tone for expectations and informing the campus culture. Some processes are currently in place, e.g., internal audits, early trainings, and low turnover. The College may benefit from a more introspective look at how they gather employee information and how they value employees in a more formal manner so that evaluation of the processes can be conducted. HCC has an opportunity to develop a set of systematic, campus-wide Human Resource policies to better utilize its people and help them advance in their careers.

Category Five

Transitioning to the AQIP appears to have benefitted HCC. Leadership and communication pathways have improved since the transition. Efforts to review and update mission, goals and strategic plan are positive. Described level of involvement in the process is good.

HCC understands it does not currently have sufficient measures on its communications processes to fully demonstrate both systemic and comprehensive evaluations, analysis of data, and benchmarking against national standards. The College will benefit by formalizing its processes to compare itself with like institutions.

Category Six

HCC is to be commended for the work on its support structure. As the institution builds a more solid evaluation process, HCC can continue to use data to support decisions and improvements based on its information on students and employees. HCC could benefit from a more in-depth analysis of data and a more transparent documentation process, showing how data become information and how this information is used to "close the loop". The College would benefit by developing processes to gather this valuable information. Although the portfolio indicates the College collects a number of data sets, there is no indication of how data are analyzed and used.

Category Seven

HCC appears to be benefitting from the various continuous improvement processes suggested by AQIP to assist in identifying ways in which the College can improve how it collects, analyzes, and distributes data related to measuring and improving institutional effectiveness. The College has access to a considerable amount of data. HCC could benefit by formalizing the management and mining of data to better inform College stakeholders such as faculty, staff, and

administration as they make decisions and evaluate processes and projects. Utilizing other local, state, regional, and national comparative or benchmarking sources can assist HCC in studying its effectiveness with wider audiences.

Category Eight

HCC has made strides in establishing a campus culture supportive of planning continuous improvement. There is growing ability to use information grounded in data to more proactively design institutional planning processes. Faculty and staff development structures are learning-oriented and show promise to prepare people to engage with more knowledge of planning processes. HCC has the opportunity to strengthen its use of metrics and systematic approaches to analyze and respond to planning and improvement data. Involvement of administration, faculty, and staff is described although not clearly substantiated. There are many new campus and district administrators creating possible transition challenges as well as opportunities. Opportunity exists to establish and describe processes of how HCC engages external stakeholders in planning continuous improvement.

Category Nine

HCC has a long history of working with local groups to develop and improve external collaborative relationships. It utilizes a number of traditional techniques for monitoring needs of internal and external stakeholders often informally. What is not always clear from the information provided is exactly how data are used in the strategic planning, prioritization, and decision-making processes. The presentation of such data would be improved if it were in tabular form and trend line analyses were provided. It seems possible that as a result of recent AQIP action projects specifically designed to elicit useful feedback; greater attention may be spent of gathering such data and becoming increasingly transparent on how such data are used to make decisions at HCC.

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

ELEMENTS OF HIBBING 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 Hibbing 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 Hibbing 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 Hibbing 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:

- HCC acknowledges its challenge to better measure student learning. The use of indirect measures of student learning such as persistence to degree or graduate follow-up surveys alone are not sufficient to measure student learning. The integration of more direct measures would significantly strengthen future portfolios. The team strongly recommends HCC's stated goal to better measure the performance results and level of student learning be a priority for the institution.
- The stated commitment to become a more data driven institution will be instrumental as HCC fully integrates AQIP. While the initial portfolio suggests a variety of data are collected, there is limited evidence as to how data are analyzed and used to guide and influence decisions. HCC's continuous improvement efforts will benefit by the systematic analysis of data, communication of the results, and feedback into the improvement of processes and student learning. In addition, benchmarking against peer and aspiration institutions can add value to the data already collected. HCC would benefit from the expansion of results comparisons beyond the state borders.

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 [Institution], 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 Hibbing 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. Hibbing Community College (HCC) is a comprehensive community college offering programming in liberal arts/transfer, 22 career and technical programs, and customized business and industry/continuing education offerings. HCC has 5,540 students in credit

courses along and more than 15,000 enrollments in customized training and continuing education.

- OV1b. The HCC transfer function offers face-to-face, online, and day/evening class offerings. Seventeen percent (17%) of the College's credits are delivered online. The twenty-two (22) career and technical programs constitute fifty-five percent (55%) of the enrolled students.
- OV1c. While HCC was a two-year college in 1916, it was not a fully comprehensive college until 1996. In 2004 HCC joined four other colleges to form the Northeast Minnesota Higher Education District (NHED).
- OV2. HCC also offers academic and student life support opportunities. In Student Life some options are student clubs and organizations (e.g., Skills-USA VICA, theatre, student life clubs, Student Senate, Service Learning, Veterans' Center, study abroad, athletics). Academic options that support student success are Student Success Coordinator assistance, Library services, Phi Theta Kappa, financial aid support, Learning Center.
- OV3a. The primary competitors for HCC include its partners in NHED, other Minnesota institutions of higher education, both public and private, such as UM-Duluth, online institutions, and the local workforce.
- OV3b. HCC's short-term requirements are availability of classes, access to classes and services; fiscal responsibility and integrity; effectiveness; efficiency; safety and maintenance of facility. Long-term requirements, on the other hand, are remaining current and up-to-date in curriculum and equipment, maintain accreditation, strengthen and maintain the college's reputation, effective and quality hiring practices, faculty and staff credentials, safety, maintenance of facility.
- OV4a. HCC is part of a complex state system. The college is governed by a provost who works in conjunction with a four-member administrative team and who in turn is supervised by a regional NHED president.
- OV4b. HCC has five unions.
- OV5. HCC operates within two different state systems, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) and NHED along with internal committees such as Shared Governance and Academic Affairs Standards Council.

