Higher Learning Commission Visit

July 16-18, 2012

Progress on Opportunities

Systems Portfolio Feedback Report
Progress Toward Addressing
Opportunities for Improvement

Category 1: Helping Students Learn

Determining Shared Objectives for All Students
1P1b: *It is not clear that there is an ongoing process to review, assess, and improve general outcomes for learning and development. Having such a process could strengthen student learning.*

Progress Made:
- **At the end of each year, Title III is responsible to show, by review of teaching materials, at least 80% of participants' (of workshops supported by Title III funds) use of at least 2 strategies addressed in development. In order to ensure that this objective was met, Title III purchased *TracDat* to be used by the assessment committee. To date, the grant is using the tool for aspects of tracking grant progress and will be engaging more with the assessment committee to prepare for optimizing the use of the product to meet grant and institutional objectives.**

- **The Division Assessment Coordinators worked with their faculty to identify which courses support which general education outcomes. These links have been entered into *TracDat*. To gather baseline data, the courses linked to general education outcomes developed measures and collected data in Spring and Fall of 2011. The results have been entered into *TracDat*. The goal of the Assessment Committee for 2012-13 is to develop a college wide assessment plan for course, program and general education assessment.**

Determining Shared Objectives for Specific Programs
1P2b: *The process for developing the learning objectives is not fully described in the portfolio and does not appear to include student input. This kind of process, with student input, could enhance the development of learning objectives.*

Progress Made:
- **The Office of Institutional Research has implemented a program consisting of ongoing student focus groups. This has provided insight into specific challenges students face that the administration may not have otherwise considered, and provides data to help establish meaningful learning objectives suited to student needs. The Board of Trustees, including the Student Trustee, is presented the learning outcomes from the College and input from the Board is requested.**

1P5b: *A more systematic process that explicitly identifies required preparation based on program goals and objectives could ensure that the curriculum will change to meet the needs that were not considered when the current assessment instruments were developed.*

Progress Made:

- *TracDat* (an assessment management program) offers a centralized location to store assessment objectives and data. Focusing on the clearly defined Student Learning Outcomes that are currently measured on the course level and recorded in *TracDat* allows for a process that traces improvement and needs from the course level to the overall instructional strategic plan.

Addressing Differences in Students' Learning Styles
1P9: *NWACC recognizes that it has the opportunity to develop more formal and centralized processes for addressing differences in students' learning styles in order to provide a higher level of support for student learning.*

Progress Made:

- Since July 2011, Learner Support Services has re-engaged the Title III team in an effort to address issues related to college wide student success. Some of this work is reflected in the following responses. More specifically, the Title III grant provided the College an opportunity to participate in the Foundations of Excellence Study (FOE) with the Gardner Foundation. The data gathered during the "First Year Focus" survey served as the baseline for decision making, new program development, and allocation of resources.

   - Purchased and implemented *AdvisorTrac* software to better track student participation in various resources/offices on campus, provide a more unified approach to tracking interventions, and manage human resources needed to sustain improved programming efforts.

   - Renewed efforts toward offering the "My Link to Success" (First Year) course for incoming students. During this course, the Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator has been administered as well as a Learning Styles inventory prepared by the Academic Success Center as part of the regular curriculum. The results are discussed at length with the students and reflection assignments show the students integration of this self-knowledge into their educational and career planning.

Some examples include:

   o The purchase of *AdvisorTrac* Software to better track student participation in various resources/offices on campus, provide a more unified approach to tracking interventions, and manage human resources needed to sustain improved programming efforts (this includes an early alert and referral pilot coming, Fall 2012).

   o The Career Services Office created and piloted the Career and Academic Discovery Certificate (CADC), which supports this type of learning and personal style evaluation through the use of Strengths Quest and through work with an individual Career Counselor. The Title III Grant also funded this initiative.

   o Title III Grant funds purchased 14 on demand Student Lingo Workshops, of which one specifically addressed Learning Styles. The workshops expose learners of varying strengths and weaknesses to a variety of topics. Faculty, staff or advisors are able to

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recommend one of the workshops based on their specific interaction with the students. The workshops included:

 a) Maximizing Your College Experience
 b) What It Takes To Be A Successful Student
 c) Exploring Careers And Choosing A Major
 d) Mastering The Interview
 e) Resume Writing And Cover Letters
 f) Time Management: Strategies for Success
 g) Understanding & Conquering Procrastination
 h) Financial Literacy
 i) Stress Management
 j) 10 Steps to Financing Your Education
 k) Discover Your Learning Style
 l) Study Tips & Note-Taking Strategies
 m) Test Anxiety & Test-Taking Skills
 n) Avoiding Plagiarism

- **Additionally, the Academic Success Center has begun piloting a series of "Test Anxiety" workshops, offering one-on-one assistance to students reporting some type of test anxiety, and making referrals to a learning coach who was contracted using funds made available by the Title III Grant. Students' perception on the helpfulness and quality of the workshop instruction is favorable (See Chart 1, below).**

Chart 1

Students' Perception of Workshop Instruction
- Excellent — 70%
- Above Average — 30%
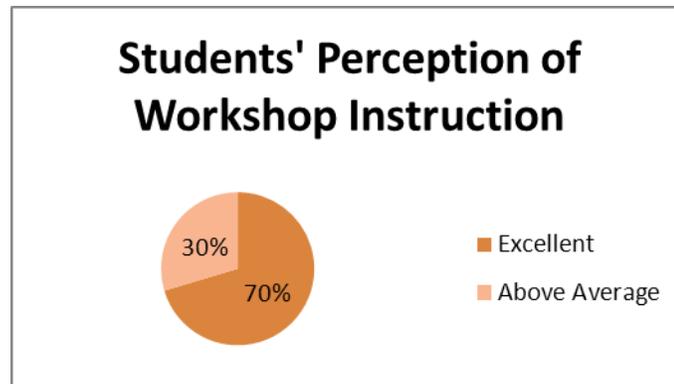
Building Effective Course Delivery Systems

1P12: *A clearly articulated set of goals and objectives related to course delivery has not been articulated. Without this, it will be difficult to assess whether the course delivery system is effective and efficient. It is not clear whether anything other than the traditional semester has been considered to address the various needs of students.*

Progress Made:
- **The AQIP Course Evaluation Technology Project team was formed out of a need to better manage the administration of student course evaluations and the data generated by this process. The project emerged from changes in the faculty evaluation procedure, making it**

apparent that the existing way of collecting student evaluation data was very labor intensive, had no consistent method of data analysis, and was expensive. Once appointed, the Team met in September 2011 to develop an online survey of stakeholders (e.g. faculty, students, and administrators/staff) to discover attitudes and concerns surrounding a switch to a completely online course evaluation system, as well as the features most desired by the stakeholders. The survey was publicized through regular communication channels of the College (e.g. email, announcements, etc.) and respondents consisted of 24 students, 115 faculty, and 18 administrators/staff. The team then met to analyze the survey responses, and developed a rubric of features and questions to use in reviewing both in-house and commercial course evaluation products. From October 2011 through February 2012, the team held a series of open meetings to view product demonstrations, with seven products being reviewed in all. In January, 2012, the team did a cost analysis survey of time and materials to determine the cost of existing evaluation methods [principally using Scantrons] as a means of comparison with the products under review. By the end of February, two 'finalist' products were chosen, with one product, SmartEvals, being recommended to the College for implementation. The product selection was then endorsed by vote of the Faculty Senate, and funding provided by the Information Technology department. Phase I of the project is now complete.

Addressing Learning Support Needs of Students and Faculty

1P15b: *NWACC appears to lack a systematic plan for determining and addressing the learning needs of students or to determine faculty learning support needs. Student learning could be enhanced through a more systematic process and through faculty development, including the large number of adjunct faculty members.*

Progress Made:

- The institution has placed renewed emphasis on faculty development with the designation of additional funds directed toward meeting this need. This funding is designated by the Vice President for Learning and the Faculty Development Coordinator utilizing an application process. The College also conducts faculty development through the biannual Celebrate Learning for Faculty event. Also, through several focus groups held with students, areas for faculty development have been documented. One such area was in the use of BlackBoard. This year, NWACC held a mandatory BlackBoard training for all faculty to ensure the success of online classes.

Aligning Co-Curricular Development Goals with Curricular Learning Objectives

1P16: *Although a Director of Co-Curricular and Judicial Affairs was recently hired, NWACC has the opportunity to develop a college-wide process to align co-curricular and curricular goals, so that student can learn effectively both within and beyond the classroom.*

Progress Made:

- *The following items have been implemented or are in progress:*
    1) Definition of advising in relation to the phases of the NWACC enrollment model (advisement, entry, persistence, and transition)
    2) Mission statement for the Advising Center in Learner Support Services has been developed
    3) An advising syllabus has been developed

4) **Advisor and student expectations have been developed and are in the last phases of approval**
5) **An advisor training is in the final phases of development and will be completed during a faculty advisement pilot, Summer 2012**
6) **Students having satisfactory academic progress are required to meet with an advisor and complete a plan of improvement**
7) **Orientation has been redesigned and is now an on campus requirement featuring a first year course**

Determining Learning and Development of Students
1P17: *Although some programs have indirect assessments of learning, NWACC does not currently have a college-wide process to determine whether students have met learning and development goals.*

Progress Made:
- **The goal of the Assessment Committee is to work in conjunction with the Provost, Vice Presidents of Learning and Deans to develop a College wide assessment plan for courses, programs and general education outcomes. Some areas are already following the developed plans, but the development of a comprehensive plan that includes timetables and deadlines for data entry, faculty review and follow-up and clear descriptions of who is responsible for these processes in each area is being developed. Using *TracDat*, faculty and staff are collecting data and assessing student learning. Reports can be developed at various times depending on the need for data.**

- **See 1P5b, 1P12, 1P18b and 1R1.**

- **In addition, the AQIP Course Evaluation Technology Action Project has been adopted and will be implemented, Summer 2012.**

Designing Student Learning Assessment
1P18b: *The process for assessing student learning in general education is being developed, which should enable the institution to engage in continuous improvement of the general education curriculum.*

Progress Made:
- **Through the work of the Assessment Committee and the implementation of the Core Indicators for Success model, NWACC is better positioned to describe and track student learning through general education outcomes. This is being documented through *TracDat*. Faculty and staff have been trained on the utilization of *TracDat* and are inputting data throughout the academic year.**

- **The complete implementation of *TracDat*, which is an AQIP Action Project for 2012-13, will assist in the efforts to assess courses, programs and general education and more easily engage in continuous improvement for general education.**

Measure of Student Learning and Development
1R1: *Although the portfolio lists several measures of student learning and development, the institution has the opportunity to show how the measures address all of the expected learning objectives and to demonstrate how the data are tied to strategic planning and budgeting.*

Progress Made:
- **See 1P5b.**

- *TracDat* **allows for the process mapping from the Trustee approved 5-Year Strategic Plan to the classroom practices that assess student learning. The Office for Effectiveness, in cooperation with the faculty led Assessment Committee, is currently implementing this new practice beginning on the course and department levels and will incorporate the mapping process to include the overall institutional strategic plan.**

