

# **H** **HIGHLAND** COMMUNITY COLLEGE



**NOVEMBER 2016**

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## INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

### Introduction

Founded in 1858 as Highland University, making it the first institution of higher education in the state of Kansas, Highland Community College currently has a service area of the nine rural counties in the northeast corner of the state. To serve our students, the College offers three associate degrees covering 68 programs and certificate programs for an additional 15 programs (<http://highlandcc.edu/pages/aas-degree-and-certificate-programs>). The College traditionally favored a face-to-face instructional relationship, so we established Regional Centers throughout the service area to accommodate that philosophy. In addition to the campus in Highland, five of those Centers remain intact in College-owned facilities in the nine-county service area: Atchison, Baileyville, Holton, Perry, and Wamego. In addition, the College partners with LearningHouse to provide HCC Online to a growing population of e-students both within and beyond the nine county service area (further delineated in Categories One and Five). In July of 2008, the region's technical college in Atchison merged with Highland, allowing HCC to expand and enhance the scope of our technical education offerings.

The College is governed by a six-member Board of Trustees comprised of residents of Doniphan County, the location of the Highland campus. On the state level, HCC is coordinated by the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR), which governs the state's six universities. The College has traditionally prepared students to continue their studies at baccalaureate institutions. Studies conducted at the Regents universities in Kansas show that students who begin their college careers at Highland and then transfer compare favorably academically with all other students who transfer to those universities and those who start there **(1R3)**.

### Institutional Mission, Strategic Vision, Values

Following its review at the annual Planning Retreat in 2009, the Board of Trustees adopted the following mission and vision statements for the College:

#### Mission Statement

HCC, the first college in Kansas, provides lifelong learning opportunities and contributes to economic development to enhance the quality of life in the communities we serve.

#### Vision

Highland Community College is recognized as the college of choice in Northeast Kansas. Reviewed annually since 2009, the Trustees continue their commitment to this mission and vision.

#### Values - SPEs

Work Competently, Communicate Effectively, Respect Others, Make Good Decisions, Act Responsibly, Work Effectively in Teams.

### Numbers and Types of Students, Faculty, Staff

In FY 2015, HCC served nearly 5,200 students, including 1,190 degree-seeking students with Full-Time Equivalency (FTE) of over 2,000. The average age of program-declared students is

approximately 23, with over 83% attending part-time. College employees include 54 full-time faculty, 391 adjunct faculty over the course of the academic year, and 137 support staff. To show the approximate size of enrollment by grouping, in the fall of 2015, enrollment headcount was: Highland campus, 610; Region, 835; Online, 1085; Concurrent, 829; Tech Center, 415. These enrollments show the importance of each grouping to understanding the student composition of the College and subsequently, how the College is funded **(4P1, 5P2)**.

### **Quality Improvement Experiences**

After opting for AQIP in 2004, the College started to run without first learning to walk with Continuous Improvement (CI) principles. Consequently, we had some fitful starts to our journey, which is now more firmly on track. The preponderance of our Action Projects have been successful, more personnel than ever before are involved with our processes and those processes have been mapped, faculty are now on board with a successful PDCA Action Project that assisted them with improving their instructional methods. One CI exercise that has proven to be valuable was the identification of institutional core values. Those values and the process for identifying them – through two iterations, one as Common Learning Objectives (2011), and the next as SPEs (2015) -- are delineated in Categories One and Six. The writing of this portfolio further served to solidify CI processes already in place, crystallized the need for other processes, and the need to document empirical results of our processes. The portfolio was written with the view of being transparent about the reality of our CI journey.

### **Key Challenges/Accomplishments/Failures/Future Opportunities**

The College has always attempted to provide its educational opportunities at a cost that is affordable to the students we serve. The Board of Trustees is diligent about keeping the local county tax levy as low as possible so as not to be a burden on taxpayers, particularly in a rural setting. Consequently, by minimizing the portion of the budget that comes from students and the local mill levy, the portion of the College operating budget that comes from the state is around 45 percent. The significance of those dollars is felt especially keenly when the state allocation is cut, which it has been 15 percent over the last seven years -- as the governor's tax plan has not proven to be successful. Declining state support, with another anticipated cut of five percent in December of this year, another five percent for next year, and with no end in sight, has proven to be a key challenge. Knowing the need for private support, the College has joined with the HCC Foundation to employ an additional person to work with private giving. Initial work has proven beneficial. Even with the decreased state budget support, the College has utilized a federal Title III grant to develop an additional technical facility on the western side of its service area – now called the Western Center – and leveraged current holdings to enhance its viticulture (grape growing) and enology (wine making) capabilities, primarily at its Wamego Center. With the development of program-specific budget costs and revenues, the College is currently undertaking a review of its programs to identify support necessary to make those programs at least self-sustaining. In the next two years, the College will be preparing for a significant shift in upper leadership as the president and two of the four vice presidents near retirement.

## AQIP CATEGORY ONE: HELPING STUDENTS LEARN

### Introduction

Highland Community College serves students and community members in all or parts of nine counties in Northeast Kansas, at the Highland campus, 5 regional centers and 33 high schools, multiple clinical facilities, internship and practicum partnerships, and community events. Highland instructors and academic support staff have established two primary goals: A consistent level of instructional quality and rigor across all delivery modalities, and a high standard of academic integrity among faculty, staff, and students. Over the past 5 years, the instructional division has reorganized around a culture of assessment, with varying levels of maturity. Five instruction-focused committees are responsible for ensuring that the division’s goals are met and that outcomes data is used to improve learning. These committees are Assessment (Program Learning Outcomes); Curriculum and Instruction (Academic Program Design); Instructional Council (Academic Program Quality); Academic Standards (Instructional Consistency and Rigor); and Professional Development (Instructional Improvement and Support).

| Reacting  | Systematic  | Aligned   | Integrated  |
|---|---|---|---|
| Isolated tasks and activities address immediate needs | Repeatable, proactive processes with clear explicit goals | Stable, consciously managed, regularly evaluate | Regularly improved through analysis, innovation and sharing |

The Highland assessment processes may be described as aligned in utilizing effective ways of responding to student and other stakeholder needs. There is evidence to support the conclusion that Highland academic programs are regularly, systematically reviewed, and results are used for direct improvements to classroom instruction. Highland faculty and instructional staff have also achieved 100% compliance with recommended curriculum revisions for general education/guaranteed transfer courses and with career technical program alignment guidelines established by the Kansas Board of Regents.

| Reacting  | Systematic  | Aligned   | Integrated  |
|---|---|---|---|
| Isolated tasks and activities address immediate needs | Repeatable, proactive processes with clear explicit goals | Stable, consciously managed, regularly evaluate | Regularly improved through analysis, innovation and sharing |

In the past 4 years, the Highland Instructional Division has moved from reacting to being systematic in producing student performance results across all course delivery modalities. These results have been used to improve teaching and learning at the overall general education/career tech program, academic/discipline, and course levels.