- OV6. Continuous improvement is a key component of HCC's strategic, enrollment management and master facilities plans.
- OV7. HCC is mandated to collect and communicate critical data. Other areas such as program development and curriculum, meeting minutes, and policy information also are collected and shared. Data management occurs through use of IPEDS, the HCC website, email, ImageNow, and AskUs.
- OV8a. HCC is located within a region known for its "boom and bust" cycles. To the extent possible, HCC operates counter cyclically to these economic realities. The region is also experiencing a decline in traditional high school aged students and an increasingly aging population.
- OV8b. Currently fifty percent (50%) of HCC's budget comes from the state. HCC will continue to be challenged by the projected reductions in support it receives from the state.
- OV9. HCC has significant partnerships that benefit both the college and community. Their partnership with the University of Minnesota (U of M) dental school provides teaching and learning experiences along with dental services to the community. Partnerships with other higher education institutions make it possible for community members to obtain bachelor's and master's degrees.

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

Item Critical Characteristic

- OV1a. Hibbing Community College (HCC) is a comprehensive community college offering programming in liberal arts/transfer, 22 career and technical programs, and customized business and industry/continuing education offerings. HCC has 5,540 students in credit courses along and more than 15,000 enrollments in customized training and continuing education.
- OV1b. The HCC transfer function offers face-to-face, online, and day/evening class offerings. Seventeen percent (17%) of the College's credits are delivered online. The twenty-two (22) career and technical programs constitute fifty-five percent (55%) of the enrolled students.
- OV3b. HCC's short-term requirements are availability of classes, access to classes and services; fiscal responsibility and integrity; effectiveness; efficiency; safety and maintenance of facility. Long-term requirements, on the other hand, are remaining current and up-to-date in curriculum and equipment, maintain accreditation, strengthen and maintain the college's reputation, effective and quality hiring practices, faculty and staff credentials, safety, maintenance of facility.

OV9. HCC has significant partnerships that benefit both the college and community. Their partnership with the University of Minnesota (U of M) dental school provides teaching and learning experiences along with dental services to the community. Partnerships with other higher education institutions make it possible for community members to obtain bachelor's and master's degrees.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1P1	S	HCC has common and shared course learning objectives for all students that were determined by a cross-campus committee composed of faculty and administration.
1P2	S	Specific program learning objectives at HCC are determined through cross-functional curriculum committees including the faculty, staff, and administrators.
1P3	S	HCC uses its program advisory boards and the administrative team in developing new technical programs and courses. Liberal arts courses are developed internally through the curriculum committees that make recommendations to AASC.
1P4	S	HCC uses both state accountability factors (e.g., Minnesota labor market data) and campus/district requirements (e.g., impact on human resources and facilities) to determine the need to develop a new program or suspend a current program. HCC uses program viability, demographics, employment outlook, salary projections and industry and student demand in developing new programs which are also subject to review by the MnSCU system.
1P5	S	HCC, although an open-door institution, screens students prior to admission for key learning skill areas by using Accuplacer to determine entry-level criteria which supports integrity of the learning experience for students. HCC also offers developmental and study skills courses. Some

technical programs use other industry-based criteria for program admission (e.g., nursing, law enforcement).

- 1P6-1P7 SS HCC has many resources to assist students. The ISSEK website and courses on “Choosing a major” and “Transition to College” provided by the Student Support Services program are used to help students select programs of study. Some resources are web-based (e.g., MCIS, Discover) while others involve College advisors and counselors. HCC also has TRIO grant support to help first-generation students and students with special support needs.
- 1P8a S HCC advisors monitor students placed in developmental courses and recommend additional help such as tutoring and study groups as appropriate. HCC also provides space for ABE classes.
- 1P8b O Comprehensive follow-up assessment and evaluation of students’ who have been in developmental courses as they progress through college-level courses might yield important insights into how better to serve those students.
- 1P9a S HCC encourages attendance at the annual faculty Center for Teaching and Learning conference (“Realizing Student Potential”) during Professional Development Days.
- 1P9b O HCC has the opportunity for “detecting” difference in student learning styles.
- 1P10 S Students who document disabilities are provided with reasonable accommodations. Faculty integrate multiple delivery approaches to support student learning styles. HCC offers a variety of course delivery options (e.g., online, face-to-face, and hybrid). Senior citizens are given tuition discounts.
- 1P11a S Course outlines and syllabi are reviewed by the curriculum committee every five years. Program review is conducted annually. MnSCU’s Accountability Dashboard measures key outcomes.

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|-------|---|--|
| 1P11b | O | HCC has an opportunity to define and document pathways to fully communicate information related to using core/course outlines for goals and objectives. HCC has an opportunity to define and document learning to ascertain its meaning to the faculty and students. |
| 1P12 | S | HCC uses a complete course scheduling system established collaboratively by the Dean of Academic Affairs and Student Services, the Curriculum specialist, and faculty in which the College courses are offered in a variety of modes and times to best meet student needs. |
| 1P13a | S | The HCC Administrative Team uses feedback from the Academic Affairs Standards Committee to determine program and/or course additions and deletions. A review also occurs at the state level through MnTC which uses a five-year cycle to review courses and programs for accuracy and currency. Career Advisory Boards meet a minimum of twice a year to review curriculum and ensure relevancy. |
| 1P13b | O | While HCC annually examines program and course enrollments, student satisfaction, job opportunities and trends, HCC might consider additional criteria to review for each program and/or course during its annual review and a more frequent course outline review cycle. |
| 1P14 | S | Minor changes (less than 20 percent of content) are handled internally. If larger changes are requested the department, the curriculum committee and AASC must be consulted. Changes in technical programs are approved through the program advisory committees. |
| 1P15a | S | HCC relies on course evaluations, AQIP, and CTL surveys help determine professional development needs of faculty. Identified professional development needs are included in annual faculty development plans that are presented to the Administrative Team for review. |
| 1P15b | S | The Academic Center serves as a major hub to determine support needs of students. Counselors and advisors work with faculty to closely monitor the progress of students, and pay special attention to those who are considered at-risk. |

- 1P15c O While HCC uses the Accuplacer assessment tool to determine student readiness, it is not clear what process is used to determine other student learning support needs or how these evaluations are linked to the budgeting processes.
- 1P16 S HCC aligns its co-curricular development goals through its four Core Competencies. Co-curricular options include service learning, leadership development, participation in theatre and industry-based competitions (e.g., SkillsUSA), and learning more about other cultures and environmental/sustainability issues.
- 1P17a S HCC has identified core competencies which are required for all students and states that a minimum of three competencies must be listed on the syllabus and that the course outline identify which core competency is covered in the course.
- 1P17b O HCC expects instructors to ensure these competencies are met by assessing student learning in a variety of ways. Formal presentation of instructor evidence documenting student performance and achievement would measure expected “outputs”.
- 1P18 OO Although HCC states its processes are designed for student learning assessment at three levels—the core Competency Level, the Program Level, and the Course Level. HCC does not clarify how these Core Competencies are measured, reported, or analyzed at these various levels. Competencies appear to be regularly assessed at the program level for technical programs. Competencies in the transfer programs are measured indirectly through student grade point averages at transfer institutions. Formative and summative measures are used to assess student learning at the course level.
- 1R1a S HCC measures student learning at the program level through state and national licensure and examination rates and SkillsUSA. The College also monitors transfer students’ GPAs. In addition, the College uses persistence to degree, term-to-term persistence, graduation rates, placement rates, and graduate follow-up surveys.