- **One of the** *ARGOS* **data reports created through an AQIP Action Project has been an enrollment comparison that allows deans and other decision makers to analyze changes in SSCH and headcount registrations by course, division, etc. This has approved the precision of course scheduling and planning. In addition, the College has adopted 16 Core Indicators of effectiveness for community colleges. Baseline measures for these are being established which will be reported to the Board of Trustees and Expanded Cabinet in an effort to improve.**

Common Student Learning and Development Results

1R2: *The portfolio includes limited data about student learning assessment. Some of the data reflects indirect rather than direct measures of learning. Gathering, analyzing, and disseminating a wider variety of data could help NWACC to identify opportunities for curricular improvement.*

Progress Made:
- **The College has made gains with its course and core assessment of student learning efforts. In Fall 2012, the Learning Assessment Committee identified two major goals for the coming year: 1) Identify the specific curriculum embedded measures referred to in the Status Report and their respective general education core objective and 2) For each general education outcome, provide an inventory of the general education course(s) identified for measuring learning in relation to the core objective. An all-day workshop on outcomes assessment and measurement was attended by 156 faculty on March 3, 2012. Survey feedback from participants indicated more faculty having more common approaches to assessment measures. The College has also updated the duties of the faculty Department Assessment Coordinators and the College Assessment Coordinator, and updated the Learning Assessment Committee's role and scope of work.**

Comparing Program Performance Results

1R3: *Although sample performance results are provided--such as selected licensure exam results--a systematic process for data collection regarding specific program learning objectives and the improvements that are based on the data that is not presented. Analysis of such data, including longitudinal data, should help the institution develop a richer system of assessment leading to continuous improvement.*

Progress Made:
- **All courses, programs, and general education outcomes have been entered into** *TracDat*. **Data from some courses and programs have also been entered. When** *TracDat* **is completely implemented, longitudinal data will be created.**

Acquisition of Stakeholder-Required Knowledge and Skills
1R4: *NWACC recognizes the need that employers and four-year institutions have for more data about students' knowledge and skills as well as program completion. Developing a system to provide that information could strengthen articulation agreements and internship opportunities for students in the workforce.*
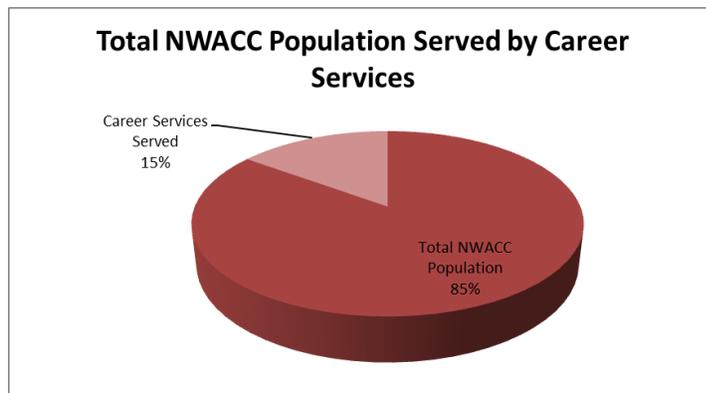
Progress Made:
- **The Career Services Office has initiated a series of Employer Information Sessions." These sessions allow prospective employers a chance to interact with students. The students are given an opportunity to network and begin building relationships with key recruiting contacts. These sessions are advertised on the College's newly implemented "NACELink" Career Services Manager website. Students are able to RSVP to attend employment related events while visiting the site. The Career Services Office has begun a solid practice of gathering data on services rendered.**
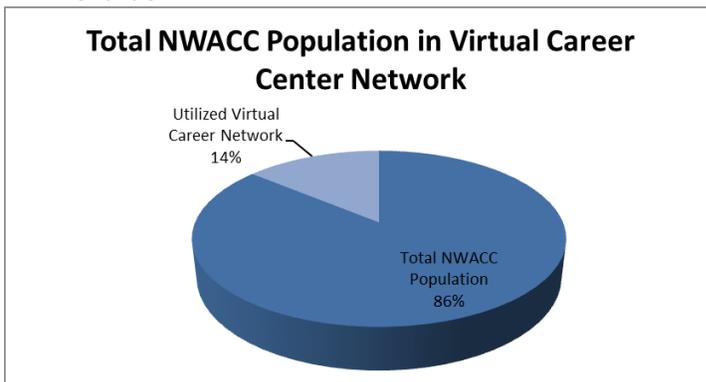
    Since July 1, 2011, Career Services has connected 1193 students 14.0% of the student population to resources via the Virtual Career Network. These resources include employers' sessions – networking opportunities, resume assistance, and interview technique workshops (See Chart 2, below).

    Since July 1, 2011, Career Services has served 15% of the total student population (See Chart 3, below).

Chart 2

Total NWACC Population Served by Career Services

Career Services Served 15%

Total NWACC Population 85%

Chart 3

Total NWACC Population in Virtual Career Center Network

Utilized Virtual Career Network 14%

Total NWACC Population 86%

Learning Support Process Results

1R5: *Although one year's results were provided and help to set a baseline for assessment, multi-year data on assessment efforts may lead to an enhanced culture of continuous improvement.*

Progress Made:
- **As part of the AQIP Action Project on *TracDat* for 2012-13, the Assessment Committee plans to assist Learner Support Services staff to develop outcomes and measures and assist with entry into *TracDat*.**

- **See 1P5b and 1R1.**

Comparison of Results

1R6: *NWACC has one of the lowest cumulative graduation rates among Arkansas colleges. It could be helpful for the institution to analyze the causes of this low graduation rate as the basis for improvement in student success.*

Progress Made:
- **Title III has supported the institution's purchase and implementation of *Degree Works* software that is intended to assist with career and educational planning, academic advisement, and progress tracking and degree auditing that will aid in the evaluation and intervention systems designed to improve students' success and progress toward graduation.**

- **Learner Support Services created a Degree Audit Coordinator position. The role of this position is to execute degree audits on the current student population and raise awareness of the credentials a student may be able to earn. Since the position's creation in July of 2011, 150 credentials have been awarded solely based on the audit and course substitution work managed by the degree audit coordinator. Additionally, degree completions have increased by 29% from Spring 2011 graduation to Spring 2012 graduation.[1] Special emphasis has been placed on informing students of the importance of earning an Associate's degree prior to transfer. Current data demonstrates the number of students indicating transfer as their option has decreased over four consecutive years.**

- **The Learner Support Services Division has launched a video campaign to raise awareness on the importance of the Associate Degree. The intent is to encourage students to remain at the College through degree completion. These video can be accessed at:**

  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SZKMPPIMu8

Category 2: Accomplishing Other Distinctive Goals

Designing and Operating Key Non-Instructional Processes

2P1: *Although Goal Statements are derived from the Strategic Plan and statements are developed for each of the key stakeholder groups, it remains unclear as to how the processes are shaped by the goals. For example, the Advancement and Workforce Development divisions operationalize the non-*

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[1] Final graduation and completion numbers will be audited and official June 1, 2012.

instructional processes such as community and high school relations, as well as grants and services to business and industry, but there is no corresponding information about the impact of these processes.

Progress Made:

- **The creation of the new NWACC 5-Year Strategic Plan involved both internal and external constituents. The Board formally approved the plan, in February 2012. The process for measurement is the implementation of one year goals and measurables that flow back to the Strategic Plan and the College's constituents. These goals are vetted through Cabinet, Expanded Cabinet, and the College community for input and recommendations. Once vetted, they are reviewed again by Cabinet, approved, and presented to the Board of Trustees, in July. These goals are then presented multiple times during the fiscal year to provide updates to the Board and the College Community by the Associate Vice President for Research and Planning.**

Assessing and Reviewing Appropriateness and Value of Non-Instructional Objectives
2P4: *Although the Distinctive Objectives are assessed for alignment with the College's mission, vision, and strategic plan, no description of this alignment process is given nor is the criteria that the College Cabinet uses to review the objectives. Clearly communicating this process could help increase stakeholder understanding.*

Progress Made:

- **The Board of Trustees sets the overall strategy of the institution through the approved 5-Year Strategic Plan. Based on these criteria, annual goals are created to meet the needs of NWACC constituents. This is done on an annual basis.**

- **The Learner Support Services Division has realigned its efforts to directly support the College's 5-Year Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives. This decision was made based on slowing student enrollment and changes in the economic and political climate impacting higher education in the region.**

Determining Faculty and Staff Needs Regarding Non-Instructional Objectives
2P5: *NWACC does not appear to have formal processes in place for valuing and prioritizing distinctive objectives. Without such processes, NWACC may be limited in their efforts to continually improve these objectives.*

Progress Made:

- **The Strategic Plan and Goals are vetted annually through focus groups and e-mail correspondence to get faculty and staff input and support. This data is collected by the Office of Institutional Research and provided to the Office for Institutional Effectiveness for analysis and reporting.**

- **The Learner Support Services Division has begun the processes of creating a set of broad Strategic Enrollment Management Definitions (See Table 1, below) to provide a framework for the inventory of processes associated with the various phases of student enrollment. These phases include entry (admissions and pre-admissions), persistence (retention) and transition (graduation, transfer, or stop out). Additionally, the College continues to refine its definition of advising to add to the Strategic Enrollment Management framework. This framework has been reviewed at the College's Expanded Cabinet and Cabinet levels, and should be**

formalized, July 2012. Once finalized, staff competencies will be drawn from each of the various areas associated with the enrollment management process.

Table 1

- **Advising**- A mutual exchange of information facilitated through regular student contact via in-person appointments, mail, telephone, E-mail and social media systems. This exchange helps advisors gain valuable understanding of students' diverse academic, social, and personal experiences and needs. Advisors use these insights to connect students to appropriate resources and assist students as they transition to new academic and social communities, develop sound academic and career goals, and ultimately, become successful learners. Advisors are also responsible for: a) conveying the purpose of the College, b) giving information about registration, educational policies, regulations, and administrative procedures, c) assisting students with planning short and long-term goals, and d) making referral to the appropriate resources or agencies to assist students.
- **Entry**- During the entry phase, College staff and faculty are responsible for conveying the purpose of the College, giving information about registration, financial aid, degree options, educational policies, regulations, and administrative procedures. This phase also includes assisting students with planning short and long-term goals as well as making referral to the appropriate resources or agencies to assist students.
- **Persistence/Retention**- During the persistence phase, advisors, staff and faculty collaboratively are responsible for monitoring the academic progress of students. Staff and faculty are also responsible for connecting students to resources necessary to enhance their academic success. Such resources include, tutoring services, supplemental instruction services, disability resources, veteran services, and career and transfer services.
- **Transition**- During the transition phase, staff and faculty are responsible for preparing students to meet new challenges and opportunities associated with transitioning from the College to the workplace or to another higher education institution. Collaboratively, staff and faculty are also responsible for connecting students to transfer and career information that will facilitate successful transition.