Highland promotes a culture of academic and behavioral integrity at all Highland Centers, having implemented a system of in- and out-of-classroom interventions focused on supporting the maturing student while maintaining a safe and ethical learning environment. The College has implemented a tracking system for academic and behavioral incidents, which allows consequences to be applied fairly and, in recurring cases, with increasing severity.

**Common Learning Outcomes**

**1P1.** *Common Learning Outcomes focuses on the knowledge, skills, and abilities expected of graduates from all programs. Describe the processes for determining, communicating, and ensuring the stated common learning outcomes and who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Aligning common outcomes to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution (3.B.1, 3.E.2)*

**Table 1.1: Associate in Applied Science Degree Configuration**

| Function in Program                          | Credits              |
|--|----------------------|
| <b>Technical Studies</b>                     | 32 to 59             |
| <b>General Education - Category Minimums</b> | <b>Minimum of 15</b> |
| Communications                               | 6                    |
| Physical Education                           | 1                    |
| Computer Literacy                            | 1                    |
| Orientation                                  | 1                    |
| Humanities & Fine Arts                       | 3                    |
| Social & Behavioral Science                  | 3                    |
| Mathematics or Science                       | 3                    |
| <b>Total Credit Range</b>                    | <b>Minimum of 63</b> |

**Table 1.2: Technical Certificate Requirements**

| Function in Program       | Credits                  |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Technical Studies         | Credits Based on Program |
| 1 Year Technical Program  | 32-39                    |
| 2 Year Technical Program  | 52-59                    |
| <b>Total Credit Range</b> | <b>32-59</b>             |

**Table 1.3: [SPEs for Employees and Students](#)**

| <b>SPEs</b><br><b>To Reflect the Skills and Behaviors Expected of College Employees and Students</b><br><b>Spring 2014</b> |  |
|--|--|
| 1.   | <b>BE COMPETENT AT YOUR WORK</b> - Know your area of work or study; consistently perform to expectations; use constructive feedback to improve                             |
| 2.   | <b>COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY</b> - Demonstrate the ability to create and understand messages - in written, oral or visual form.  |
| 3.   | <b>RESPECT OTHERS</b> - Show respect to other people and the environment; be open to perspectives different than your own; treat people and environment with courtesy.     |
| 4.   | <b>MAKE GOOD DECISIONS</b> - Apply critical thinking processes - examine assumptions, gather relevant and reliable data and information; make decisions based on evidence. |
| 5.   | <b>ACT RESPONSIBLY</b> - Within your role at HCC, meet your commitments and be accountable for your own behavior and performance.  |
| 6.   | <b>WORK EFFECTIVELY ON TEAMS</b> - Contribute productively - as a leader or member of a team.  |

- *Determining Common Outcomes (3.B.2, 4.B.4)*

One example of a Quality Improvement Initiative which has served the College well resulted

from a discussion on identifying core College values. That discussion led to a series of institution and community focus groups designed to determine what characteristics we wanted Highland graduates to possess as they walked across the stage at commencement. Established in the spring of 2011, the work of the focus groups was distilled into six characteristics we called Common Learning Outcomes – this is what we expected of our graduates.

As the College began a strategic planning process more closely aligned with the CLOs and the Core Competencies addressed in this document, it became clear that the Objectives represented expectations not only of students, but of all College personnel – these objectives grew to represent a model for what defines us as an institution. Further, during the process of developing a set of behaviorally focused, observable assessments during the spring 2015 term, the Strategic Planning Committee approved a series of revisions and a new title: Shared Performance Expectations (SPEs listed above).

The next task was to create separate plans for assessing competence among students, instructors, and non-instructional staff. Each measure is based upon the following best practices:

1. Means of measurement used for assessment is aligned with the SPEs, which are grounded in and directly reflect the College’s Mission and Strategic Plan initiatives.
  2. Students, instructors, and staff have a clear understanding of the SPEs and how they relate to learning outcomes and job duties.
  3. Students, instructors, and staff receive prompt, relevant feedback based upon assessment results; classroom and workplace development strategies are available, with a goal of continuous performance improvement.
  4. Observers/evaluators also practice continuous quality improvement principles by giving positive feedback for improved performance.
- *Articulating the purposes, content, and level of achievement of the outcomes (3.B.2, 4.B.1)*

The SPEs are available to employees and students through a variety of informational strategies. [SPEs are published on the HCC website](#), through posters on bulletin boards, and by inclusion on meeting agendas and minutes for a number of standing committees. “[Quality Quotes](#)” was created to keep the campus community informed. The HCC Assessment Team is launching a pilot project in Fall 2016 to assess performance on the SPEs by students across all instructional locations and delivery modes. Refer to the “Assessing Common Outcomes” process map below for an expanded project description. Technical programs assess CTE program students on behaviors aligned with both employer workplace expectations and SPE #5: “Act Responsibly.” Faculty members have established a rating of “3” as a benchmark for all technical program students across all measures for the “Act Responsibly” Student Assessment Project. See Section 111 for a description of plans to assess SPEs and to set benchmarks for level of achievement among employees, and a strategy to improve awareness among students by including the SPEs in each standard course syllabus and first-day handout.

- *Incorporating into the curriculum opportunities for all students to achieve the*

*outcomes (3.B.3, 3.B.5)*

Refer to Table 1.8, page 1.11 for evidence of alignment between the SPEs, general education outcomes, and discipline-specific competencies.

In Fall 2015, a new course, PHI 103 Logic and Critical Thinking was added to the Highland Community College Catalog to provide an opportunity for students to enhance the critical thinking skills defined by the Kansas Core Outcomes Group. KCOG is a statewide faculty group which reviews and revises transfer course competencies within all Kansas public colleges. The course transfers seamlessly to other Kansas colleges and addresses skills gaps in critical reasoning and decision making as documented by business and industry partners.

Additional information about guaranteed transfer among Kansas colleges is available on the [Kansas Board of Regents website](#).

Faculty who developed the critical thinking curriculum also considered recommendations from the Kansas Department of Education Commissioner, who conducted a listening tour of Kansas in 2015, [holding community events and gathering data](#). The Commissioner's findings are available by following this link: <http://www.ksde.org/Agency/Office-of-the-Commissioner>

For information from local community survey results which relate SPE #4 to the implementation of critical thinking competencies for Highland students, refer to Category 2. PHI103 Logical and Critical Thinking is approved as an option in the AA/AS general education core and counts toward graduation. Students are assessed on the following competencies, and the course aligns with and addresses Shared Performance Expectation #4 Make Good Decisions (3.B.4):

1. Demonstrate an understanding of principles of argument and persuasion
  2. Apply ethical standards to argument practices
  3. Identify and use valid forms of evidence to support a claim
  4. Evaluate arguments and determine whether they are valid and sound
  5. Apply the tests of reasoning to arguments to detect logical fallacies
  6. Use effective strategies to respond to and refute an opposing argument
  7. Identify logical fallacies in the media, political campaigns, and other settings
  8. Eliminate weak arguments and logical fallacies in one's own communication
- *Ensuring the outcomes remain relevant and aligned with student, workplace, and societal needs (3.B.4)*

Refer to Section 4.P.1 Developing, Deploying and Reviewing for an expanded discussion of on-going assessment of the SPEs. In Fall 2017-Spring 2018, under the President's leadership, the Strategic Plan Committee, Assessment Team, and Instructional Staff in all locations will conduct an environmental scan of students, students' families, community members, public and private partners, local officials, and business leaders to determine the relevance and currency of the SPEs.