- 1R1b OO The use of indirect measures of student learning such as persistence to degree or graduate follow-up surveys alone are not sufficient to measure student learning. More direct measures would significantly strengthen future portfolios.
- 1R2 OO HCC is aware of the difficulty in developing and implementing appropriate direct measures of the performance results and level of student learning in core competencies. The team strongly recommends the stated goal to better measure the performance results and level of student learning be a priority for the institution.
- 1R3 O While tracking some levels of performance results for specific program learning objectives, HCC recognizes an opportunity through the AQIP process to enhance its use of systematic and quantitative metrics. For example, presentation of results of student learning in tabular form similar to what is presented in Figure 3 with identification of appropriate trend lines would strengthen claims of student learning achievements.
- 1R4 S Students in transfer areas do well when going to four-year colleges and universities. HCC programs with third-party assessments (e.g., POST, NCLEX) consistently place at or above state/national norms. Many technical programs show high rates of employment in the field of study (range 66.7%-100%). HCC's employment rate is about 80% over a five-year period.
- 1R5 O Performance results that documented student achievement and accomplishment would strengthen current data that rely on satisfaction indicators. For instance, the CCSSE provides HCC with multiple satisfaction ratings, but few actual performance measures.
- 1R6 O While data provide a snapshot of HCC's general performance, these data would be more informative if analyzed over time or as compared to specific goals HCC established.
- 1I1-2 S As a result of recent AQIP Action Projects of retention of full-time, degree-seeking developmental students, the creation of learning communities for developmental students in health occupations, and the development of

orientation for online learners, HCC made substantial improvements to student learning. Furthermore, the AQIP sub-committee JUMP (Join Us, Make Progress) helps the campus to focus on AQIP related activities and changes.

- 111-2 O HCC has the opportunity to realize valuable improvements in the specific action projects defined. Commitment to carrying out these projects in a timely manner is of significant importance.

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 Hibbing 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:

- OV1a Hibbing Community College (HCC) is a comprehensive community college offering programming in liberal arts/transfer, 22 career and technical programs, and customized business and industry/continuing education offerings. HCC has 5,540 students in credit courses along and more than 15,000 enrollments in customized training and continuing education.
- OV2. HCC also offers academic and student life support opportunities. In Student Life some options are student clubs and organizations (e.g., Skills-USA VICA, theatre, student life clubs, Student Senate, Service Learning, Veterans' Center, study abroad, athletics). Academic options that support student success are Student Success Coordinator assistance, Library services, Phi Theta Kappa, financial aid support, and Learning Center.

OV4a. HCC is part of a complex state system. The college is governed by a provost who works in conjunction with a four-member administrative team and who in turn is supervised by a regional NHED president.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
2P1a	S	HCC offers a variety of non-credit courses, workshops, and training for individuals of all ages and life circumstances. Customized training is developed to meet specific individual and company needs through direct feedback from community stakeholders and shows broad involvement which also promotes collaboration.
2P1b	O	While the key non-instructional processes are determined by variety of processes such as alumni affairs, continuing education/customized training, organizational development, leadership, and total quality among others, it is unclear as to how these fit into the institutional environment.
2P2a	S	Major non-instructional campus objectives are developed through use of campus-wide input and information sessions. HCC used this approach and their strategic planning process to reshape its mission, vision, and goals.
2P2b	O	Although HCC non-instructional objectives are aligned with the college mission statement and strategic initiatives, the processes by which it designs and operates its non-instructional processes are unclear. HCC may want to consider expanding input to developing non-instructional objectives for external stakeholders by including representatives of external stakeholders in setting these organizational objectives.
2P3a	S	HCC's strategic initiatives are developed and reviewed with input from faculty, staff, students and community members. The mission statement and strategic initiatives are included in college publications and on the website.

- 2P3b O Although the College uses its catalog and website to communicate its fundamental statements, the effectiveness of communication to all stakeholders is not identified.
- 2P4 O HCC recognizes the need to assess the other distinctive objectives and is making concentrated efforts to become data-driven for assessment purposes. It is unclear from the portfolio provided how HCC reviews and assess the appropriateness of these various objectives and who is involved in this process.
- 2P5 O While HCC attempts to receive input from various elements of the campus through regular and open meetings, the college has an opportunity to develop a more systematic approach for gathering, analyzing, and reporting the needs of its various stakeholders.
- 2P6a S HCC receives inputs related to adjusting organizational objectives through department or union groups who communicate through appropriate channels such as Shared Governance, AASC, or the College Advancement Committee.
- 2P6b O HCC has an opportunity to formalize the process for gathering information on employee needs and developing procedure for readjusting the objectives based on feedback and information.
- 2R1a S HCC demonstrates commitment to continually improving non-instructional objectives through measures such as admissions, student satisfaction and data on students involved in extracurricular activities. Recent CCSSE reports indicate students enjoy a high level of quality relationships with people they encounter at the College.
- 2R1b O Although HCC uses a number of methods to measure its non-instructional objectives, it is unclear how these measures are interpreted and incorporated into the organizational decision-making process. HCC might consider selecting and/or clarifying measures that will indicate accomplishment of major non-instructional objectives and activities.