Incorporating Faculty and Staff Needs in Readjusting Objectives or Processes

2P6: *While input from faculty and staff is incorporated into the formulation of objectives and department leaders are empowered to respond by readjusting objectives, NWACC does not appear to have formal processes in place for determining other distinctive objectives for meeting faculty and staff needs and incorporating their feedback when readjusting these objectives. Without formal processes and systems for assessing effectiveness the College may be unable to continually improve stakeholder satisfaction.*

Progress Made:

- The Strategic Plan and Goals are vetted annually through focus groups and e-mail correspondence to get faculty and staff input and support. This data is collected by the Office of Institutional Research and provided to the Office for Institutional Effectiveness for analysis and reporting. By looking at the goals annually, this provides time for adjustment as changes arise due to seen and unforeseen circumstances.

- Staff competencies will be formally established upon formal development and approval of the College's comprehensive Strategic Enrollment Management Plan.

Performance Results in Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives

2R2: *Although NWACC provides some numerical performance results in accomplishing other distinctive objectives, such as the Adult Education department's strong GED pass rate, these results only give a "snapshot" of the effectiveness of activities and do not provide a long-term system of tracking and assessing performance results, thus evaluating their value added. Other services identified in Table 2.1 shows few tangible results despite the numerous measurements listed. The lack of results is an opportunity to begin tracking for the future.*

Progress Made:

- **This opportunity is being fulfilled through the implementation of the Core Indicators for Community College Success. Fact sheets are created based on measurable benchmarks in 16 areas. Data is provided, both quantitative and qualitative, to provide analysis on how the College is doing. This is the first year of implementation with further presentation and education being completed through the Offices of Institutional Research and Effectiveness.**

- **The NWACC Adult Education Program has a level of success in the areas of student enrollment, contact hours and pass rates. There is a need to measure and monitor the transition of adult students to post-secondary education and track their academic performance at the postsecondary level. The Adult Education Program has implemented the following initiatives to impact those needs:**

  - **The position of Adult Education enrollment specialist was created and filled for the purpose of assisting GED students as they bridge to community college enrollment. The Enrollment Specialist makes presentations in GED classes, assists GED students with admission and financial aid applications, schedules and then interprets COMPASS tests and takes them on campus for tours and orientation sessions.**

  - **The position of ESL Assessment Coordinator was created and filled for the purpose of tracking ESL student academic progress. The Coordinator tracks ESL test scores on AERIS (Adult Education data system), monitors test alerts for ESL classes, and tracks testing progress for each ESL class.**

  - **The college prep math class was developed to assist students in improving math skills and preparing students for the COMPASS test. This class was created to serve students with a GED and students with a high school diploma. Students are identified coming from the GED program and are referred from advisors on the main campus.**

- **Students impacted by these three initiatives will be tracked as they enroll in college credit classes at NWACC.**

Comparing Performance Results to Other Institutions

2R3: *While NWACC participates in the National Community College Benchmarking Project and is able to compare some performance results of accomplishing other distinctive objectives with other community colleges nationally, there is an opportunity to further analyze results to provide additional means of benchmarking for improvement.*

Progress Made:

- **This opportunity is being fulfilled through the implementation of the Core Indicators for Community College Success. Fact sheets are created based on measurable benchmarks in 16 areas. Data is provided, both quantitative and qualitative, to provide analysis on how the college is doing. When available, comparable data from other institutions or national data sets will be utilized to fulfill the direction of the Board to be a nationally recognized institution (CCSSE, NCCBP, etc.)**

- **The Office of Institutional Research staff present the results of CCSSE, NCCBP and the annual graduate survey to Learner Support Services at their division meeting; to the faculty senate and to Expanded Cabinet. In addition, the Office of Institutional Research regularly conducts informational sessions at Celebrate Learning for Faculty and staff events and updates on the Core Indicators to the Board of Trustees and the Expanded Cabinet.**

- **NorthWest Arkansas Community College participated in the EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research 2012 Student Technology Study/Survey. Nearly 200 colleges and universities participated and responses were collected from over 100,000 students. By July 31, 2012, NWACC will receive the following:**

  - **a file comparing aggregated responses from students at NWACC to aggregated responses from students at other institutions**
  - **a file with quantitative survey responses from students at NWACC**
  - **a file with open-ended survey responses from students at NWACC**

  The official final response count, response rate and the estimated margin of error for NWACC will also be received. The results will be shared with Administration and improvements will be made based on the responses.

Selecting Processes to Improve Performance in Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives
2I2: *NWACC's culture and infrastructure are influenced by workforce development and business partnership successes; however, few measures are used to identify needs and results directly associated with determining and achieving other distinctive objectives. As NWACC collects and analyzes measures that assess how well the College is meeting other distinctive objectives, they will be well-positioned to design systematic processes for improvement and set targets for improved performance.*

Progress Made:

- **Corporate Learning requests performance evaluations from each student that completes a training class. The evaluation questions focus on the instructor, course evaluation and facilities evaluation. Opportunities are provided for additional comments relating to the instructor, course, facilities and any additional training that might be of interest. Each evaluation is analyzed to determine need for improvement in training, facilities, facilitators and the need for additional training.**

- **See 3R4.**

Category 3: Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs

Identifying the Changing Needs of Student Groups
3P1: *While NWACC has a number of formal and informal means of encouraging relationship-building with students, it has no centralized, formal process or system to identify and analyze the changing needs of students groups or selecting courses of action regarding those needs. Developing and centralizing a formalized system could help the College to better understand and address the changing needs of student groups.*

Progress Made:

- **In an effort to establish consistency, the Office of Institutional Research is in the process of establishing an annual survey calendar that outlines when various areas of Learner Support Services will solicit feedback from their students (e.g. International Programs, Disability Resources, Orientation, etc.) Upon survey conclusion, the results are analyzed by the Office of Institutional Research and presented to the area's staff/administration. During that time, discussions are held about the implications of the survey findings and opportunities for improvements.**

- **See 2R3.**

- **NorthWest Arkansas Community College's Information Technology department, with support from Learner Support Services, implemented a Student Technology Helpdesk specifically to address and assist with all technology needs of the students. The Student Technology Help Desk, with support of the NWACC distance learning team, also provides first line support for the distance learning product, BlackBoard.**

- **During the Fall 2012 semester, the College officially launched a Student Government Association (SGA). The charge of this group was to represent the voice and needs of students. A member of the NWACC president's cabinet was assigned as a liaison and task to meet regularly with the SGA leadership. The student government has engaged in campus wide projects including:**

    - **College Branding Initiative**
    - **Student Transit System Support**
    - **Food Court and Student Union (common area renovation) campaign.**

- **The Learner Support Services has also employed two (2) full-time enrollment specialists. The role of the enrollment specialists is to reach out to various prospective student groups and centers of influence throughout the region and to engage them in activities designed to aid in the transition to college. Once such activity targeted non-traditional, working students and offered extended evening hours, individual orientation, and assistance with the financial aid process. As of this report, over 70% of the students that attend this event remain enrolled at the College.**

Building and Maintaining Relationships with Students
3P2: *Although some relationship-building activities are listed, no systematic process for building relationships with prospective students and maintaining relationships with current students is presented here. Formalizing this process could help increase student retention.*

Progress Made:
- **Learner Support Services staff has worked with the Office of Institutional Research to design an assessment instrument that is emailed to every student upon conclusion of their on-campus assessment. The purpose of this survey is twofold, both to determine the level of knowledge gleaned by the student through the orientation experience and to determine their level of satisfaction with the program.**

- **Learner Support Services has launched a newly-designed orientation program intended to engage students and connect them with staff and faculty advisors shortly after acceptance into the College. Upgrades to Banner modules have facilitated earlier communications via automated emails with students.**

- **Students are connected to their academic advisor during orientation with determined times for advising throughout the year. This is a new process at NWACC and data is being collected to look at the effectiveness of the new process.**

- **The College has established several affinity type groups on Facebook to engage students and communicate pertinent information. NWACC has hired a social media specialist whose role is to reach out to students and the community using online social networking platforms. Additionally, in Fall 2012 NWACC will begin using social networking services to distribute digital welcome packets to newly enrolled students to introduce to the College and explain vital processes such as registration, advising, and financial aid. NWACC is also participating in a research project partnering with the League for Innovation in the Community College and the Gates Foundation to look at the use of Social Media and its influence on student success. This is being done through the now implemented NWACC App on Facebook.**

- **The Admissions Office has built automated prospective student communication to encourage engagement at specific intervals of the enrollment process. This communication campaign begins with perspective students and continues until registration for orientation.**

Analyzing the Changing Needs of Key Stakeholder Groups
3P3: *The College lists a number of data points analyzed; however, no centralized, college-wide process is used to solicit stakeholder feedback on a regular basis. NWACC could be well served to analyze data related to enrollment, population, labor force, competitors, and projections on a quarterly if not monthly basis.*

Progress Made:
- **In February, the Office of Institutional Research designed and conducted a survey intended to solicit feedback from community members regarding their level of knowledge about and satisfaction with the College. This survey will be conducted annually to determine trends and areas of opportunity. The results of this survey will be made available to the College's leaders through presentations at Expanded Cabinet.**

- **Through the Data AQIP Action Project, the Office of Institutional Research has made available a set of *ARGOS* data blocks to keep key members of the College informed of enrollment trends, grade distribution, and enrollment figures by major.**

- **The Office of Institutional Research created an online survey that will be sent to each Workforce Advisory group. Currently, only one group, Retail Advisory Group, has participated in the survey because they have been the only committee to meet since the survey was created.**

Targeting New Students and Stakeholder Groups
3P5: *Although NWACC lists data sources for targeting new students and stakeholder needs, no process is described. It is unclear how these sources work within a system, such as Plan-Do-Check-Act Cycle or a strategic enrollment management process to maximize recruitment, marketing, retention, graduation, employment, and transfer of students.*

Progress Made:
- **A group of local high school students selected NWACC as their Senior Capstone Project and worked closely with the Office of Institutional Research and Marketing Departments to give their thoughts, ideas and impressions of the College in general, the College's recruiting process, website, etc. The feedback gained from "seeing the College through their eyes" was extremely insightful. It is the intention of the Office of Institutional Research to work closely with local high schools to make this an annual event as it provides real-world experience for the students and valuable insight for the College.**

- **The Admissions Office has started an evaluation of Return on Investment for all recruitment activities. Areas of focus were identified based on the demographics of the community and demographics of the high schools' graduating seniors. Once gaps were identified, specific events and outreach efforts were created to align the demographics of the College with the community. After the events, the evaluations and Return on Investment determine if the event was successful, what changes and/or additions were needed or if a demographic needed to reach in a different way.**

- **Learner Support Services is developing a Strategic Enrollment Management Plan.**

- **Census data from local high schools has been reviewed, indicating a large number of Hispanic/Latino students that were eligible for college, but were not being engaged. Learner Support Services restructured, and centralized outreach initiatives in an effort to target these growing, underserved populations.**

- **The Division's Global Community Center was awarded grant dollars to launch an initiative to reach the aforementioned underserved students. The newly developed program, "LIFE" is designed to provide empowerment and create the desire for and the access to quality higher educational opportunities for students, to promote student success during and after their enrollment in the LIFE program, and to create an atmosphere of acceptance and cultural celebration by linking all communities and peoples (See goals and objectives, page 17).**

Goals and Objectives

To reach out to high school students who have potential to benefit from this program. The focus will be on educating students for LIFE, not only for college. Emphasis will be on empowering students to believe they can create a brighter future for themselves and emphasize that education is key in achieving that:

- o **To increase knowledge about postsecondary opportunities among students and families.**
- o **To empower and motivate participants to set academic, career and personal goals for their future.**
- o **To engage community members and leaders in the summer program that will encourage participants to broaden the perspective of community.**
- o **To create a caring environment where participants feel comfortable transitioning to higher education.**
- o **To provide positive role models both from community leader involvement and NWACC mentors, faculty, and staff involvement.**
- o **To teach responsibility towards learning and education.**
- o **To teach skills that will increase participant's ability to plan and improve decision-making skills.**
- o **To demonstrate that fun with responsibility can improve learning.**
- o **To have 100 to 150 students participate in LIFE 2012.**

Collecting Stakeholder Complaint Information and Communicating Courses of Action
3P6: *NWACC has a process in place to deal with complaints from stakeholders and processes are in place to collect complaint information including grievances or appeals, student comments on instructor evaluations, online student comments, and staff and faculty complaints; however, a centralized process that is well publicized, easy to access, and provides a regular review of complaint trends may be needed to look for patterns and to ensure that appropriate action was taken.*

Progress Made:

- **NorthWest Arkansas Community College empowers faculty and staff with several avenues for presentation, discussion and open feedback.**

- **The 5-Year Planning Task Force Chair presented the 5-Year Strategic Plan draft to Cabinet, Expanded Cabinet, Staff Council, Faculty Business Meeting, stand-alone email communication (to Faculty via Faculty Senate President, to Staff via Staff Council President and to Students), all staff/faculty at the Spring Forum 2012, and twice to the Board of Trustees at Board Retreats. Feedback was received and integrated into the draft plan.**

- **Technology upgrades/implementations require cross-campus communication and engagement via committee meetings, open forums, email communications directly from the NWACC technology leader, dedicated web-based project plans and one-on-one conversations.**

- **The Information Technology department implemented anonymous technology feedback forms on the IT website (https://api.nwacc.edu/ITSfeedback.php) and via the College portal, My NWACC Connection.**

- **Director of Co-Curricular Activities and Judicial Affairs has updated the student handbook and provided feedback for the College catalog to eliminate ambiguity in the reporting process. The Director has also provided College wide training to staff and faculty on the use of the institution's central reporting system.**

- **The College has established a routine communication plan to contact students about conduct issues, findings and sanctions. This process is administered by the Director of Judicial Affairs.**

Performance Results for Student Satisfaction
3R2: *NWACC provides performance results for student satisfaction including some longitudinal data for Career Pathways and Early College experience. The CCSSE data provided in Tables 1.6 and 1.7 is baseline data, suggesting this measurement is in their beginning stages, and in the future the College could benefit from trend data on student satisfaction over a broad range of services.*

Progress Made:
- **NWACC participated in CCSSE again in 2011; the results of this survey were presented to several groups on campus (i.e. Learner Support Services, faculty, Expanded Cabinet, etc.). Current results, trend data and comparisons with similar institutions were presented. In addition, faculty/staff and administration members were given the opportunity to take the CCSSE instrument and then compare their results with those given by NWACC students. Future plans for using CCSSE data include work with the Assessment Committee.**

- **Institutional Research has compiled trend data from eight years' worth of graduate surveys and three biannual administrations of the CCSSE instrument. The data is routinely made available to faculty and the Expanded Cabinet.**

Performance Results for Building Relationships with your Students
3R3: *NWACC recognizes that it has no centralized process to collect information for understanding students' and other stakeholders' needs and, therefore, provides limited results. Developing a system for collecting and using data to inform decisions in this area may lead to stronger support from students and a better ability to meet their needs.*

Progress Made:
- **An AQIP Action Project was initiated in 2011 with the goal of identifying and addressing institutional data needs. The AQIP Action Project team represented a cross section of the College. Team members became responsible for going back to their areas and asking, "What data do you need to know to be more effective in your job?" The findings were reported back to the group. The result was approximately 20 data needs from all across the College. Purchasing an expensive dashboard was cost prohibitive. *ARGOS* was selected as the reporting tool within Banner and the list of 20 was limited to a more manageable number of 6 data needs that could be addressed using *ARGOS*. Information Technology is currently working with the Office of Institutional Research to develop the data sets.**

- **The College has taken major steps with its organization and administration of Planning, Research and Effectiveness. Together, the Offices of Institutional Research and Institutional Effectiveness have established institutional Core Indicators, modeled after best practices, which will guide the College's major research questions and data collection. The College's Quality Council, the Offices of Institutional Research and Institutional Effectiveness have also begun inventorying the additional student feedback and data that will be needed to establish timelines for various surveys and processes for analyzing results. In February 2012, the Associate Vice President for Research and Planning co-led the development of a new 5-Year Strategic Plan approved by the Board of Trustees. The Office of Institutional Research has also created a data warehouse for organizing, accessing and utilizing major data collection for all college stakeholders.**

Performance Results for Stakeholder Satisfaction
3R4: *Employer satisfaction data is given for only one program, Fire Science, and no narrative explains if there are similar data for other programs. Table 3.4 is not explained in the text, linked to any measurement in Table 3.3, and dates/frequency of information is not provided. Again, this suggests that this tool is new, but if continued, it could provide comparative data for improvement planning.*

Progress Made:
- **The Office of Institutional Research is working with Corporate Learning to conduct surveys and focus groups of their various advisory boards. In addition, the Office of Institutional Research communicates with AAS Program Directors to determine what they are currently doing in regards to employer satisfaction and to work with them to initiate annual employer satisfaction surveys and/or focus groups.**

Performance Results for Building Relationships with Key Stakeholders
3R5: *NWACC recognizes that it does not have a process for collecting performance results for building relationships with key stakeholders. The results provided do not necessarily speak to relationship-building. Developing a process and collecting this data could help the College have better support from stakeholders. Because there is no process in place, there are no results.*

Progress Made:
- **The Office of Institutional Research conducts an annual Graduate Survey. Each fall, the results of the survey are presented to faculty and Learner Support Services staff. In addition, the Office of Institutional Research conducts an annual Learner Support Services general survey to determine the needs of students as well as several smaller, more concentrated surveys for the specialized areas (e.g. International Programs, Disability Resources, etc.). Student Focus groups are also held to solicit feedback about the value of numerous campus initiatives (e.g. content of "NWACC TV" videos designed to provide information to new and current students on topics such as registration, applying for graduation, etc.).**

- **The College continues to address this challenge. Key areas identified for "relationship building" include business and industries served by the College's Corporate Learning division and regional Chambers of Commerce. A Workforce Development Survey was administered to regional business/industry leaders in collaboration with the Northwest Arkansas Regional Council and the University of Arkansas' Walton College of Business with the results being analyzed and integrated into the planning processes.**

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Comparison with Other Institutions

3R6: *The College compared their student satisfaction to a peer group and found that NWACC performed better than the average for that group in student-faculty interaction, and slightly better than average for active and collaborative learning and student effort. However, the cohorts in this comparison are not identified and the areas of comparison are vague, particularly "student effort." Not all are measurements of satisfaction with the services NWACC provides their students. The College could benefit from a more rigorous benchmarking process and results that break down the general student service area (advising, tutoring, library) and include more services (security, financial aid, parking).*

Progress Made:

- **NWACC participates regularly in the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). "Student effort" is a benchmark on the CCSSE instrument that the College uses to gauge performance. NWACC is also participating in the national Community College Institutional Survey (CCIS): Promising Practices for Student Engagement and Success. When available the results of that survey will provide the College with the opportunity to see how NWACC compares to other institutions with regard to various "high impact" educational practices that impact student retention.**

- **Learner Support Services has completed its third year of longitudinal data gathering on student services to include admissions, financial aid and advising. Learner Support Services is continuing to collaborate with the Office of Institutional Research to benchmark against national "best-practice" institutions.**

3I1b: *NWACC lists some recent improvements in supporting students' and other stakeholders' needs, developing a formalized, centralized system should help promote a continuous quality improvement culture that may more fully identify and support students' and key stakeholders' needs.*

Progress Made:

- **NWACC has recently implemented several software programs that support this effort including *Starfish*, a student tracking, advising and reporting program that allows Learner Support Services to better track the use of services by students and ensure their success. Also, focus groups have been conducted with several student constituent groups that have brought to light many areas for improvement. Two of these areas were with international students and student advising efforts. The Advising Center is also utilizing *AdvisorTrac* to create extensive reports on advising services that documents services provided to students and the amount of time that students are being provided these services.**

Selecting Specific Processes to Improve Performance in Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs

3I2: *While NWACC lists several means by which it selects processes, it does not reflect on the methods used for the decision-making process. Outlining this process may help the constituents within the College and community understand the rationale for decisions within the institution.*

Progress Made:
- **Learner Support Services has established a three-tiered decision making model with regard to improvements, purchases and the allocation of resources, human and otherwise. The three tiers are:**
  a) **Critical – this change or purchase is critical to assisting the College in fulfilling its mission.**
  b) **Needed – this change or purchase is needed and would improve services, but will not prohibit the College from fulfilling its mission.**
  c) **Desired – this change is desired and its impact will do very little to the overall efficiency of the College. It will not prohibit the College from fulfilling its mission.**

Category 4: Valuing people

Identifying Specific Credentials, Skills, and Values Required for Employee Groups
4P1: *NWACC may benefit from expanding beyond the use of their hiring managers and job rating software to determine the credentials required for faculty, staff, and administrator positions. Engaging with community partners and area employers as well as accreditation organizations may be a source of this expansion. The process for identifying credential, skills, and values is unclear. The ability to monitor and assess credentials, skills, and values will require consistent and accurate data.*

Progress Made:
- **Human Resources has added a position, Compensation Analyst, in order to complete desk audits that define position specific job tasks and better establish required credentials and skills for staff. Additionally, a goal for Human Resources is to design and implement performance-based employee evaluations. This would result in managers identifying targets for skill level(s) tied to job tasks.**

Planning for Personnel Changes
4P5b: *It is not clear what processes are in place for personnel changes, other than a 60-day notice of non-renewal. A more fully developed talent management process could lead to more seamless transitions.*

Progress Made:
- **Human Resources is currently focused on reviewing policy and position management as dictated by the State of Arkansas. These reviews must be completed prior to determining the process for succession planning. An external consultant is studying the current structure, payment plan, and succession processes from the President's Office to the Director level.**

Designing Work Processes and Activities that Contribute to Organizational Productivity and Employee Satisfaction
4P6: *While NWACC attempts to automate and systematize where it can and uses divisional process improvement teams to work with front line staff to identify and implement action items for improvements, it does not fully describe the process for doing so. Recognizing the process for doing so will help them continue to automate and systematize.*

Progress Made:

- **Administrative Services is currently reviewing all policy and procedures within this division. A component of this project is to focus on the processes and systems that are managed by policy. This project is slated for completion in June 2013. Departmental reorganizations have occurred in FY 2012 aimed at improving productivity.**

Determining Employee Training Needs to Strengthen Programs and Services
4P8: *As noted in the portfolio, NWACC does not have a centralized process for determining training needs. The recently developed Talent Management department could be used to provide more systematic attention to training needs and alignment with short and long-range organizational plans.*