- *Designing, aligning, and delivering co-curricular activities to support learning (3.E.1,*

### 4.B.2)

Co-curricular activities are defined as activities in which students participate which are aligned with a stated course or program competency (3.E.1) and result in a course-related assignment that assesses student learning (4.B.2). For a comprehensive list of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities which support learning at HCC, refer to 2R1, Table 2.7.

Full- and part-time instructors at Highland offer a large number and wide variety of co-curricular activities, such as those displayed here:

**Table 1.4: Co-Curricular Activities**

| Academic Discipline  | Course   | Course Competency | Assessment   |
|--|--|-------------------|--|
| <b>Photography</b>   | PHO 210<br>Landscape<br>Photography                | 4                 | Prepare a final portfolio of prints from projects      |
| Competency 4: Apply research findings to practical shooting assignments and darkroom work                  |  |                   |  |
| <b>Business</b>  | BUS 120A<br>Professional<br>Development<br>II      | 1                 | Dress appropriately for field trips to area businesses |
| Competency 1: Describe appropriate business attire   |  |                   |  |
| <b>Sustainability</b>  | IDS<br>Contemporary<br>Issues in<br>Sustainability | 4 ,7              | Field trips  |
| Competency 4: Apply the concept of sustainability in critically examining social issues                    |  |                   |  |
| Refer to 1R1 for an expanded discussion of assessment of SPEs through co-curricular activities in IDS 110. |  |                   |  |

- *Selecting tools/methods/instruments used to assess attainment of common learning outcomes (4.B.2)*
- *Assessing Common Learning Outcomes (SPEs): Instructors (4.B.1, 4.B.2, 4.B.4)*

### Assessment Common Learning Outcomes (SPEs): Instructors

Highland instructional staff have worked closely with full- and part-time faculty to ensure that the SPEs, which are relevant to teaching effectiveness, are regularly practiced in all classroom settings, regardless of delivery mode or geographic location. Full-time faculty, regional directors, and other instructional staff collaborated with a higher education specialist to develop and implement a web-based observation tool (eWalkthrough) aligned with the College Mission, SPEs, and research-based best practices. Instructors receive “just-in-time” feedback based on multiple five to seven minutes classroom observations. The goals of eWalkthrough are to provide positive encouragement for outstanding teaching and to provide suggestions for

improvement based on an established “best-practice” rubric. The eWalkthrough tool is organized around metrics such as Effective Teaching Practices, Learning Environment, Content Knowledge, and Instructor/Student Interactions. The observer looks for evidence that the instructor is demonstrating the SPEs and setting expectations for students’ behavior based on the SPEs.

Consistency across observers is improved by using two strategies:

1. During eWalkthrough training, observers calibrate their responses by requiring multiple observers to visit a classroom together, then comparing observation results and discussing any differences. This step is repeated until each observer feels confident in his/her ability to identify desired practices and the supervising trainer determines that observation results are satisfactorily consistent.
2. The tool also includes a glossary of evaluation terms and definitions, immediately available within the tool by hyperlink (differentiated instruction, focused instruction, check for understanding, cooperative learning, guided practice, independent practice, a link to the course-specific syllabus, and a link to the HCC Mission and Strategic Plan).

The tool provides administrative reports by location, delivery mode, and academic discipline; reports can be used to tailor professional development opportunities for instructors based on gaps between best practices and observed behaviors. For example, across 192 observations, only 21% of instructors used some form of differentiated instruction during the class session. This data allows instructional administrators to provide workshops and individualized development plans that encourage best practices in teaching and learning **(4.B.4)**.

Refer to Category 3, Section 3P2 Evaluation and Recognition: Designing performance evaluation systems for all employees, for a description of the process by which employees’ performance is assessed based on the SPEs. The Assessment Committee will use the following procedure to [assess student performance on the SPEs](#) and analyze the data from these evaluations to make informed decisions regarding the effectiveness of learning activities and the need for curriculum revisions to address the student performance gaps **(4.B.1, 4.B.2, 4.B.4)**.

In addition to the plan to assess all students’ performance on the SPEs (see above), Highland technical program faculty have also implemented a rubric for assessing certificate (CERT) and Associate of Applied Science (AAS) students’ competence on one specific Expectation: *#5 Act Responsibly*. Highland has chosen to use this assessment as one of the local [Key Performance Indicators in the Kansas Board of Regents institutional performance accountability project](#). Results from this assessment are reported to KBOR to document the number of technical program students who demonstrate measurable outcomes based on the SPEs while engaged in classroom, clinical, laboratory, and shop activities. These workplace values form the rubric to assess SPE #5 Act Responsibly among HCC Career/Technical program students. Refer to the SPE #5 Act Responsibly project results in Section 1R1, based on a scoring range of 1-4 and with a mean goal rating of 3.

#### **Table 1.5: Rubric Used to Assess CTE Program Students**

SPE #5 Act Responsibly; Mean - Results, 2012-2016, by Program

|                                   | ADM  | ACR  | AUT  | BTT  | CST  | DSL  | EGT  | ELE  | HVA  | IWT  | MOA  | NUR  | Total |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Indicator                         | AVG   |
| On time to class                  | 2.58 | 2.05 | 3.13 | 3.00 | 2.79 | 3.31 | 2.40 | 2.47 | 1.38 | 2.81 | 2.69 | 3.72 | 2.69  |
| Proper uniform                    | 1.58 | 2.42 | 3.25 | 2.80 | 3.57 | 3.33 | 3.10 | 2.59 | 4.00 | 3.33 | 3.36 | 3.91 | 3.10  |
| Prepared to work                  | 2.08 | 2.68 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.38 | 2.40 | 2.35 | 3.88 | 3.26 | 3.00 | 3.70 | 2.98  |
| Academic work prepared/done       | 2.08 | 2.74 | 3.00 | 2.90 | 3.14 | 3.36 | 2.20 | 2.24 | 3.00 | 3.22 | 3.00 | 3.58 | 2.87  |
| Willing to help & receive help    | 2.25 | 2.68 | 3.13 | 3.10 | 3.57 | 3.38 | 2.80 | 2.59 | 3.88 | 3.26 | 2.86 | 3.52 | 3.08  |
| Completes work in a timely manner | 2.08 | 2.58 | 3.13 | 2.78 | 3.07 | 3.18 | 2.00 | 2.29 | 3.13 | 3.04 | 3.09 | 3.70 | 2.84  |

The goal of this assessment is to raise awareness among technical program students about work-ready skills desired by employers, and to encourage faculty to embed in existing courses activities designed to enhance these skills.