2R2a	S	HCC's performance results are included in the MnSCU's Accountability Dashboard which monitors performance on selected key measures collected and allows comparison with similar schools within the system.
2R2b	O	HCC has an opportunity to use the data gathered to improve processes for areas with lower satisfaction rates (varsity sports, intramural sports, and disability services).
2R3	S	HCC uses the Department of Education's IPEDs database to monitor and compare its data and effectiveness to other institutions.
2R4	O	HCC has an opportunity to formalize the process to evaluate how the strategic plan enhances the relationships with the surrounding community.
2I1a	S	HCC has used AQIP processes to help recent improvements in its strategic planning process in such areas as the establishment of a Global Conference on India and an AQIP Project on improving Campus Safety.
2I1b	O	Continued use of strategic planning and AQIP principles to identify gaps and establish systematic cycles of review will strengthen HCC's ability to use data in decision making and promote opportunities to increase its institutional performance levels.
2I2	O	Although HCC uses several processes to identify and improve distinctive objectives, there is no evidence provided on how the college culture and infrastructure are used in the processes.

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 Hibbing 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

- OV1b. The HCC transfer function offers face-to-face, online, and day/evening class offerings. Seventeen percent (17%) of the College's credits are delivered online. The twenty-two (22) career and technical programs constitute fifty-five percent (55%) of the enrolled students.
- OV2. HCC also offers academic and student life support opportunities. In Student Life some options are student clubs and organizations (e.g., Skills-USA VICA, theatre, student life clubs, Student Senate, Service Learning, Veterans' Center, study abroad, athletics). Academic options that support student success are Student Success Coordinator assistance, Library services, Phi Theta Kappa, financial aid support, Learning Center.
- OV3b. HCC's short-term requirements are availability of classes, access to classes and services; fiscal responsibility and integrity; effectiveness; efficiency; safety and maintenance of facility. Long-term requirements, on the other hand, are remaining current and up-to-date in curriculum and equipment, maintain accreditation, strengthen and maintain the college's reputation, effective and quality hiring practices, faculty and staff credentials, safety, maintenance of facility.
- OV8a. HCC is located within a region known for its "boom and bust" cycles. To the extent possible, HCC operates counter cyclically to these economic realities. The region is also experiencing a decline in traditional high school aged students and an increasingly aging population.

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

Item S/O Comment

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| 3P1a | S | Students' needs are formally identified through surveys such as the Student Satisfaction Survey, the annual Graduate Follow-up Survey and through CCSSE. Informally, students' needs are identified through focus groups, workshops, and student advising. |
| 3P1b | O | Although HCC uses a number of methods to formally identify students' needs there is no evidence presented as to how these data are analyzed and interpreted in identifying the changing needs of its student groups. |
| 3P2 | S | HCC has many ways that the institution builds and maintains relationships with students (e.g., front-line staff, outreach efforts, advisors, counselors, and faculty). Additionally, students can choose to live on campus, participate in intramural sports, student clubs, and other activities/events. |
| 3P3a | S | HCC utilizes a variety of means to determine and analyze the changing needs of stakeholders. These methods include: survey results, faculty-developed Program Department Plans, meetings with various groups, program advisory committee meetings, and the Iron Range Higher Education Committee. |
| 3P3b | O | HCC does not appear to have a comprehensive or strategically oriented method for identification of other stakeholders' needs nor do they clearly identify how those needs are analyzed and used to determine actions needed. |
| 3P4 | S | HCC builds relationships with key external stakeholders through business advisory groups and through the HCC Foundation. |
| 3P5a | S | HCC determines new student stakeholder groups through traditional means of local and regional job market research, economic growth indicators, demographic indicators and specific input from local business and industry. |
| 3P5b | O | Although the portfolio lists various key stakeholders it is unclear how HCC determines their targets for new educational offerings. |

- 3P6 S HCC handles complaints through both informal and formal means. There are specific staff grievance procedures that are handled through the unions. Student Complaint procedures are addressed in a Student Handbook and a file is maintained of all written student complaints.
- 3R1 S Student satisfaction is determined through a regular Student Satisfaction Survey, CCSSE, and regular course evaluations.
- 3R2a S As noted in CCSSE, HCC has positive student satisfaction ratings in the category of “relationships with instructors” (5.60/7.0). HCC was noted in the top 15% nationally by G.I. Jobs as being military friendly. Ninety-one percent (91%) of HCC’s 2008-2009 Graduate Survey respondents regarded the College favorably in all areas.
- 3R2b O The reported results do not align with the surveys and inventories indicated in 3R1.
- 3R3 O It is unclear if the institution uses systematic processes and quantitative information gathering in determining performance results for building relationships with students.
- 3R4 O HCC would benefit by establishing a broader and more formal process for gathering and analyzing stakeholder satisfaction information.
- 3R5 O HCC has many approaches to do projects and provide services with education and business partners. However, direct results for building relationships with key stakeholders are not evident.
- 3R6 OO HCC comparative data is limited to its internal stakeholders whereas the College can benefit from considering results from other comparable institutions.
- 3I1a S HCC has strengthened its commitment to students and stakeholders through recent AQIP projects.
- 3I1b O The portfolio does not indicate how systematic and comprehensive these improvements are.

- 3I2a S As a result of several AQIP projects, HCC has improved campus safety, implementation of learning communities, on-line orientation, and at-risk student intervention processes.
- 3I2b O HCC has leveraged the AQIP process to capture the institution's initial inventory of existing document identification/data collection methods and practices. This is a first step in HCC being able to improve its ability to collect, analyze, and use the results of approaches for improving processes for students and other stakeholders.

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 Hibbing 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

OV4b. HCC has five unions.

OV5. HCC operates within two different state systems, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) and NHED along with internal committees such as Shared Governance and Academic Affairs Standards Council.