Progress Made:

- **NWACC has replaced the Talent Management department with Staff Development and Faculty Development departments, which work with Human Resources to identify and facilitate training needs. Staff Development has an objective specific online training request form available to managers and staff.**

- **A post-session evaluation form is provided to participants attending professional development events. One evaluation question asks, "In order to serve your learners more effectively, please share what types of knowledge and skills you need to be successful." This information is collected and professional development sessions are chosen in response to this information. In addition, professional development surveys have been sent to all faculty asking them to identify learner-centered topics for professional development. Offerings are made according to what faculty feel they need and the results of faculty professional development surveys.**

Training and Developing Faculty, Staff, and Administrators
4P9: *The Organizational Development team uses a number of strategies to train and develop employees including brown bag lunch and learn sessions, webinars, book studies, and just in time online training and job aids, Celebrate Learning. However, the efforts are not consistent, measured, and are not linked to performance. Further, the link between this team's efforts and those of the Faculty Development Committee is not articulated. NWACC can strengthen the results of processes such as mini-conferences and the use of professional development transcripts, which they currently offer, with targeted trainings and offerings.*

Progress Made:

- **The Senior Vice President for Learning & Provost has reorganized the faculty development committee this year and their charge has been changed. This group has been reviewing professional development funding applications and making recommendations to the VP for Learning to either approve or not approve the funding requests. Prior to this academic year, the past Faculty Development Committee's chair (the faculty professional development coordinator) served as a liaison to organizational development. Together the Faculty Professional Development Committee and then Director of Organizational Development worked together to make sure the funding criteria used similar formatting, language and criteria domains which resulted in each area side of the house (faculty and staff) having a Menu-of-Options. In addition, the Faculty Professional Development Committee and the Director of Organizational Development collaboratively worked to have one professional**

development funding application that all employees could use in requesting funds. In addition, the Faculty Professional Development Committee provided a session in the New Employee Orientation to all employees on the Learning College principles to aid new employees to reflect and use the principles to drive their institutional work. In the new faculty performance review, one of the criteria is evidence of professional development activities. Faculty Development is now exploring ways to electronically capture internal professional development activities in a way to be able to easily run reports on faculty development activity and for providing individual professional development reports to upload into faculty teaching portfolios. Currently, information from the paper-based evaluations are summarized and stored in an electronic folder. In response to the reviewer's suggestion: Celebrate Learning is a type of mini-conference that is offered over two half days the week before classes begin each semester. Also see 1R2 for additional professional development opportunities for faculty.

- **Staff Development and Faculty Development have replaced Organizational Development. This allows for improved focus on employee groups that have unique training and development needs. Staff Development has revised their web presence including implementing a training menu and calendar which incorporates training registration from the calendar. Online evaluation surveys are sent immediately following all Staff Development training sessions, including New Employee Orientation. Human Resources and Staff Development are currently collaborating in order to develop an employee on-boarding plan through consistently scheduled training and development led by departmental content experts. Staff Development has a project in the works with Information Technology that would generate annual employee training and development reports to support annual performance evaluations.**

Designing and Using a Personnel Evaluation System
4P10: *NWACC is currently changing and redesigning the personnel evaluation system and has the opportunity to align the new competency based performance system with objectives for both instructional and non-instructional programs and services.*

Progress Made:
- **Human Resources is currently designing performance-based employee evaluations. This will result in managers identifying targets for skill level(s) tied to job tasks. For classified employees, the evaluation process is based on state-mandated policies. For non-classified employees, the process is currently under development. For faculty, a new process designed by the faculty was established this year and will be evaluated at the end of the year for success and improvement.**

- **See 4P1.**

Designing Employee Recognition, Reward, Compensation, and Benefit Systems
4P11: *While the College provides the benefits structure, notes that compensation levels are dictated by the state, and comments that merit pay is available for classified staff, it does not describe how these items align with objectives or the process used to revise the packages. No recognition or reward system is described. Clearly developed internal processes may help ensure that the alignment is taking place or provide a basis for change.*

Progress Made:

- **Under the direction of a new Human Resources Director, the College has identified a specific staff member to oversee completion of annual employee evaluations. Access to forms and contacts for assistance has a stronger presence on the HR web page. Human Resources has a goal to implement training for managers on conducting performance based employee evaluations before the end of FY 2013. The College is governed by the State regarding financial rewards. However, as a component of the recently completed AQIP Action Project for Valuing People, a College-wide survey was completed on employee recognition and sought to measure (1) employee awareness of current recognition initiatives and (2) feelings of value associated with current employee recognition initiatives. It was recommended that this survey become an annual event.**

Motivating Faculty, Staff and Administrators
4P12: *A more formalized process to identify elements that contribute to staff motivation, coupled with a process to measure those elements, could lead to more effective and focused motivation-enhancing efforts.*

Progress Made:

- **In the Fall of 2010, the College administered a Survey on Transparency and Openness. In addition to a question regarding the respondent's morale, other questions address access to information affecting employees' work and inclusion on decision-making processes. The survey results provided indirect measures of employee motivation. An AQIP Action Project completed in 2012 also looked at potential measures for valuing people that will help lead the process in the future.**

- **The College currently has recognition programs monthly (First Friday) for College employees. Various divisions sponsor these events across the campus. Employees are recognized for dedicated and outstanding service.**

- **See 4R1.**

Evaluating Employee Satisfaction, Health and Safety, and Well-Being
4P13: *Numerous activities exist related to employee satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being such as a wireless emergency broadcast system and digital security cameras, and include employee awareness programs such as safety meetings. There does not, however, appear to be a process for overseeing the activities to look for trends or special areas needing improvement. Improvement in this area could be enhanced with clearly developed oversight processes, development of benchmarks, and a coordinated accountability structure.*

Progress Made:

- **The College has recently added a position in Administrative Services/Operations - Emergency and Risk Management Coordinator. This position works throughout the College with management for oversight and development of processes related to employee safety and wellbeing. Human Resources has a staff member dedicated to improving employee wellness through providing learning and development opportunities.**

- **Examples of well-being programs for students, faculty, and staff include the following:**

- o **Intramural Sports Clubs**
- o **Men's Soccer Club Team – All Star Sports Indoor Arena Springdale**
- o **NWACC Baseball Club Team - Bentonville**
- o **Basketball Leagues – Fayetteville Athletic Club and/or Springdale Youth Center**
- o **Volleyball Club Team - Women's & Men's Club – All Star Sports Arena Springdale**
- o **Bowling Club Team - Rogers**
- o **Tae Kwon Do Club - Rogers**
- o **Women's Softball Club Team - Rogers**
- o **Horse Riding Club Team – Bentonville**
- o **Complimentary Fitness Center Membership Plan for Selective NWACC Students**

Measures of Valuing People
4R1: *NWACC currently has no processes for measuring and analyzing valuing people. Developing processes and systems for regularly tracking and assessing performance results in this area may help move the College to a culture that values employees and thus improve employee satisfaction.*

Progress Made:
- **NWACC recently completed an AQIP Action Project for Valuing People. The outline for this project resulted from the 2011 Strategy Forum. The committee has submitted recommendations to the Quality Council for initiating specific measures for Valuing People in employee evaluation, recognition and development.**

- **See 4P11.**

Performance Results in Valuing People
4R2: *NWACC currently has no performance results available for valuing people. Developing processes and systems for regularly tracking and assessing performance results in this area may help move the College to a culture that values employees and thus improve employee satisfaction.*

Progress Made:
- **See 4R1 & 4P11. Additionally, a new Staff Development Director has implemented an online system for training requests and has further initiated an online evaluation system for all training and development programs.**

- **NWACC has created an Office for Diversity and Inclusion with a Director that leads the efforts for ensuring the valuing of all people on and off campus. This has been an excellent addition to the campus.**

Evidence of Productivity and Effectiveness of Faculty, Staff and Administrators
4R3: *NWACC does not provide evidence indicating the productivity and effectiveness of employees in achieving college goals. Designing a system that aligns employee effectiveness to achieving College goals could improve performance and motivate employees.*

Progress Made:
- **NWACC believes that employee productivity and effectiveness is demonstrated through regular, documented employee performance conversations and evaluations. This process is currently under review and revision as noted in 4P10 & 4P11.**

Comparison to Other Organizations
4R4: *NWACC has no process in place to compare performance results for valuing people with other institutions. Developing a system to compare the College's progress in this area may promote continuous improvement and provide an opportunity to discover best practices in other institutions.*

Progress Made:
- **After further research and analysis, no program could be found that NWACC could implement. Any suggestions would be appreciated.**

Recent Improvements in Valuing People
4I1b: *Although NWACC has made recent improvements in valuing people there is no formalized, comprehensive system for identifying, aligning, and tracking performance results. Such a system could promote aligned efforts to retain employees and improve performance based on data based decision making.*

Progress Made:
- **See 4P10, 4R2, and 4P11.**

Selecting Specific Processes to Improve Performance in Valuing People
4I2: *NWACC does not yet have processes and systems to improve and set targets for improved performance results in valuing people. NWACC has the opportunity to create, implement, and evaluate processes that will assist in setting targets for improvement to establish performance results for Valuing People.*

Progress Made:
- **See 4R1.**

Category *5:* Leading and Communicating

Using Data, Information and Performance Results in Decision-Making Processes
5P6: *Although several kinds of data are collected at the institution, it is not clear how these data are used in the decision-making process nor how they connect to the strategic plan. Clarifying these linkages could enhance the effectiveness of the decision-making process.*

Progress Made:
- **The Office of Institutional Research makes frequent presentations to the Board of Trustees and Expanded Cabinet regarding findings of various institutional surveys conducted via in-house (i.e. graduate survey) and external (e.g. CCSSE) instruments. These results are used as a springboard for discussion and decision-making regarding opportunities for improvements.**

Communicating Shared Mission, Vision and Values
5P8: *The mission, vision, and values are communicated in visible areas and forms, but how this communication deepens and reinforces the College's commitment to these shared values remains unclear. The connection between the institution's Ends and Goals aligned to the mission and vision with measurables does not seem to be described clearly in 5P6.*

Progress Made:
- **The NorthWest Arkansas Community College's Information Technology Department released their first CIO (Chief Information Officer) Annual Report: http://its.nwacc.edu/cioannualreport.php. The annual report ties in directly to the documented IT Strategic Plan (http://its.nwacc.edu/documentation/IT_Strategic_Plan.pdf), which ties in directly to the NWACC 2010-2015 Strategic Planning Initiatives.**

- **Learner Support Services has re-engaged the College community in conversations on the formal adoption of a First Year philosophy to provide a framework for staff and faculty work on student engagement and retention efforts. The philosophy statement was presented to the College's quality council in March of 2012, and formally adopted.**

First Year Philosophy Statement
To ensure the success of our first year students, our philosophy is to value active learning, cultural identity, and equal access to opportunities by evaluating and assessing student needs. NorthWest Arkansas Community College fosters the transition from students' existing experiences to enhanced skills and attitudes leading to academic and career success in a safe atmosphere of individual growth and discovery.