As an example of an approach used by faculty in assessing SPEs through co-curricular activities, students in IDS 110 Contemporary Issues in Sustainability are asked to write a response paper following co-curricular experiences ([rubric](#)). They briefly summarize the factual content of the event or speaker, respond affectively to the content or relate it to their experiences, discuss how the content relates to previous course material from readings and classroom work, and explore sustainability elements of environment, economics, and social equity (aligns with SPE #2).

Although the response paper pertains to all the stated competencies on the course syllabus, it specifically aligns to the SPEs: explain the role of humans in devising and implementing sustainable solutions to environmental problems (SPE #6); describe the global challenges to sustainability from economic, environmental, and social perspectives (SPE #3); describe the impact of personal decisions on local, regional, national, and global sustainability (SPE #4); and apply the principles of sustainability on a personal level (SPE #5).

Students also present a final speech in response to the co-curricular activities (SPE #2), using a persuasive problem-solution organization that helps them summarize what they have gained from the course; students utilize a power-point demonstration for their speech which based on their experiences with guest speakers and field trips.

### **Assessment Common Learning Outcomes (SPEs): Other Highland Employees**

Refer to 3P2 Evaluation and Recognition: Designing performance evaluation systems for all employees, for a description of the process by which employees' performance is assessed based upon the SPEs.

**1R1.** *What are the results for determining if students possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are expected at each degree level?*

- *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*
- *Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)*

### Results for Assessment of Common Learning Outcomes (SPEs): Instructors

At the time of this writing, faculty and instructional staff have conducted 192 walkthrough observations of part-time instructors; 80.6% of courses were taught by instructors in an on-ground or hybrid (on-ground/IDL or on-ground/online) classroom, while 19.4% were instructors teaching in a concurrent (dual-credit) setting.

Results provide evidence for both effective teaching and areas that have been or will be addressed through instructor training and professional development opportunities. Results are based on aggregated data for all observations; each instructor receives an individualized feedback report within 48 hours of the classroom visit and the observer is available for a live or virtual conference with the instructor to discuss results and answer questions.

Student Engagement: During 79% of observations, students appeared to be fully engaged, while in 18% of observations, only some students were engaged. The remaining three percent represents visits where very few students appeared to be actively engaged.

**Table 1.6: Summary of Best-Practice Teaching and Learning Strategies**

Aligned With Highland SPEs:

| Teaching Strategy                                  | % of Classrooms Where Observed | SPE # |
|--|--------------------------------|-------|
| Employs Differentiated Instruction                 | 10                             | 1,6   |
| Communicates Learning Objectives                   | 57                             | 2     |
| Focuses on Instruction                             | 79                             | 1,5   |
| Checks for Understanding/Provide Feedback          | 66                             | 2,3   |
| Stimulates Critical Thinking or Creativity         | 63                             | 4     |
| Uses Project/Problem-Based Instruction             | 18                             | 6     |
| Employs Guided or Independent Practice             | 37                             | 1,5   |
| Employs Effective Auditory/Speaking Skills         | 94                             | 2,3   |
| Exhibits Content Knowledge                         | 96                             | 1,2   |
| Ties Course Objectives to Assessment               | 60                             | 2,5   |
| Aligns Instruction with HCC Mission/Strategic Plan | 72                             | ALL   |

The eWalkthrough tool includes metrics related to classroom teaching effectiveness such as Use of Classroom Technology (includes use of tablets, projectors, course-related software and websites and assessment of whether available technology is working properly) and Creating a Safe Learning Environment (includes room temperature and lighting, adequate seating, equipment in safe working condition). Classroom observers provide results from these related assessments directly to center directors and instructional staff, who are responsible for any equipment and facility maintenance and technology support. Observers do a “check-back” to ensure that any concerns about physical and emotional safety in the classroom are priorities for building managers.

- *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

Refer to 111 for a discussion of internal and external targets.

➤ *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

**Results for Assessment of Common Learning Outcomes (SPEs): Students**

Table 1.7 displays the average results of the SPE #5 Act Responsibly assessment among technical students from 2012-2016. The desired score is an average of a 3:

**Table 1.7: Results of SPE #5 Act Responsibly Assessment**

For Technical Students 2012-2016, Mean Scores Across All Programs

| Indicator                                   | Mean  |
|---|-------|
| On time to class                            | 3     |
| Proper uniform                              | 2.333 |
| Prepared to work                            | 2.833 |
| Academic work prepared/done                 | 2.666 |
| Willing to help & receive help              | 2.833 |
| Completes work in a timely manner           | 2.666 |
| Accountability for attendance               | 2.5   |
| Fully participate in activity or discussion | 2.5   |
| Program average                             | 2.666 |

**Results for Assessment of Common Learning Outcomes (SPEs): Other Highland Employees**

Refer to Category 3 for a discussion of Highland's process and preliminary results in assessing non-instructional staff members' performances based upon the SPEs.

*111. Based on 1R1, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years? (4.B.3)*

Based upon the results from the year-one pilot project, the Assessment Team will recommend best-practice teaching and learning strategies to faculty across all discipline areas, such as directed instruction in collaborative learning (SPE #6), recognition of cultural diversity (SPE #3), and effective communication (SPE #2). Refer to 2R1 for alignment with SPE's in co-curricular and extra-curricular programs.

In response to the results from full and part-time classroom effectiveness evaluations, Highland instructional staff have already begun offering professional development workshops and other self-guided activities directly aligned with the Shared Performance Indicators. For example, an engaging first session of any hybrid class is key to ensuring student success in both on-ground and online course activities. Instructional staff members created [a YouTube video for all first-time or returning instructors](#) who are assigned to hybrid sections. It lays out a first-session checklist to help students navigate the hybrid course requirements.

Instructional and student services staff have also collaborated on workshop sessions in response to eWalkthrough observation items with the lowest means. These topics from recent in-service sessions align with the SPEs and the HCC Strategic Plan initiatives:

- Using Field Trips to Create Project-Based Learning (Collaborative Learning)

- Old Technology/New Tool: Expanding SCANTRON to identify Study Topics (Effective Use of Technology)
- PDCA and Master Course Outlines (Consistency in Content and Rigor Across All Delivery Modalities)
- Developing Rigorous, Relevant, and Relatable Online Courses (Consistency in Content/Rigor)
- Social Emotional Support for Student Success (Respecting Others)
- Academic Dishonesty (Making Good Decisions/Ethical Behavior)
- The Flipped Classroom (Be Responsible; Think Critically)
- What Does Excellent Teaching Look Like? (Be Competent at Your Work)

Faculty and instructional staff will continue to use results from eWalkthrough observation data to create “just in time” web-based professional development that is individualized, and self-paced training with metrics based upon the SPEs, especially those which relate to effective teaching (e.g. #1: Be Competent at Your Work; #2: Communicate Effectively; #3 Respect Others, and #6: Work in Teams). The College has purchased a license for a product called “Campus Answers,” a library of existing topics that also allow campus staff and faculty to create our own custom titles and assessments.