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

Item	S/O	Comment
4P1a	S	HCC uses job descriptions established by supervisors, leadership and HR that align with required skills and tasks to assure qualified employees are hired. Faculty positions are screened to ensure they meet credential minimums established by MnSCU.
4P1b	O	HCC may benefit from the development of a faculty position description in addition to the faculty contract currently in place. The information provided does not identify what, if any, values are determined for faculty, staff, and administration.
4P2	S	HCC search committees, comprised of representatives from all bargaining units, have specific guidelines to follow throughout the hiring process as identified by the MnSCU system. Teaching and/or skill demonstrations are a part of the process to help ensure applicants' knowledge and ability to engage students. Candidates' references are checked by the College Provost who has the hiring authority.
4P3	S	HCC follows a well-structured process set out by the NHED's Human Resource Office when recruiting and hiring employees. Retention is encouraged through new employee orientation and mentoring.
4P4	S	New employees participate in an orientation session and receive the College's Employee Guidebook. Employee orientation includes required training in safety, sexual harassment, hazardous waste, and code of conduct.
4P5	O	HCC describes an informal process for changes in personnel. HCC may want to explore a more formal succession planning process to prepare for anticipated vacancies – especially in key leadership and operational positions.
4P6	S	HCC reviews position descriptions through a job audit process that may be requested by the employee or the supervisor. HCC provides staff development and professional training for employees. The activities are structured for personal growth and satisfaction of the employees. In

- addition, employees are encouraged to pursue advancement opportunities in the college.
- 4P7 S HCC regularly conducts internal audits to answer ethical practices. Employees are informed of the college's mandatory code of conduct during new employee orientation. Other mandatory conduct-related issues are communicated via specific departments.
- 4P8a S HCC determines training needs in a variety of ways. Opportunities such as HCC's Professional Development Days provide training and gathering feedback on employee needs. Training mandated by contracts or other state requirements (e.g., safety and health, ethics) allow employees to be learning oriented. These approaches also align with HCC's commitment to develop faculty and staff.
- 4P8b O There does not appear to be a strategic plan on how to the utilize training (in 4P8a) to strengthen the overall instructional and non-instructional programs and services. There is no evidence of how these training needs are assessed and determined.
- 4P9a S HCC evaluates newly hired employees carefully to determine their ability to contribute to the College. Once hired, the College uses a variety of methods to enhance those skills. New employees participate in the New Employee Orientation and/or New Administrator Training. All staff attend Professional Development Days. Training is also provided for instructors teaching online courses.
- 4P9b O It is not clear from the information provided, how professional development is evaluated to determine its effectiveness.
- 4P10a S HCC uses annual employee performance reviews. In addition, course evaluations are required of all faculty members. New faculty are evaluated by the dean of student services and academic affairs for the first three years.
- 4P10b O The portfolio does not indicate how the described activities align with college objectives nor how this process is designed.

- 4P11a S HCC does recognize employees' years of service. MnSCU Board of Trustees grants annual "Awards of Excellence" based on creativity in teaching.
- 4P11b O HCC has an opportunity to develop a formal employee recognition system. Years of service awards are presented but there is not a process for recognizing other areas.
- 4P12a S HCC responded to employees requesting more opportunities for interaction with co-workers. A project (valuing people) was created and gives the attention of a formal AQIP project.
- 4P12b O It is not clear from the information provided how "key issues" are identified, selected, analyzed, and utilized in a strategic and continuous improvement manner. Employee satisfaction is not part of the HR processes.
- 4P13 S HCC responded to employee feedback and developed an AQIP Action Project concerning Improving Campus Safety. The project includes reinstatement of the Campus Crisis Team and the Safety Committee along with the creation of the Emergency Response Team.
- 4R1 O HCC recognizes the need for more systematic processes for measuring, collecting, and analyzing data on valuing its people and interpreting these performance results.
- 4R2 O Early in the AQIP process, HCC identified 'Valuing People' in one of their first Action Projects. The college now has an opportunity to formalize their system for valuing employees.
- 4R3a S HCC programs and employees have received awards for excellence.
- 4R3b O HCC has an opportunity to improve the process for uncovering evidence of productivity and effectiveness in moving toward the college goals.
- 4R4 O HCC indicates recognition of developing more systematic processes and quantitative information to determine performance results related to valuing people and comparisons to other higher education organizations.

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| 411a | S | HCC has implemented changes for “Valuing People” based on information gathered from Professional Development Days and informal meetings. |
| 411- 2b | O | The portfolio does not indicate how systemic and comprehensive these improvements are. There is no evidence how these improvements are part of the strategic goals. |
| 412 | S | HCC’s leadership team encourages discussion - leading to input and suggestions to provide training and staff development. |

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 Hibbing 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

- OV4a. HCC is part of a complex state system. The college is governed by a provost who works in conjunction with a four-member administrative team and who in turn is supervised by a regional NHED president.
- OV5. HCC operates within two different state systems, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) and NHED along with internal committees such as Shared Governance and Academic Affairs Standards Council.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Hibbing 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	S	HCC used an open strategic planning process which included internal and external stakeholders to review the College's mission and values statements which will be reviewed on a three-year cycle.
5P2	S	As a member of the MnSCU System, HCC aligns its mission, goals, vision, value statements, and commitments to dovetail with those of MNSCU and NHED's work plan. Direction for the HCC strategic plan is aligned at the administrative level and flows out to all areas of the college. The strategic planning process is supported by the Accountability Dashboard.
5P3	S	HCC's strategic plan aligns the expectations of the Chancellor with the needs of HCC's students and stakeholders HCC uses feedback and ideas from many internal and external stakeholders to understand the needs of current and future students. These ideas are then integrated into the Chancellor's Workplan and HCC's Strategic Plan.
5P4	S	HCC is a key resource for education and training in the community. The strategic plan is used when pursuing new opportunities to ensure that they align with the college mission.
5P5	S	HCC's 'inclusive' management style involves stakeholders in committee work to glean ideas and information. These groups are empowered to make recommendations and decisions.
5P6	OO	While HCC uses data to review key decisions such as course scheduling, program review, and budgets, it has identified through its recent AQIP project on data collection/practices that the institution has an enormous amount of data that is available but not yet fully utilized.
5P7	S	HCC identifies a number of formal and informal communication formats. Informal conversation is a frequently-used method of conveying