Developing Leadership Abilities and Sharing Best Practices in Leadership
5P9: *Although NWACC leadership encourages internal, local, and statewide leadership development for faculty and staff; it is unclear how this is communicated or how the learning from leadership development activities is shared throughout the organization. A Learning College culture could be enhanced by sharing knowledge, skills, and best practices.*

Progress Made:
- **Leadership NWACC completed two sessions in FY 11 & 12. These pilot programs are currently under review and a revised Leadership NWACC is slated to resume, in Fall of 2012. Internal subject matter experts will be used throughout this program that will include varying levels of leadership development opportunities.**

Measures of Leading and Communicating
5R1: *Although NWACC utilizes the Ends and Goals process to measure performance in leading and communicating through the CCSSE and NCCBS, the actual performance measures were not provided. Including these performance measures in College communications may help with transparency and enhance the Learning College environment.*

Progress Made:
- **These measures are provided in the Core Indicators fact sheets and in the Board updates provided throughout the year can be found on the NWACC Board of Trustees website.**

    http://www.nwacc.edu/web/presidentsoffice/trustees.php

Results for Leading and Communicating

5R2: *While the College has provided a link to the location of the minutes of the Board of Trustees, it does not show which results are specifically geared towards this category. By considering these results in a more focused manner, the College may be able to better inform its processes and systems.*

Progress Made:

- **http://www.nwacc.edu/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=1c2d5c3f-fec3-479d-bbcc-ddd3dfc015ef&groupId=143923**

Comparison to Other Organizations

5R3: *NWACC referenced the AQIP Examiner's Survey to provide comparison to other institutions. These results showed the College lacking in all categories when compared to other organizations. NWACC did not provide other methods of comparison specifically. NWACC could improve in this category by increasing efforts in the areas of the AQIP Examiners Survey and by reviewing other comparison methods.*

Progress Made:

- **These measures are provided in the Core Indicators fact sheets and in the board updates provided throughout the year found on the NWACC Board of Trustees website. These measures can also be found on the Institutional Research website and internally through *ARGOS*.**

- **NWACC participates regularly in the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). CCSSE results are compared to other institutions of comparable size, geographic region, etc. In addition, NWACC produces an annual "Report Card" that compares the College to similar institutions in the areas of cost, percent full-time faculty, graduation rates, headcount, etc. NWACC also participates in the National Community College Benchmark project annually which allows for comparisons on such benchmarks as course completion rates, retention rates, etc. It is also anticipated that the state's performance funding that will go into effect 2013 will allow the College some additional opportunities to benchmark itself against other Arkansas colleges using the performance funding criteria.**

Recent Improvements in Leading and Communicating

5I1b: *Although NWACC can point to a variety of individual improvements made in this leading and communicating, the processes for leading and communicating are not systematic and yield few measurable results at this time. The AQIP project "Improve Communication & Leadership Processes" demonstrates the College's commitment to improving this area.*

Progress Made:

- **NWACC has recently reorganized the Marketing and Public Relations Division. Led by the Vice President for Public Relations and Development, the Executive Director for Public Relations, Communication Specialist, Social Media Specialist, Public Relations Writer, and Director of Marketing. This office has provided a systematic and measurable process for disseminating information. The use of multimedia, social networking and e-news provides the College and local community an opportunity to provide remarks and feedback concerning how and when they receive information.**

Selecting Specific Processes to Improve Performance in Leading and Communicating
5I2: *NWACC recognizes there is much work to be done in this area. The commitment to transparency, open communication, and continuous quality improvement along with the commitment to develop measureable goals throughout the institution provide a good foundation for future improvement. As the College continues to become a more data-informed institution, it will be well-positioned to create a culture and infrastructure to implement improvements in Leading and Communicating.*

Progress Made:
- **Data and information are more readily available utilizing the Core Indicators fact sheets and in the Board updates provided throughout the year found on the NWACC Board of Trustees website. These measures can also be found on the Office of Institutional Research website and internally utilizing the *ARGOS* system.**

  http://www.nwacc.edu/web/institutionalresearch/index.php

Category 6: Supporting Institutional Operations

Identifying Administrative Support Service Needs of Faculty, Staff and Administrators
6P2: *While some processes are listed regarding the identification of administrative support service needs, the needs are not consistently identified across the institution. NWACC has the opportunity to formalize processes to identify the administrative support service needs for employees. Creating a system that documents these needs may allow the College to plan and budget in a consistent manner for all employees.*

Progress Made:
- **Administrative Services has launched a newly designed website that seeks to provide access to information for and receive feedback from, all stakeholders. Additionally, this division is leading a College-wide initiative to review all current policy and provide access to policy that is accurate, clear and efficient.**

Maintaining Physical Safety and Security
6P3: *NWACC uses a variety of support processes to maintain physical safety and security on campus; however, how these processes are designed, communicated, and updated in a systematic way via their Business Continuity Emergency Plans remains unclear. Communicating the total process and how it is assessed and improved may enhance stakeholder buy-in and confidence.*

Progress Made:
- **NorthWest Arkansas Community College was the focus of a Cisco Customer Case Study (white paper) after deploying a centrally managed, high-definition video surveillance IP camera system on campus. The College continues to identify and focus on protecting its greatest assets –students, faculty, staff and guests. The improvement was communicated to all College affiliates and the community and is documented on the IT website (http://its.nwacc.edu/index.php) and on the Cisco website (http://www.cisco.com/en/US/prod/collateral/vpndevc/ps6918/ps9145/ps9152/case_study_c36-690833.html). NWACC has also created the Office for Risk Management. A new director has been named and is reviewing emergency plans and implementing campus wide training.**

Managing Student, Administrative, and Organizational Support Services Processes

6P4: *The College provides examples of how it manages some of their day-to-day support service processes; however, it is not clear how these services are meeting the needs of the stakeholders on a day-to-day basis. No mention of data collection or analysis is provided for these support services. For example, staffing the Student Information Center is not managing a service to ensure it meets the needs of the students using that Center. Keeping a public safety log does not demonstrate how that daily log ensures that safety concerns are being addressed.*

Progress Made:

- **Decisions for changes to the administration of student support and services are driven through the Critical, Needed, Desired (CND) model. Data are gathered through surveys administered each semester. Data are also gathered during the College's annual graduate survey. With a rising number of violent incidents occurring across the nation, one area of concern for the College was the students' perception of their sense of security. Per the College's 2011 graduate survey, 93.5% of the respondents reporting feeling safe on campus.**

- **The College's Vice President for Learner Support Services has implemented a secure online area for students to voice concerns and suggest improvements.**

- **The Office of Institutional Research also measures the effectiveness of student support services via survey each semester. The Division's leadership team reviews data, and areas deemed worthy of attention are given to the Division's process improvement team for consideration.**

Documenting Support Processes

6P5: *While the institution has some methods of knowledge sharing, such as storing minutes on the Internet; it does not have a centralized college-wide approach for documenting support processes. Should the College develop such a process, cross-departmental effectiveness and innovation could be improved, fostering empowerment and creating a means for the mapping of institutional efforts.*

Progress Made:

- **Learner Support Services service areas have begun the process of producing all internal process in *One Note* for file sharing. Also, departmental procedures are available on an institutional shared drive.**

- ***TracDat* (an assessment management program) offers a centralized location to store assessment objectives and data. Focusing on the clearly defined Student Learning Outcomes that are currently measured on the course level and recorded in *TracDat, TracDat* allows for a process that traces improvement and needs from the course level to the overall instructional strategic plan. With phase two being implemented in Fall 2012, Learner Support Services Administrative Services and Research and Planning will add to the amount of assessment data that will be available for data driven decision making from the course level to NWACC's overall 5-year Strategic Plan.**

Measures of Student, Administrative and Organizational Support Service Processes

6R1: *Although NWACC regularly collects and analyzes measures of student, administrative, and organizational support service processes to meet state reporting requirements and to use for planning*

and budgeting, very few examples are provided. Formalizing processes and systems in this area could help track and assess organizational progress.

Progress Made:

- **NWACC's Learner Support Services division measures its effectiveness by examining feedback received from a "Service Satisfaction" survey that has been administered at least once per semester for the past three years. The survey is administered to any student that received support during the semester from one of the service areas. The results are analyzed, shared with the division, and the division's process Improvement team (LSPIT), with appropriate recommendations coming from this team.**

- **NWACC's Learner Support Services division measures its effectiveness by examining feedback from its annual "Graduation Survey." This survey is administered to all students completing a degree or credential during the academic year. The results are presented and discussed by the division leadership. The division leadership shares the results with the process improvement team for consideration and recommendations.**

Results for Student Support Service Processes

6R2: *Although NWACC regularly collects and analyzes measures of student, administrative, and organizational support service processes to meet state reporting requirements and to use for planning and budgeting, no performance results are provided. Providing results would help illuminate the processes used for collection, analysis, and the resultant data-based decision making for improvement.*

Progress Made:

- **See 6R1.**

Results for Administrative Support Service Processes

6R3: *Although Table 6.1 suggests many tools for identifying needs for the college support services, NWACC does not appear to have a formalized system of tracking and reporting performance results for administrative support service processes. Developing and implementing these processes and systems may help the College identify areas of need and to make improvements that could increase efficiency.*

Progress Made:

- **Under the direction of new leadership, Administrative Services will produce its first Annual Report in July of 2012. Additionally, a number of reports in Budget, Financial Operations and Public Safety are currently updated on a regular basis and accessible from the new Administrative Services Website.**

    http://www.nwacc.edu/web/administrativeservices/

Using Information and Results to Improve Services

6R4: *While NWACC notes that departments are encouraged to use information and results to improve services, the lack of data provided in this section makes it difficult to assess data availability and use. A consistent, institution-wide, data collection process could improve evaluation and planning efforts and ensure that key support areas use results to improve services.*

Progress Made:
- **The Office of Institutional Research has recently become significantly more proactive with surveys it conducts, both in terms of survey creation and volume. While careful consideration is paid not to "over survey" the students, their feedback is sought in numerous ways. Targeted surveys (e.g. Orientation participants, International Students, Career Pathways participants, etc.) are conducted as well as the general Learner Support Services annual survey and the annual graduate survey. In addition, the Office of Institutional Research staff is available for data analysis, evaluation and often conducts follow-up focus groups as requested by the departments or divisions originally conducting the surveys.**

Results for Supporting Organizational Operations Processes with Other Institutions
6R5: *Although NWACC has comparative data documenting performance of processes for supporting organizational operations with other institutions; it is not clear how the College actually uses this data to track trends, to make improvements, or to prioritize areas for improvement beyond those originating from Arkansas Department of Higher Education reports.*

Progress Made:
- *NorthWest Arkansas Community College's Information Technology Department has implemented numerous collaborative efforts within the State of Arkansas (and beyond):*

  - **Creation of a statewide technology consortium – Arkansas Technology in Higher Ed (ATHE) message board. Initially created to encourage technology communication and collaboration for Arkansas 2-year institutions, the forum has now been rolled out to 4-year institutions and instructional technology faculty and deans. http://athe.nwacc.edu/forums/**

  - **Creation of a technology track at the annual Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges conference. First technology track (October 2011) welcomed representatives from 15 of the 22 two-year schools, administrative and academic.**

  - **NorthWest Arkansas Community College hosted the annual Arkansas Banner User Group conference in September 2011. 150 SunGard ERP users attended (Arkansas State University, Arkansas Tech University, Harding University, UA - Little Rock, UA – Cooperative Extension, Tulsa Community College, UA – Fort Smith, University of Central Arkansas, University of Dallas) as well as large-scale vendors like SunGard, BlackBoard, Campus EAI, Oracle and Cisco.**

  - **NorthWest Arkansas Community College is collaborating with the University of Arkansas – Fayetteville in their deployment of the Kuali system on their campus.**

  - **ARE-ON and NorthWest Arkansas Community College are working closely to pursue a statewide 'SaaS' offering using the new optical network.**

  - **NorthWest Arkansas Community College has taken a leadership role in compliance with state legislation regarding the 'Open Checkbook Law' for Arkansas Higher Education the Expenditure Transparency Website. NWACC completed their website and has shared the site with all 2 and 4 year institutions via guest logins and**

presentation at Arkansas Department of Higher Education committee meetings and the Presidents/Chancellors meetings. NWACC has also compiled and shared code with other Arkansas institutions to aid in the development of their websites.