During 2016-2017, full-time faculty and academic administrators will work together to replace the current evaluation tool with a new measure which is based on the SPEs and HCC Strategic Plan and has a foundation in research-based best practices. The Instructional Council and Academic Standards Committees will explore several possible evaluation strategies and oversee a pilot during Fall 2017.

Faculty will study results from the embedded item assessments and analyze results for use in implementing instructional strategies tied to the General Education Outcomes, SPEs, and College Strategic Plan.

The C&I committee will consider a recommendation to include SPEs on all common-course syllabi and first-day handouts. Instructional staff will use e-Walkthrough observations as “pre-test” benchmarks to assess improvements in follow-up observations after training.

In Spring 2017, a new committee of representatives from students, instruction, student services, administrative and support staff will collaborate on an AQIP Action Project to answer the question “How Effective Are HCC Teams?” (SPE #6) using [an assessment method developed at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology](#). Researchers will use the results to help standing committees and project-based teams at HCC improve the quality of outcomes and enhance the positive perception about the value of their service.

### **Program Learning Outcomes**

*1P2. Program Learning Outcomes focuses on the knowledge, skills, and abilities graduates from particular programs are expected to possess. Describe the processes for determining, communicating, and ensuring the stated program learning outcomes and who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of*

key processes for:

- *Aligning program learning outcomes to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution (3.B.2)*

The table below illustrates the alignment among the campus-wide SPEs, the General Education/Transfer Outcomes, which are assessed for students who complete at least 45 credit hours at Highland, and selected Departmental Outcomes in programs designed for transfer.

**Table 1.8: Alignment Among Highland SPEs**  
General Education Outcomes, and Department-Level Outcomes (3.B.1, 3.B.3).

| Shared Performance Expectation | General Education Outcome   | Departmental Program Outcomes (indicating relevant program competency*)  |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Be Competent at Your Work      | Oral and Written Communication<br>Computation, Quantitative Reasoning and Data-driven Problem Solving<br>Humanities<br>Social Sciences<br>Natural and Physical Sciences | Photography (4*)<br>Graphic Design (3)<br>Psychology (1,3)<br>Mathematics (1-4)<br>Music (3)<br>Chemistry (3,4)<br>Biology (2-7) |
| Communicate Effectively        | Oral and Written Communication<br>Technology and Information Literacy   | Spanish (1-3)<br>English (1)<br>Speech (1)<br>Psychology (8)   |
| Respect Others                 | Cultural Diversity  | Music (2, 4)<br>Spanish (11)<br>Psychology (4)   |
| Think Critically               | Critical Thinking<br>Computation, Quantitative Reasoning and Data-Driven Problem Solving  | Photography (2)<br>Chemistry (2, 4)<br>Psychology (2,5)<br>Biology (1)<br>Mathematics (4)  |
| Act Responsibly                | Critical Thinking   | Psychology (7)   |
| Work Effectively on Teams      | Oral and Written Communication<br>Cultural Diversity<br>2b.Data-driven Problem Solving  | Biology (lab)  |

\*Numerals refers to departmental program [course competencies](#), which align directly to General Education and Shared Performance indicators.

- *Determining program outcomes (4.B.4)*

In early 2014, the Academic Affairs division began the process of revising the existing General Education outcomes for students who pursue an Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree and of developing departmental-level program outcomes for students who complete a minimum number of credits in a specific discipline (3.B.1).

Instructional staff and faculty reviewers revised existing General Education outcomes to improve

the assessment of competencies for students who have completed at least 45 credits toward an AA or AS degree, while departmental-level outcomes would assess students who completed a 9-15 credit cluster within disciplines intended for transfer **(4.B.4)**.

Faculty and instructional staff followed best-practice standards in developing program outcomes based primarily upon two resources: University of Connecticut's [Assessment Primer: Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes](#) and University of North Carolina – Charlotte's [Guidelines for Using Active Verbs in Student Outcomes Statements Based Upon Bloom's Taxonomy](#) **(4.B.4)**.

Specifically, faculty used the following guidelines in creating and revising program outcomes: outcomes must be directly related to the academic discipline, outcomes must be observable and measurable, and outcomes must focus on student learning rather than curricular inputs.

Outcomes were peer-reviewed to ensure that they aligned with the SPEs, the Strategic Plan, and the College Mission, **(3.B.2)** were directly responsive to results from 4-year college transfer data, workplace surveys and meetings with business and industry advisors, **(3.B.4)** and were measurable using an embedded-item methodology which allows results to be used for direct improvement at both program and course levels **(4.B.3)**.

For example, a previous outcome included passive learning terms such as “understand” and “know”. Now Highland's [General Education Outcomes](#) for Oral and Written Communication require students to demonstrate an ability to “gather information appropriately, make effective oral presentations, and to write with a clear purpose and a mastery of writing technique” **(3.B.3)**. The instructional team also added a new outcome (GE Outcome #5) to address the need to assess students' skills in analyzing and applying information and in evaluating competing perspectives. Instructors decided to add a separate critical thinking outcome rather than to include the topic within the existing outcomes to respond to consistent demands from transfer colleges and state-wide industry partners for graduates and employees who are able to demonstrate effective critical thinking skills in information management and decision making **(3.B.2)**.

Program faculty took different approaches to creating program outcomes. Biological Sciences chose to address the steps associated with the scientific method and apply this approach in the study of biology; describe the structures of cells; identify types of cells and various aspects of cellular physiology (SPEs 1 and 4, GE Outcomes 5 and 8), Music program students will observe, evaluate, and categorize music across geographic locales and historical periods; experience and evaluate performance as a participant and an audience member; improve their fundamental performance skills of sight reading, rhythmic comprehension, technique, and communication; demonstrate awareness of the cultural impact of music on society (SPEs 1 and 3; GE Outcomes 4 and 6). In answering the question, “what knowledge and competencies will Highland students who complete 9-15 credits in a specific discipline be able to demonstrate upon entering a four-year college or workplace,” it is important to avoid a “cookie-cutter” approach. Instead, Highland faculty considered the wide variability across upper-level university programs, while ensuring that outcomes are measurable and remain rigorous and relevant.

- *Articulating the purposes, content, and level of achievement of the outcomes (4.B.1)*

For most career and technical programs, outcomes are determined as the results of a [statewide competency alignment initiative coordinated by the Technical Education Authority \(TEA\) and the Kansas Board of Regents \(KBOR\)](#). CTE program faculty from community and technical colleges across Kansas meet with advisory committee members from business and industry to discuss changes in workplace demands and suggest curriculum revisions.