- information quickly. Information is also included in the employee guidebook, campus newsletters, student handbook, college catalog, etc. In addition, HCC has identified email as the official mode of communication for the campus.
- 5P8 S HCC's mission, vision, goals, and commitments are communicated through the employee handbook, student handbook, the college catalog, the Dialogue, the Strategic Plan, and on the back of business cards.
- 5P9a S Opportunities are available for leadership development including training and workshops, continuing education for faculty and administrators, Professional Development Day sessions, and guest speakers. HCC provides development funds to support learning and personal development.
- 5P9b O There is little mention of leadership development for other staff. The portfolio does not indicate what level of actual participation or recognition is accomplished. Furthermore, external leadership building opportunities at the state- and NHED-level are currently suspended due to budget reasons.
- 5P10 O HCC has an opportunity to take steps to devise a more formal succession plan. While HCC's Administrative Team and members of employee hiring committees ensure that the mission, vision and values are passed on, a more formalized and systematic approach can ensure consistency and continuity during transition.
- 5R1 O It is not clear from the portfolio what is measured or what the consequences are. HCC understands and acknowledges the need to develop more effective means for evaluating communications.
- 5R2a S Results from employee evaluations, campus climate survey, and annual graduate survey indicate that faculty, staff and students rank HCC's leadership and communication processes above average.
- 5R2b O The planned Campus Climate Survey presents an opportunity for additional data and analysis that will improve HCC's ability to respond to

- this category in the future. Inclusion of comparative data and systematic/quantitative approaches will also be valuable.
- 5R3 OO HCC recognizes the need for a more systematic process and quantitative information to determine performance for leading and communicating processes and systems.
- 5I1a S HCC's recent evaluation and retooling of its Strategic Plan was completed with a significant amount of work and collaboration involved in the processes for improving and refining direction-charting documents. The college is to be commended for the level of work and collaboration described.
- 5I1b O It cannot be determined from the information provided how systemic and comprehensive efforts are in the area of measuring leading and communicating.
- 5I2a S HCC is establishing a continuous improvement culture through its communication action project and the use of data. HCC uses AQIP Action Projects to improve communication and leadership. The projects are chosen with input from college staff.
- 5I2b S HCC's infrastructure includes several layers of complimentary, mission-driven work plans. These work plans exist in a hierarchy from MnSCU to NHED to HCC as a whole, and by HCC programs and departments.

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 Hibbing 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

OV2. HCC also offers academic and student life support opportunities. In Student Life some options are student clubs and organizations (e.g., Skills-USA VICA, theatre, student life clubs, Student Senate, Service Learning, Veterans' Center, study abroad, athletics). Academic options that support student success are Student Success Coordinator assistance, Library services, Phi Theta Kappa, financial aid support, and the Learning Center.

OV3b. HCC's short-term requirements are availability of classes, access to classes and services; fiscal responsibility and integrity; effectiveness; efficiency; safety and maintenance of facility. Long-term requirements, on the other hand, are remaining current and up-to-date in curriculum and equipment, maintain accreditation, strengthen and maintain the college's reputation, effective and quality hiring practices, faculty and staff credentials, safety, maintenance of facility.

OV7. HCC is mandated to collect and communicate critical data. Other areas such as program development and curriculum, meeting minutes, and policy information also are collected and shared. Data management occurs through use of IPEDS, the HCC website, email, ImageNow, and AskUs.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Hibbing 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>
6P1a	S	Student needs are identified by a variety of means both formal and informal including student engagement and satisfaction surveys, and other meetings.
6P1b	O	HCC does not appear to have any formal and systematic way to regularly collect, analyze, and utilize feedback from external stakeholders.

- 6P2a S HCC has established a number of methods to solicit and identify administrative support needs.
- 6P2b O While a climate survey is planned for the future, HCC does not appear to have any formal and systematic way to regularly collect, analyze, and utilize feedback from the internal stakeholders.
- 6P3 SS Through analysis, feedback, and suggestions from internal and external stakeholders, as well as testing and evaluating safety efforts and plans, HCC has created a safer environment in which to work and learn.
- 6P4 S HCC's small size allows for a high level of daily interaction among employees and frequent team meetings by an array of departments. This provides HCC with critical means of communication.
- 6P5 O HCC recognizes the need to design a systematic method to document, support, and encourage knowledge sharing, innovation, and empowerment.
- 6R1 S HCC uses a variety of traditional methods to collect data on organizational operations.
- 6R2 O Although HCC has positive results for instructional services, there is no information provided as to how data (e.g., Graduate Survey) are used to improve both the instructional and non-instructional services it offers students.
- 6R3-4 OO While financial aid and the business office annual audit results are positive, HCC recognizes it has an opportunity to expand analysis of data and application of results to improve processes in other administrative support services. The current portfolio does not indicate "how" data are used in the decision-making process.
- 6R5a S HCC's organizational operations compare favorably both externally (CCSSE) and within the MnSCU system (Accountability Dashboard). HCC meets expectations in enrollment, license exam pass rates, completion rates, related employment of graduates, and facilities' conditions. Although tuition and fees do not compare favorably with

- other U.S. public institutions, there is a set tuition structure for all institutions in the MnSCU system.
- 6R5b O HCC has the opportunity to give a more complete picture of the value of the college's efforts by listing the data collected in 6R1 as part of comparisons with other institutions.
- 6I1a S HCC has refocused the Strategic Plan and continues to focus on mission-critical decision making. Although the MnSCU Board of Trustees is committed to maintaining quality education and access, the tuition burden is being addressed.
- 6I1b O Although the portfolio indicates a structure for tuition affordability, there is no mention of how systematic and comprehensive this improvement is.
- 6I2 S Because of its culture and small size, HCC has the ability to engage in informal yet meaningful conversations that lead to formal results. Through the AQIP process, HCC has come to realize the need for more formal documentation of the selection processes leading to planning for improvement.