Recent Improvements in Supporting Organizational Operations
6I1b: *While some departments have engaged in improvement efforts, NWACC acknowledges the lack of a systematize processes and reporting for support services. Creating a more formal system that tracks and communicates improvement may strengthen the learning culture and highlight best practices.*

Progress Made:
- **NWACC has implemented several multidisciplinary groups that work to improve the processes for support services. These groups include the Quality Council, Effectiveness Team, Assessment Committee and Intercultural Education Committee. One of the focus areas for each of these groups is to meld the thoughts and ideas of various constituent groups to ensure campus support.**

Selecting Specific Processes to Improve Performance in Supporting Organizational Operations
6I2: *Although NWACC is in the process of growth and change and their current culture and infrastructure support rapid response to identified needs, building more formalized and centralized processes and systems to set targets for improved performance results in supporting organizational operations may assist with planning and resource allocation.*

Progress Made:
- **Key areas of progress include ongoing revisions to Standing College Committees procedures, and alignment of processes utilizing the Offices of Institutional Research and Institutional Effectiveness. Administrative Services is working to revise administrative policies and improve the dissemination of these policies through a comprehensive web presence. The Cabinet has empowered the Committee on Committees to define the College's standing committees, their respective role and scope, their general (by stakeholder area) composition and their supervisory line to Cabinet. The Offices of Institutional Research and Institutional Effectiveness have defined their specific relationship to one another, collaborated to improve and implement a new academic program review process, and established their respective roles as the College moves to implement the new Arkansas State Performance Funding model.**

Category 7: Measuring Effectiveness

Selecting, Managing and Distributing Data and Performance Information to Support Programs and Services
7P1b: *NWACC recognizes that some divisions and departments are not yet using data in decision-making processes. A campus-wide commitment to data-driven decision making, and a clear articulation of the processes used, may increase institutional effectiveness.*

Progress Made:
- **The Office of Institutional Research provides data using numerous vehicles: the annual College Fact Book, annual Fast Facts and Quick Facts documents, as well as frequent presentations at Learner Support Services, faculty business and expanded cabinet meetings. In addition, the**

Director of the Office of Institutional Research has spearheaded an AQIP Action Project designed to determine and address institutional data needs as defined by the College stakeholders themselves, which has resulted in the creation (still ongoing) of 6 *ARGOS* data blocks.

- **The formalization of the Strategic Enrollment Management plan will serve as the primary tool for decision making in addition to the Critical, Needed and Desired (CND) model. Currently, baseline data such as enrollment funnel yield, financial aid student loan default rate are two critical tools used to aid in the decision making process. The College recently implemented a new mandatory Satisfactory Academic Progress counseling session for all aid recipients based on stiffening federal requirements and a slightly higher student loan default rate.**

- **See 3I2.**

Selecting, Managing and Distributing Data and Performance Information to Support Planning and Improvement Efforts
7P2: *Although Office of Institutional Research provides data to the college community; it is unclear how that information supports planning and improvement efforts in a systematic way. A clear articulation of the processes used may provide the foundation for an effective assessment system. Aligning strategic planning and improvement efforts with data management and communication could assist data-based decision making and enhance a culture of continuous improvement.*

Progress Made:
- **See 7P1.**

Determining Needs for Collection, Storage and Accessibility of Data and Performance Information
7P3: *Although Office of Institutional Research responds to state reporting requests and data requests from departments, formalized processes to determine the needs of departments related to the collection, storage, and accessibility of data and performance information may promote more buy-in for a culture of assessment. NWCC's assessment systems may be strengthened by ensuring that the assessments are grounded in the mission of the institution.*

Progress Made:
- **As of March 2012, the Office of the Associate Vice President of Research and Planning launched the official website of the National Community College Research Institute. Operating in conjunction with the Office of Institutional Research, NCCRI will manage data collected though research projects conducted by both of the College's research arms. As a result, NCCRI will provide through its website a centralized, public exhibition of data and research results that will be available to all departments of the College. This effort will facilitate data-driven decision-making by providing ease of access to all research reports.**

  http://nccri.nwacc.edu

- **See 3R3.**

Analyzing and Sharing Overall Performance Data and Information
7P4: *Although institutional data are collected and analyzed by the Office of Institutional Research and then shared with the cabinet and the Board of Trustees, the College has an opportunity to promote both the distribution and utilization of the data regarding overall performance to all departments. Moving to a more data-driven assessment model may promote continuous improvement efforts at the departmental level and throughout the institution.*

Progress Made:
- **As the Office of Institutional Research and the National Community College Research Institute incorporate qualitative and ethnographic methodologies into its operations, there will be a continual accumulation of raw interpretive data, field notes, recordings, etc. The Office of Institutional Research and the National Community College Research Institute are working with community partners, particularly library systems, to arrange archival storage of these data. Until such arrangements are made, these raw data will be housed by the Office of Institutional Research and the National Community College Research Institute, and are available upon request.**

Comparison to Other Organizations
7R3: *Although NWACC participates in national surveys and has developed the NWACC Report Card, the relevance of comparison results in support of institutional goals should be examined. Using the comparison data institutionally to make improvements and highlight best practices could help support a focus on continuous improvement and effectiveness.*

Progress Made:
- **In addition to the efforts previously in place (NCCBP, CCSSE, Report Card, etc.) NWACC is participating in the Community College Institutional Survey for the first time this year. Those results will allow the College to benchmark itself against other institutions in regard to numerous best practices in student retention and will allow NWACC to set goals in these areas. All national data is presented to the NWACC Board of Trustees, the College Cabinet, and Expanded Cabinet for review and comment. Based on the constituent group, specialized data is presented to these groups (faculty, staff council, advisory boards).**

Recent Improvements in Measuring Effectiveness
7I1b: *Although recent improvements have been made in this area, such as the implementation of the Office of Institutional Research assessment plan, the overall processes, measurements, and results in this area are scattered and not yet systematically tied to their planning processes.*

Progress Made:
- **Data and information is more readily available utilizing the Core Indicators fact sheets with established benchmarks and the utilization of national data sets when appropriate. For the State of Arkansas, the Core Indicators are also being coordinated with the statewide performance funding measures, allowing for a more seamless process for data collection, analysis and presentation.**

Selecting Specific Processes to Improve Performance Results in Measuring Effectiveness
7I2: *NWACC recognizes the opportunity to gather, analyze, and report more comprehensive data about institutional effectiveness. The College has made progress in promoting a culture and infrastructure that*

regularly measures effectiveness; however, more formalized processes and systems in this area could assist in accurately setting targets for improved performance results.

Progress Made:

- **The College has implemented an improved Academic Program Review procedure that now includes a five-year calendar to cycle all programs through review, a role with annual review for programs with accrediting bodies, defined criteria, and report (follow-up) requirements for a cycle of continuous improvement.**

- **The Learner Support Services leadership team has completed the first two phases of the College's Strategic Enrollment Management plan by defining the key terms/parts of the plan's conceptual framework and by establishing measurements for the category of access/entry (with the other two being persistence and transition).**

Category 8: Planning Continuous Improvement

Developing Key Action Plans to Support Organizational Strategies
8P3: *NWACC recognizes that it does not have a college-wide process for developing action plans to support organizational strategies. It has several separate planning processes that could be a foundation for a more systematic approach to continuous improvement. Adding a centralized system for developing key actions plans to the current benchmarks and annual measurables could improve the short- and long-term planning process.*

Progress Made:

- **NWACC Strategic Planning Process guides the direction of the institution utilizing key data elements, current plans and leadership vision. This newly designed strategic plan streamlines current plans into a workable document format to increase efficiency and effectiveness within the planning process and dissemination to the College community. The planning process has five focus areas that will involve data collection and analysis for various departments across NWACC. These areas are revenue, expenditures, programming, facilities, and quality. All planning will include these areas and will tie back to the Board approved Strategic Plan.**

Aligning Planning Processes, Organizational Strategies and Action Plans
8P4: *NWACC has an opportunity to further build on the current budget and division planning cycle by fully coordinating and aligning planning processes, organizational strategies, and action plans across the organizational levels. This alignment of planning and action may enhance the culture of continuous improvement and facilitate communication of key institutional goals.*

Progress Made:

- **NWACC has implemented a new budget process that takes into account the NWACC Strategic Plan, divisional plans and input from various constituent groups. This process will be evaluated after the first year of implementation and improved upon in subsequent years.**

- **See 8P5.**

Defining Objectives, Selecting Measures and Setting Performance Targets for Organizational Strategies and Action Plans

8P5: *NWACC recognizes that there is no centralized, college-wide process to define objectives, select measures, and set performance targets at this time. The "common elements" described could be the foundation for a college-wide process that may strengthen and promote continuous improvement throughout the institution.*

Progress Made:

- **NWACC has recently adopted a set of 16 Core Indicators of Effectiveness for Community Colleges. These include: Student Goal Attainment, Persistence, Graduation Rates, Student Satisfaction, Success in Subsequent and Related Course Work, Program Learning Outcomes and Mastery of the Disciple, Demonstration of General Education Competencies, Regional Market Penetration Rates, Responsiveness to Community Needs, Placement Rates, Licensure and Certification Pass Rates, Employer Satisfaction with Graduates, Diversity, Value Added to the Community, Transfer Rates and Performance after Transfer. The Office of Institutional Research is currently collecting baseline data for each of these indicators, which will be presented annually to various college constituencies in an effort to affect improvement.**

Linking Strategy Selection and Action Plans

8P6: *The College recognizes a need for linking and aligning their processes for budgeting and resource allocation with other planning processes, including processing the feedback from their stakeholders, reviewing annual short-term strategies, and integrating actions, as well as action plans. The development of a formalized system could increase efficiency and effectiveness of planning for continuous improvement.*

Progress Made:

- **This process is currently under review by new leadership in Administrative Services in Budget and Financial Operations. Notably an improvement that will occur for FYE 2012 is the ability to carry over unused M & O budget funds to the next FY. This will result in process improvements for procurement services and accounting and will provide College departments with increased budgeting options.**