Specific course and program competencies may be directly linked to the workplace, or may be designed to prepare graduates for successful performance on external credentialing exams such as Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certification or the NCLEX-PN, a national licensure examination for Practical Nursing, and Construction Education and Research (NCCER) standards for construction technology students. Whether or not a program participates in state-level alignment, CTE faculty also enhance curriculum and experiential learning by conferring with local advisory boards. Each Highland technical program meets with an advisory board composed of local business and industry representatives to review graduates' workplace performance and receive advice on instructional strategies. Advisory board members also serve as guest speakers in technical program classrooms and sponsor practicums and internships for CTE students and are considered positive partners in creating relevant, work-ready course competencies and program outcomes.

Advisory committee minutes from the past five years are available for the following programs: Automotive Collision Repair, Administrative Assistant, Automotive Technology, Constructional Technology, Computer Support Technology, Diesel Technology, Early Childhood/Human Services, Electrical Technology, Engineering Graphics, Heating Ventilation Air Conditioning, Industrial Welding, Medical Office Assistant, and Practical Nursing/Associate Degree Nursing.

All course and program changes, whether they are generated by a statewide alignment initiative or a local advisory board, must be presented for approval by the HCC C&I Committee. On approval, instructional staff members make appropriate syllabi and catalog revisions and notify academic advisors, students, and all full-time and adjunct instructors who teach within the program.

Refer to Section 112 for a discussion of means of assessment for students who pursue general education transfer programs.

- *Ensuring the outcomes remain relevant and aligned with student, workplace, and societal needs (3.B.4)*

Each technical program advisory committee meets annually and reviews program outcomes and courses for relevance to the current and future workplace demand. If the advisory committee recommends changes to the program outcomes, the program faculty and director of technical education review the recommendations and if changes are needed, they

make recommendation to the C&I Committee for further review. If changes are granted to courses, the KBOR must be notified before official changes can be made. KBOR sets program alignment across the state for technical programs and the colleges must be aligned with them.

Refer to Category 2 for detailed information on community forums, the Kansas Commissioner of Education's statewide listening tour, and student surveys conducted throughout the College. Additional information from the Kansas Department of Education's Commissioner on Business and Community forums is at <http://www.ksde.org/Agency/Office-of-the-Commissioner>.

- *Designing, aligning, and delivering co-curricular activities to support learning (3.E.1, 4.B.2)*

Several academic departments have implemented co-curricular activities that are directly aligned with program-level outcomes. Business program students who qualify may participate in a field trip/project-based learning activity, which allows them to demonstrate competency in skills such as networking, analyzing and synthesizing information, and applying oral and written communication. Performances by music and theatre groups allow students to appreciate intercultural diversity (GE Competency #4) while participating in the arts as a means of developing creativity (GE Competency #6). Allied Health and Nursing program students provide free health screenings and community events, allowing them to apply their critical thinking (#5) and oral communication (#1) skills. Students in the Administrative Assistant certificate program compete in state, regional, and national competitions in skill contests related to program competencies (#1, #2, #3, #5) (3.E.1, 4.B.2). Refer to Category 2R1 for information about alignment with SPE's in co-curricular and extra-curricular programs.

- *Selecting tools/methods/instruments used to assess attainment of program learning outcomes (4.B.2)*

The College has recently changed the tool and method used to assess student attainment of program learning outcomes. Prior to Fall 2013, Highland students who applied to graduate were required to complete the CAAP test. There were several drawbacks to this practice. Many students who attend Highland and earn at least 45 general education credits do not apply for a degree. Further, students who did take the standardized test were not required to earn a minimum score to graduate and did not give serious effort. Finally, although some universities in Kansas had previously required rising-junior scores for transfer admission, this requirement was eliminated. A faculty team began a study to identify or create an alternative to the CAPP which would be statistically valid and reliable as an assessment of student learning, would be aligned to the General Education Outcomes and SPEs, and would yield results which could be used by faculty to improve quality of classroom instruction.

The General Education Outcomes Assessment Task Force recommended a process that targets courses commonly taken by students in their sophomore year. Lead faculty for these courses identified standard course competencies and relevant assessment activities that closely align with the general education outcomes.

For each general education outcome, instructional staff identified four to six different course competency/assessment sets for analysis (for example, student data from ANT112, ENG102 College English II, SP106 Public Speaking, BUS130 Microcomputer Applications, and BS105 Environmental Science were all assessed for GE Outcome #3). It is important to note that students identified in the study were unaware, names and grades were confidential, with results reported in aggregate by total sections offered for given course, regardless of delivery modality. The project team analyzed competency-based assessment results for 486 students during the pilot study.

The instructional task force members suggested an initial baseline grade of 2.5 or greater by individual assessment for all sample students and a baseline of 2.5 for all assessments aligned with a single general education outcome **(4.B.4)**.

- *Assessing program learning outcomes (4.B.1, 4.B.2, 4.B.4)*

A sample of 486 students provided general education outcomes performance data. These students had completed a minimum of 45 credits at HCC through a variety of course delivery modes and were enrolled in at least two of the courses selected by faculty for the study. Full-time/part-time (length of enrollment) was not a factor, nor was location or mode where the course was taken, student age or gender. Some students had earned college credit prior to enrolling at Highland, but this credit was not included.

**1R2.** *What are the results for determining if students possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are expected in programs?*

- *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

Results related to the assessment of students who completed 45+ general education credits with HCC only are an indicator of students' meeting expectations for knowledge, skills and abilities. Because the general education competencies are integrated into the courses and students are unaware of the assessment, the data provides the College with insight into trends in areas where improvement is needed and areas of strength. Please refer to Table 1.9 for results from Year One regarding students with 45+ general education credits with HCC only.

- *Overall levels of deployment of assessment processes within the institution*
- *Summary results of assessment (include tables and figures when possible)*

**Table 1.9: Assessment of General Education Outcomes for Students**

With 45+ GE credits, In-Course & Overall by GE Competency based on GPA (4.00 Scale)

| General Education Competency | Course  | GPA Mean Results by Course - 45+ | GPA Mean Results by Competency- 45+ |
|------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Oral & Written Communication | M 103   | 3.778                            | 2.842                               |
|                              | SOC 101 | 3.08                             |                                     |
|                              | SP 106  | 2.942                            |                                     |

|   |            |       |       |
|---|------------|-------|-------|
|   | TH 108     | 3.03  |       |
| Computation, Quantitative Reasoning,<br>Data-driven Problem Solving | BS 101     | 3.5   | 2.64  |
|   | BS 203     | 2.684 |       |
|   | MAT 104    | 1.735 |       |
| Technology & Information Literacy                                   | ANT 112    | 3.83  | 3.283 |
|   | BS 105     | 3.667 |       |
|   | BUS 130    | 3.188 |       |
|   | ENG 102    | 2.667 |       |
|   | SP 106     | 3.062 |       |
| Cultural Diversity  | A 202      | 3.444 | 3.09  |
|   | PSY 205    | 2.667 |       |
|   | SOC 102    | 3.158 |       |
| Critical Thinking   | BS 107     | 2.75  | 3.124 |
|   | CJ 120     | 3.067 |       |
|   | PHI 102    | 3.556 |       |
| Humanities  | A 101      | 3.525 | 3.472 |
|   | M 116      | 3.62  |       |
|   | TH 108     | 3.272 |       |
| Social Sciences   | ANT 112    | 3.264 | 3.248 |
|   | PSY 101    | 3.216 |       |
|   | SOC 101    | 3.264 |       |
| Natural & Physical Sciences   | BS 101     | 3.391 | 2.227 |
|   | PS 107     | 1.9   |       |
|   | PS 111/112 | 1     |       |

- *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*
- *Interpretation of assessment results and insight gained*

In the chart displayed above, HCC's pass-rate trend over a four-year period for Licensed Practical Nursing and LPN to RN Bridge Program students indicates that graduates are meeting occupational competency expectations on a State and National level. Considering that associate degree and technical certificate graduates are often entering the professional workplace for the first time, the internal target is for our graduates to meet employer expectations and to pass the NCLEX (national licensing examination). From an external standpoint, Highland students continue to compare favorably with other Kansas programs and pass-rates for LPN and Bridge Programs nationally.