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 Hibbing 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

- OV3b. HCC's short-term requirements are availability of classes, access to classes and services; fiscal responsibility and integrity; effectiveness; efficiency; safety and maintenance of facility. Long-term requirements, on the other hand, are remaining current and up-to-date in curriculum and equipment, maintain accreditation, strengthen and maintain the college's reputation, effective and quality hiring practices, faculty and staff credentials, safety, maintenance of facility.
- OV4a. HCC is part of a complex state system. The college is governed by a provost who works in conjunction with a four-member administrative team and who in turn is supervised by a regional NHED president.
- OV5. HCC operates within two different state systems, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) and NHED along with internal committees such as Shared Governance and Academic Affairs Standards Council.
- OV7. HCC is mandated to collect and communicate critical data. Other areas such as program development and curriculum, meeting minutes, and policy information also are collected and shared. Data management occurs through use of IPEDS, the HCC website, email, ImageNow, and AskUs.
- OV8b. Currently fifty percent (50%) of HCC's budget comes from the state. HCC will continue to be challenged by the projected reductions in support it receives from the state.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Hibbing 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>
7P1a	S	HCC has access to a variety of data sources through MnSCU and the NHED as well as a variety of surveys, both local and national. The NHED President's Cabinet directs the Office of Institutional Research in the collection of data and the distribution of the results along with presumably the analysis of said data.
7P1b	O	HCC recognizes that there is still room for improvement in their collection, analyses, distribution of data, and making more transparent how such data are used to make decisions.

7P2a	S	HCC manages data in a traditional manner through an Office of Institutional Research and increasingly distributes data electronically through the College's website. Data are collected on varying schedules (e.g., CCSSE and MnSCU), and depending upon the data source, are used to drive planning and to demonstrate accountability.
7P2b	O	HCC has identified the need to increase data-driven decision making.
7P3	S	HCC balances the need for required data sets with campus-based and departmental needs. The NHED Office of Institutional Research provides data, expertise, and training opportunities.
7P4a	S	Data are analyzed at the administrative level and are used to inform various decision-making processes including enrollment and retention efforts, human resource needs, and program review. Fiscal data are maintained and analyzed by HCC's fiscal officer.
7P4b	O	It is not clear from the information provided exactly how fiscal and other data drive the planning process. Clarification of this linkage and distribution of results might be useful in developing increased confidence by faculty, staff, and others.
7P5a	S	HCC's mandatory participation in providing data for the Accountability Dashboard provides the most widely used comparative data.
7P5b	O	HCC does not provide information about data availability related to comparable national institutions.
7P6	O	Through its AQIP Action Project, HCC is aware of the need for improving its data collection and analysis methods to enhance its ability to align data with achievement of goals and objectives.
7P7	S	HCC uses a well organized information technology network to help ensure the timeliness, accuracy, reliability, and security of information systems.
7R1	S	HCC's data are backed up and stored on a secure server. Storage space is provided on the College server for staff, inbound email is analyzed, and

- “trouble tickets” are used for problems. A network monitoring system is used to track efficiency of campus servers and equipment.
- 7R2 O HCC has systems in place to measure the effectiveness of their information management processes, but there is no evidence to show if the processes are working and are contributing to HCC’s mission and goals.
- 7R3 OO While HCC performs better than other local agencies in terms of measuring effectiveness. HCC may consider using other local, state, regional, and national benchmarks for comparing effectiveness.
- 7I1a S HCC revised its Strategic Plan and implemented department workplans to align with the College mission. These changes grew out of an AQIP Action Project.
- 7I1b O HCC recognizes that it has an opportunity to improve in being systematic and comprehensive in its process and performance results for measuring effectiveness.
- 7I2a S HCC is using continuous improvement processes within AQIP to suggest areas for future improvement in measuring effectiveness. The College is also working to establish a culture that values the use of data.
- 7I2b O As HCC deepens its ability to apply continuous quality improvement cycles through AQIP, it has identified strengthening its ability to measure effectiveness as an opportunity for growth and learning (e.g., AQIP Action Project for data inventory and collection).

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 Hibbing 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

- OV3b. HCC's short-term requirements are availability of classes, access to classes and services; fiscal responsibility and integrity; effectiveness; efficiency; safety and maintenance of facility. Long-term requirements, on the other hand, are remaining current and up-to-date in curriculum and equipment, maintain accreditation, strengthen and maintain the college's reputation, effective and quality hiring practices, faculty and staff credentials, safety, maintenance of facility.
- OV4a. HCC is part of a complex state system. The college is governed by a provost who works in conjunction with a four-member administrative team and who in turn is supervised by a regional NHED president.
- OV5. HCC operates within two different state systems, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) and NHED along with internal committees such as Shared Governance and Academic Affairs Standards Council.
- OV6. Continuous improvement is a key component of HCC's strategic, enrollment management and master facilities plans.
- OV8a. HCC is located within a region known for its "boom and bust" cycles. To the extent possible, HCC operates counter cyclically to these economic realities. The region is also experiencing a decline in traditional high school aged students and an increasingly aging population.

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

Item S/O Comment

- 8P1 S HCC has numerous planning processes such as Strategic Planning, AQIP, Program Review, Course Scheduling, Budget Review, Enrollment Management, Marketing, and Annual Workplans at the local-, regional-, and state-levels. High levels of communication and input characterize the processes.
- 8P2a S HCC uses the college's mission, vision, objectives and data to select strategies with short-term strategies guided by the Administrative Team's workplans and through AQIP goals while its long-term strategies are guided by multi-year, detailed, long-range plan and the use of demographic and economic data.
- 8P2b O Long-term planning can be bolstered with the identification and inclusion of stakeholders in the development of the multi-year, detailed, long-range plan that better integrated with budget planning.
- 8P3a S Department workplans provide the basis for development of actions that contribute to HCC's Strategic Plan.
- 8P3b O While the key action plans seem to be developed within the context of the strategic plan, it is not clear from the information provided how those key action plans are actually developed.
- 8P4 S HCC aligns and coordinates its planning processes to meet institutional, MnSCU, and NHED requirements. All departments contribute information and these data are moved upward to the Administrative Team and Provost for integration into institutional and district planning processes.
- 8P5a S Objectives are defined in the Strategic Plan, department workplans, employee position descriptions, and AQIP Action Projects, and the goals recommended by the MnSCU and the NHED. Further objectives are selected and defined through individual office and department plans, through CAC and Shared Governance, or other college groups, such as the Safety Committee or TASC.
- 8P5b O The mechanism for internally defining objectives, selecting measures and performance targets is not clearly apparent. While multiple sources are