Assessing and Addressing Risk in Planning Processes

8P7: *While some mechanisms are in place to identify and mitigate risk in some areas of the institution including financial risk, risk that result from grants, insurance liability, and newly developed business continuity and emergency management, centralized risk identification and review process appears to be missing. Being more systematic in this area and extending risk identification and review to other areas could ensure that all types of risk are considered.*

Progress Made:

- **Administrative Services has implemented a more comprehensive audit process that better ensures better oversight and reduces financial risk for the institution.**

- **The College has recently approved and is in the process of forming an Institutional Review Board. This board will serve to protect the rights of human participants and to promote professional research in a safe environment for students and employees.**

- **See 6P3.**

Developing and Nurturing Employees to Address Changing Requirements
8P8*: The College does not appear to have a centralized, formal system to ensure the development of employee capabilities to address changing requirements related to organizational strategies and action plans. Developing this type of system could support and align needed professional development and training efforts.*

Progress Made:
- **See 4P8 and 4P9.**

Performance Targets for Next 1-3 Years
8R3: *NWACC has identified only general performance targets at this point. Further development of the NWACC report card may allow for increased effectiveness of performance monitoring.*

Progress Made:
- **Performance targets are being benchmarked, analyzed and reported through the new Core Indicators for Community College Success model. This allows for the College to be measured based on 16 vetted Core Indicators. These indicators also trace back to the State's performance funding measures, streamlining data collection, analysis and reporting.**

Comparison to Other Organizations
8R4: *NWACC does not provide results for performance of processes for planning continuous improvement that compare to other institutions' results. Fully utilizing data from the NCCB and CCSSE could allow the College to benchmark performance and identify best practices.*

Progress Made:
- **The Office of Institutional Research makes regular presentations to various College constituencies (Expanded Cabinet, Learner Support Services, Faculty Senate, etc.) to provide the results of instruments such as NCCBP and CCSSE.**

Measuring and Evaluating Planning Processes and Activities
8R5: *Currently, NWACC does not have a process in place to evaluate planning processes. The development of a process could allow the College to enhance data-based decision making and promote effective planning that is focused on key goals of the institution.*

Progress Made:
- **As described in the new strategic planning process, quality is one of the key focus areas. This includes the measurement of the planning process itself. It is now required for all plans to include an evaluation plan based on a minimum of one Core Indicators. Again, this streamlines the data collection, analysis and reporting aspects and ties all planning back to the institution's Strategic Plan.**

Recent Improvements
8I1b: *NWACC does not provide a discussion regarding the systematic and comprehensive nature of processes and performance for this category. The development of systematic and comprehensive*

processes and performance results for continuous improvement could assist the institution in being more efficient and effective throughout the institution.

Progress Made:

- **NWACC Strategic Planning Process guides the direction of the institution utilizing key data elements, current plans, and leadership vision. This newly designed strategic plan streamlines current plans into a workable document format to increase efficiency and effectiveness within the planning process and dissemination to the College community. The planning process has five focus areas that will involve data collection and analysis for various departments across NWACC. These areas are revenue, expenditures, programming, facilities, and quality. Moving forward, all planning will include these areas and will tie back to the Board approved NWACC Strategic Plan.**

Selecting Processes to Improve Performance for Planning Continuous Improvement
8I2: *NWACC does not provide information on how the culture and infrastructure help to select improvement processes and targets for this category. A culture of continuous improvement could help ensure efficient and effective processes and systems while regular measuring of results and assessment could help create a culture of quality college-wide.*

Progress Made:

- **The College has strengthened the key committee charged with steering all the College's continuous improvement efforts, the Quality Council. Recent changes include creating a co-chair system that includes a faculty and staff member, revised the mission of the Council to move toward reviewing and making recommendations toward institutional improvements, and creating an environment of inclusiveness with a multi-disciplinary membership model. This has helped to create a dialog of openness and also the culture of leadership within the Quality Council membership.**

Category 9 - Building Collaborative Relationships

Building Relationships with Organizations from Which We Receive Students
9P1: *NWACC shows the key partners that serve their students but fails to present any process for creating, prioritizing, or building these important relationships. Developing processes and systems in this area could help the College move to a more effective relationship-building.*

Progress Made:

- **NWACC continues to work on this effort through focus groups conducted by the Office of Institutional Research and receiving more insight and direction from NWACC's external advisory boards. This is an area of focus and improvement for the institution, particularly in the area of utilization of advisory board effectively.**

Building Relationships with Educational Organizations and Employers
9P2: *While the portfolio describes several kinds of partnerships that are valuable in fulfilling the college's mission to educate students and to serve the region, it is not clear how the College creates, prioritizes, and builds relationships with the educational organizations and employers. Developing processes and systems that set standards and assess results could improve the College's efforts for building collaborative relationships.*

Progress Made:
- **See 9P1.**

Building Relationships with Organizations Providing Services to Students
9P3: *Although a number of ways by which the institution identifies students' needs is provided here, no list of the organizations that actually fulfill these needs is offered nor is any process for building relationships with those organizations given. Developing formal processes and systems may provide a mechanism to identify, maintain, and strengthen key collaborative relationships.*

Progress Made:
- **The following are organizations that partner with NWACC in providing services to students. Learner Support Services does recognize the need to establish a formalized process to identify, build and manage these relationships. Partners include:**

    - **Northwest Arkansas Human Resource Association - Provides job shadowing and informational sessions for students**

    - **ALPFA (Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting - Provides mentoring and leadership opportunities for Latino students**

    - **Friendship Families - local community members provide support for international students**

    - **Single Parent Scholarship Fund**

    - **Ozark Regional Transit**

Prioritizing Relationships with Organizations Supplying Materials and Services
9P4: *While the policy and law of the State of Arkansas influences the manner in which NWACC relates to organizations supplying materials and services, the College does not appear to have an internal process or system for creating, prioritizing, and building relationships with these organizations and those not covered by Arkansas policy and law. An internal system could help avoid errors and provide a mechanism for assessing these relationships.*

Progress Made:
- **As stated, NWACC is limited by the state in terms of vendor relationships. The Operations Department seeks to provide information access to external stakeholders through maintaining a comprehensive webpage. Additionally, the College seeks to treat all vendors/stakeholders equitably in establishing and maintaining relationships. A Conflict of Interest Policy resides upon the Administrative Services Website. Procurement Services abides by established procedure in securing all bids and contracts for services. Operations will host its first annual vendor fair in FY 2013.**

Prioritizing Relationships with Others
9P5b: *While NWACC list the types of relationships it has and methods of communication, it does not discuss how it creates, prioritizes, and builds them. Designing a process to address this area could help streamline future relationship management endeavors.*

Progress Made:
- **As a community college, our mission is to serve our community. As a comprehensive community college, we consider our community local, statewide, and national in scope. This is also the direction set by the Board of Trustees. The relationships established by the institution are based on the direction of the Board, administration, and the Strategic Plan.**

Ensuring Partner Relationships Meet Varying Needs
9P6: *NWACC recognizes the opportunity to demonstrate more clearly how their partner relationships meet the needs of students and other stakeholders. No systematic processes seem to be in place to evaluate these partnerships to determine if they are meeting the needs of the various stakeholders. A systematic process could help formalize these relationships and document the value of the relationship for assessment and possible improvement.*

Progress Made:
- **The process of partner relationships in alignment with students and other stakeholders is unique to department and intent. Although no one system may be readily obvious, multiple systematic processes exist at the departmental/divisional level regarding stakeholder relationships. For Administrative Services, refer to 9P4 & 9P5B and the divisional website.**

Building Relationships Between and Among Departments and Units
9P7: *NWACC provides a list of the ways that departments interact and create relationships and relies upon a general practice to encourage relationships between departments. However, there appears to be a lack of an intentional plan for creating and building these internal relationships. Formalizing this system may help ensure integration and communication across these relationships.*

Progress Made:
- **Through the new organization structure, the institution is more consistent and determined to build internal relationships between divisions. One example of this is the increased relationship between Learner Support Services, the Office for Institutional Research and the Office for Institutional Effectiveness. Based on a request from Learner Support Services, Institutional Research is conducting several focus groups including international students, new students, administration and student organizations looking at needed services. In cooperation with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, these results will be presented at several meetings with the various departments in Learner Support Services.**

Measures of Building Collaborative Relationships
9R1: *NWACC recognizes that it has developed a limited number of measures to assess their collaborative relationships. Having a more comprehensive list of measures could enhance the institution's ability to evaluate these relationships.*

Progress Made:
- **In an effort to assess the College's relationship with community members, the Office of Institutional Research conducts annual surveys of alumni and local chamber members. To**

evaluate the relationship with four-year institutions, the Transfer Center and the Office of Institutional Research communicate with the largest receiving institutions each semester both through personal visits and exchange of data. The College's Early College Experience Director works closely with area K-12 districts and the NWACC Director of Institutional Research sits on the School Board of the College's largest feeder district. In an effort to increase networking and visibility for the institution, the College also sends at least one representative each year to the Leadership Benton County and Leadership Washington County programs sponsored by local chambers.

Performance Results in Building Key Collaborative Relationships
9R2: *NWACC does not yet appear to have a systematic process for identifying and tracking performance results in building key collaborative external and internal relationships and, therefore, has only limited examples of performance results. Developing such a system and analyzing performance results may assist with assigning institutional resources to key partnerships.*

Progress Made:
- **The Office of Institutional Research maintains an annual survey calendar outlining the various internal (Learner Support Services, Graduate Survey, etc.) and external (alumni, Chamber of Commerce, workforce, etc.) surveys designed to track performance and satisfaction. In addition, the assessment program utilized by faculty (*TracDat*) houses numerous examples of performance results. Also, the State of Arkansas' new performance funding model will dictate and standardize reporting. Finally, the College's Core Indicators will serve as a comprehensive set of measures for performance tracking.**

Comparison to Other Institutions
9R3: *NWACC does not have performance results of processes for collaborative relationships that can be compared with other institutions. Designing a system to collect and analyze comparative data with other institutions could allow the identification of best practices and opportunities for benchmarking results.*

Progress Made:
- **After further research and analysis, no program could be found that NWACC could implement. Any suggestions would be appreciated.**

Recent Improvements
9I1b: While NWACC has identified several recent departmental improvements in this building collaborative relationships, it recognizes that the improvements made in this area are done on a "case-by-case" basis. The College recognizes a significant need for the development of processes and performance results that are systematic and comprehensive. The development of such processes and performance results for collaborative relationships could assist the institution in identifying which partnerships are working effectively and which need attention.

Progress Made:
- **The NWACC Board of Trustees has identified the need to improve external relations with NWACC constituents. New partnerships that have assisted in this effort are with the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, Northwest Technical Institute, and area constituent groups including the Northwest Arkansas Council. These partnerships follow the Ends communities that are approved by the Board and are NWACC constituent groups.**

Selecting Specific Process to Improve Performance

9I2: NWACC recognizes the need to change its culture by not only improving collaborative relationships with others, but evaluating these relationships to ensure that they are serving the needs of their students. Strengthening and systematizing the way the College develops and maintains relationships with collaborative partners could improve alignment of the activities with the mission of the institution.

Progress Made:
- **See 9I1b.**