The nursing faculty at Highland is continually engaged in seeking out new teaching methods and resources to support their students' learning. Refer to 113 for a discussion of improvement strategies implemented within the past two years.

**112.** *Based on 1R2, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years? (4.B.3)*

In response to preliminary results from the Year One General Education Outcomes Assessment project, faculty and academic staff are implementing the following improvements. Academic staff will collaborate with faculty and assessment team members to establish benchmarks for student performance on embedded items, identify potential sources for internal comparisons,

and use existing IPEDs and National Benchmarking cohorts to create a network for external comparative data. Academic staff has already identified 2-3 peer colleges whose general education outcomes for degree completers are similar and who have adopted a course-level embedded item methodology. Sixteen other Kansas community colleges offer a course related to logic and critical thinking. Collaborating with 6 of those colleges who are demographic cohorts will give HCC a source of student data to help determine the effectiveness of Highland's new course. The English faculty has also added a new course, ENG103 Composition II: Rhetoric and Research, which is designed to enhance students' research and persuasive writing skills. These two courses respond to feedback from transfer colleges and workplace partners indicating a need for students who demonstrate skill in using quantitative methods and critical evaluation of information to make effective decisions **(4.B.3, 4.B.4)**.

Faculty and instructional staff have noted low overall means for mathematics, especially College Algebra, and natural and physical sciences, two common areas of concern among students at open admission colleges. Math and science faculty will analyze results in detail and propose recommendations for supplemental instruction, prerequisites or course sequence revisions, or improved academic support services **(4.B.3)**.

Refer to Section 113 for a detailed description of the Nursing Program faculty's strategies for improving students' first-time performance on the NCLEX licensure examination.

Further, critical thinking and effective, information-based decision making continues to be a workplace requirement for new employees, as demonstrated in business and industry surveys and community forum results. One new course, with one additional instance of embedded assessment items, is not sufficient to meet our students' needs for competence in this area. Faculty and instructional staff will make a targeted effort to a) identify additional course competencies which already require students to demonstrate critical thinking skills and b) embed new assignments, including co-curricular activities, which will enhance students' data-informed decision making.

A major curriculum revision is in the development and approval phases as a result of local and state-wide employer survey results and community forum discussions. Faculty and instructional staff who work with career and technical program students who receive employer feedback on the success of Highland graduates recognize the need for more job-related general education skills. However, since many CTE students 1) are interested primarily in gaining a technical certificate and seeking employment and 2) are uninterested or fail to see the relevance of taking a cluster of core general education courses, technical faculty and instructional staff are proposing a new cluster of general education courses which are targeted to identified workplace demands and directly related to students' career goals.

Refer to Table 1.9 for a Proposed Curriculum Guide to the revised AAS for Career Technical Students **(3.B.3)**.

### **Table 1.10 Proposed Curriculum for Associate of Applied Science**

Alignment of SPEs and General Education Outcomes **(3.B.3, 3.B.4)**

| Current GE Cluster                    | Proposed GE Cluster   | Aligned SPEs | Aligned GE Outcomes |
|---------------------------------------|---|--------------|---------------------|
| College English I                     | Technical Writing   | 1 and 2      | 1                   |
| College English II or Public Speaking | Oral Communication<br>Electronic Business Presentation<br>Electronic Communications<br>Web Design<br>Conversational Spanish | 1, 2, and 3  | 1 and 3             |
| Computer Literacy                     | Microcomputer Applications<br>Three 1-credit Applications   | 1 and 4      | 3 and 5             |
| Math or Science                       | Technical Math  | 1 and 4      | 2                   |
| Any Social/Behavioral Science         | State/Local Government<br>Personal Finance<br>Workplace Psychology  | 1, 4, and 5  | 4 and 5             |
| No Business Requirement               | Intro to Business<br>Principles of Entrepreneurship<br>Leadership Principles<br>Human Resources                             | 1,3,4, and 6 | 2, 4, and 5         |

Proposed program courses align with recommendations from local CTE Advisory Committees, SPEs, and overall General Education Outcomes. Within two years of implementing the new course cluster, Highland faculty and staff will assess its effectiveness by surveying employers and graduating students **(4.B.3, 4.B.4)**. As of this writing, the C&I Committee has approved new or revised courses to be included in the new AAS pathway. Members will consider the overall program as revised no later than December 2016; if approved, career/technical students may begin pursuing the new general education pathway toward the AAS degree during the Spring 2017 term.

### Academic Program Design

**1P3.** *Academic Program Design focuses on developing and revising programs to meet stakeholders' needs. Describe the processes for ensuring new and current programs meet the needs of the institution and its diverse stakeholders. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Identifying student stakeholder groups and determining their educational needs **(1.C.1, 1.C.2)***

Highland student stakeholders' needs generally fall into students who wish to transfer earn a terminal degree and seek employment, and are seeking an external credential Refer to Category 2P3 for an extensive list of stakeholders for HCC.

- *Identifying other key stakeholder groups and determining their needs **(1.C.1, 1.C.2)***

Highland also designs programs and services in response to other key stakeholder groups, such as, community members, parents and family members, business/industry partners and Program Advisory Committees, local, state, and federal agencies and elected officials.

- *Developing and improving responsive programming to meet all stakeholders' needs (1.C.1, 1.C.2)*

Highland Instructional and Student Services staff gather feedback from a variety of stakeholders and respond by revising programs and courses to meet their needs. For example, a team of faculty and staff is using local and statewide employer feedback to revise the general education core for the Associate of Applied Science degree. In collaboration with a nearby university business department which receives a number of transfer students from HCC each year, Highland business faculty proposed and implemented revisions to accounting and entrepreneurship courses to respond to gaps in student preparation. Faculty from the Fine Arts programs are collaborating to create an environment where students may experiment with a cross-discipline approach to the arts, e.g. combining coursework in photography and graphic design; graphic design, theatre and music; or music and technology.