- identified (e.g., CAC, shared governance, safety committee, etc.) the processes describing how these sources contribute to the larger organizational plan are not apparent.
- 8P6 OO HCC identifies daunting fiscal challenges and budgetary constraints mandating the college dedicate resources to areas supporting and promoting the college's core values. HCC uses the mission and vision as the foundation for planning. The portfolio does not indicate "how" this is linked to current resources and prioritized for future needs.
- 8P7a S Prudent budget planning and oversight of purchasing and expenditures have provided HCC with a sizable fiscal reserve that has helped to ensure financial stability.
- 8P7b S HCC assesses and addresses risk in its planning processes through Continuation of Operations Planning (COOP) which establishes policy and guidance to ensure the execution of the mission essential functions of the college in the event that an emergency threatens, disrupts or diminishes operations and services.
- 8P8a SS All full-time unlimited and part-time unlimited faculty members are eligible for sabbaticals. Sabbatical projects must support learning. Annually, 3% to 10% of faculty are granted sabbatical.
- 8P8b S HCC commitment to develop and nurture its personnel is exemplified by the eight days it devotes each year to Professional Development Days, Really Important People Conference, planning retreats, and funding of continuing education pursuits.
- 8R1 S HCC tracks course schedules, enrollment trends, marketing plan efforts, and the impact of unit work plans. Additionally, strategic planning cycles, budget efforts, and program review have a high priority at HCC. Use of AQIP principles to collect, analyze, and use results of measures for improvement are positive steps for HCC.

- 8R2a S Audit reports, McSCU Accountability Dashboard and a commitment to transparency provide reliable external means to confirm performance results.
- 8R2b OO The list of planning processes in 8P1 are not addressed in this portfolio response. The results presented on finances and enrollments do not list measureable results. Having specific metrics would continue to strengthen HCC's ability to use data for decision making.
- 8R3a S Examples of specific objectives and corresponding performance targets provide some evidence of the effectiveness of HCC's planning and process improvements over the next one to three years.
- 8R3b O Expanded use of setting definable metrics on performance goals will support analysis and application of fact-based information gathering.
- 8R4a S Continuous improvement results compare favorably both externally (CCSSE) and within the MnSCU system (Accountability Dashboard). Although tuition and fees do not compare favorably with other U.S. public institutions, there is a set tuition structure for all institutions in the MnSCU system.
- 8R4b O HCC would benefit by expanding their comparisons beyond the state boundaries.
- 8R5 S Multiple sources are used to attain feedback and evidence as to the effectiveness of Planning Continuous Improvement. The first year of focused strategic planning has produced evidence of its effectiveness.
- 8I1 S HCC has made many steps to embrace and practice continuous quality improvement principles. Implementation of the Strategic Plan three-year cycles, use of annual work plans aligning with and supported by campus and district leadership, and using the AQIP accreditation process are recent improvements and opportunities that will support HCC's continued systematic use of continuous quality improvement.

8I2 S HCC's commitment to AQIP accreditation process has helped to transform the college's culture and has served as a platform for collaborative 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 Hibbing 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

- OV1c. While HCC was a two-year college in 1916, it was not a fully comprehensive college until 1996. In 2004 HCC joined four other colleges to form the Northeast Minnesota Higher Education District (NHED).
- OV3a. The primary competitors for HCC include its partners in NHED, other Minnesota institutions of higher education, both public and private, such as UM-Duluth, online institutions, and the local workforce.
- OV5. HCC operates within two different state systems, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) and NHED along with internal committees such as Shared Governance and Academic Affairs Standards Council.
- OV9. HCC has significant partnerships that benefit both the college and community. Their partnership with the University of Minnesota (U of M) dental school provides teaching and learning experiences along with dental services to the community. Partnerships with other higher education institutions make it possible for community members to obtain bachelor's and master's degrees.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
9P1a	S	HCC's longevity has given it ample opportunity to develop long-term relationships with the various external stakeholders from which it receives its students. These activities include Technical Career Day, STEM day, Upward Bound, hosting regional high-school one-act play competitions, as well as partnering with local business and industry for development of training activities.
9P2	S	HCC utilizes many traditional methods of building and maintaining partners with external stakeholders who receive its students including program advisory boards, articulation agreements, and the Iron Range Education Committee.
9P3	S	HCC utilizes many traditional methods of building relationships with external stakeholders who provide services to its students including a Veterans Services office, ESL, and an on-campus provider Arrowhead University, relationships with local hospitals and U of M School of Dentistry, Northern Helicopters, DaimlerChrysler, and HCC's Workforce Center.
9P1-3	O	While HCC utilizes a number of relationships with its networks, partners, and stakeholders, there is no information detailing how these areas are considered part of its strategic planning and prioritization.
9P4	S	As a state agency, the College has to comply with the state bidding process for creating, prioritizing, and building relationships with the organizations that supply materials and services to HCC.
9P5	S	HCC personnel participate in meetings, conferences and other interactions with external agencies. Relationships center around accreditations, articulations or resource sharing.

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| 9P6 | S | HCC uses external surveys such as employer satisfaction, feedback from advisory boards, and direct visits from the College President to local employers. |
| 9P7 | S | Professional Development Days serve as a mechanism to create and build relationship among internal stakeholders. In addition, regular department meetings, College Advancement meetings, and Dialogue newsletter provide other mediums to connect. |
| 9R1a | S | HCC uses traditional items to assess internal and external relationships such as employer surveys, the number of articulation agreements, and the number of students using the services of such organizations as Arrowhead University. |
| 9R1b | O | While HCC collects information on its collaborative internal and external relationships, it is unclear what the specific measures are and how they tie to the process improvement goals of the organization (e.g., In 9R2 HCC notes it has nearly 75% of area high school graduates attending—does HCC want to go higher? How does this compare year-to-year?). |
| 9R2 | S | Several joint initiatives, such as ALI, serve as evidence of success in building collaborative relationships. Data suggest growth in shared activities and services. |
| 9R3 | O | Taking advantage of the MnSCU Accountability Dashboard when the measurement becomes available will be a positive step; however, HCC should consider looking beyond just those state-based data to gauge effectiveness. |
| 9I1 | S | As a result of its initial AQIP Action projects, HCC has become aware of the benefits of determining internal and external satisfaction of its various stakeholders. Other activities include its expanded nursing program, the ALI initiative, and the Iron Range Higher Education Committee. |
| 9I2 | S | HCC believes that its inclusive management style and open communications creates a culture that naturally allows for building more and better collaborations. |