To meet the cultural and entertainment needs of the nearby communities, Highland presents a variety of fine arts events, including musical concerts, theatre productions, and art exhibitions, which are free to the public. Highland also sponsors an [“Arts at the Barn” series](#) which features a wide range of local performers from square dancing demonstrations to horseshoeing workshops to musical variety shows. Arts at the Barn participants and other community-based groups such as Boy Scouts, Bee Chat, Quail Unlimited, and the Land Institute of Kansas enjoy the beautiful Klinefelter Farm and meeting facilities.

Refer to Category 2, Section 2P3, for a more extensive list of community stakeholders' needs and ways in which Highland responds.

- *Selecting the tools/methods/instruments used to assess the currency and effectiveness of academic programs*

Highland faculty and instructional staff employ a range of internal and external measures to assess the currency and effectiveness of academic programs in response to the needs of the stakeholder groups listed above.

Faculty members in all general education/transfer disciplines participate in the yearly Kansas Core Outcomes (KCOG) program meetings. Two- and four-year faculty also recommend new courses to be included in the Guaranteed Transfer Matrix for all Kansas public colleges. Participating faculty review existing discipline courses to ensure that the competencies common to all colleges' syllabi remain relevant and responsive to profession and program demands.

Students who wish to transfer from Highland to another two- or four-year Kansas college may rely on the guaranteed transfer agreements, required by Kansas statute, developed by discipline faculty, and approved by the KBOR. Highland offers 93% (69/74) of all courses approved for [guaranteed transfer](#).

A number of formal articulation agreements exist for students who wish to transfer their coursework to a two or four year college outside of Kansas. Students may also work directly with their academic advisors or the Transfer Coordinator to determine whether their Highland courses will transfer.

Highland career/technical program faculty participate in a similar review of Technical Certificate and AAS programs known as the [Kansas CTE Program Alignment](#) process. Faculty meet on a yearly basis with industry advisory committees to ensure that technical programs meet workplace and employer needs and that students' technical courses are fully transferable among all state-wide programs.

Students who enroll at Highland wishing to prepare for an external credential or license receive individualized assistance from an advisor with expertise in the specific discipline area and licensure requirements. This advisor will recommend courses or other programs of study which are targeted toward gaining the desired credential.

- *Reviewing the viability of courses and programs and changing or discontinuing when necessary (4.A.1)*

Highland faculty and instructional staff, acting as the HCC Instructional Council (IC), conduct a systematic three-year cycle of program review for all general education/transfer programs and selected AAS degrees. That requires participating faculty to provide evidence of program viability, relevance, and responsiveness to stakeholder needs. The Program Review process requires that faculty demonstrate consistent instructional quality and rigor across all delivery methods. Faculty submit a detailed, data-supported written report and then meet with members of the Instructional Council to present their overall review, including a Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis (4.A.1). The Instructional Council issues one of the following responses: Continuation of the program; (no improvements identified, with specific actions or program improvements, with corrective action). Development of a cooperative program with another institution; Discontinuation of the program.

Along with a set of program-specific recommendations for improvement, the IC may ask that faculty submit an interim progress report on a specific action or wait until the next full review cycle to determine whether recommendations have been implemented (4.A.1).

The Program Review process, including rubric and narrative questions, is described in 1P4. At the course level, faculty have replaced a relatively static yearly data report with a competency-based curriculum improvement project called *Plan, Do, Check, Act* (PDCA) Assessment Project. At the beginning of each fall and spring term, an instructor selects one course competency and creates an instructional intervention to improve student performance.

Each instructor submits a PDCA New Project Form during the first two weeks of the term, which includes: a) Instructor name; b) Topic selected; c) Specific course to be studied; d) A description of the specific course competency; e) A description of the PLAN to improve student outcomes, with f) A description of how the instructor will implement the project (DO); g) Details on the

assessment the instructor will use to evaluate the plan's effectiveness (CHECK) h)After analysis of the results, how will the instructor ACT to either implement the teaching strategy or revise it for better outcomes?

After the fall and spring terms end, the instructor submits a Project Results Report summarizing the PDCA project results. Faculty may propose a continuation of the same project for the next term, in order to test revisions to the original strategy, or they may choose a new course competency and instructional strategy and submit a new project proposal **(4.A.1)**.

**1R3.** *What are the results for determining if programs are current and meet the needs of the institution's diverse stakeholder?*

➤ *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

The C&I Committee receives proposals for new and revised curriculum. Proposals may be generated by faculty as a result of program review recommendations or external sources.

➤ *Summary results of assessments (include tables and figures when possible)*

Table 1.10 displays C&I approvals during the 2015-2016 academic year, showing that meeting stakeholder needs accounts for 94 actions, or 91% of all actions taken by the C&I Committee.

**Table 1.11: C&I Committee Approvals**

By Category of Stakeholder Need (2015-16)

| Stakeholder Need                   | New Courses Added | Course Revisions Approved | Program Modifications |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| External Credential/Licensing      | 6                 | 9                         | 2                     |
| KS CTE Program Alignment           | 11                | 27                        | 2                     |
| Student Outcomes/Business Advisory | 5                 | 16                        | 7                     |
| KS Guaranteed Transfer             | 3                 | 2                         | 4                     |

Highland students also demonstrate that HCC programs meet their needs through their academic success upon transferring to four-year universities.

Table 1.11 displays results from first- and second-year Highland students who transferred to Kansas universities in 2012, 2013, and 2014 (the most recent years available).

**Table 1.12: Transfer Data from HCC to State Universities**

Number of Students and GPA

| Highland Students who Transfer to Kansas State University with Comparison to Other KS CCs and Native Students |          |                 |          |                 |          |                 |
|---|----------|-----------------|----------|-----------------|----------|-----------------|
|   | New 2012 | Continuing 2012 | New 2013 | Continuing 2013 | New 2014 | Continuing 2014 |
| Number of HCC Students  | 86       | 197             | 70       | 200             | 79       | 209             |
| Highland CC   | 2.46     | 2.79            | 2.44     | 2.86            | 2.64     | 2.95            |
| Other KS CCs  | 2.61     | 2.8             | 2.7      | 2.84            | 2.71     | 2.86            |
| Other Transfers   | 2.76     | 2.84            | 2.74     | 2.86            | 2.73     | 2.85            |
| First-time Freshman (Native to KSU)   | 2.86     | ***             | 2.91     | ***             | 2.96     | ***             |

| Highland Students who Transfer to Washburn University with Comparison to Other KS CCs and Native Students |          |                 |          |                 |          |                 |
|---|----------|-----------------|----------|-----------------|----------|-----------------|
|   | New 2012 | Continuing 2012 | New 2013 | Continuing 2013 | New 2014 | Continuing 2014 |
| Number of HCC Students  | 64       | 122             | 54       | 131             | 45       | 139             |
| Highland CC   | 2.86     | 3.01            | 3.23     | 2.88            | 2.78     | 3.14            |
| Other KS CCs  | 2.87     | 2.95            | 2.71     | 3               | 2.77     | 2.98            |
| Other Transfers   | 2.91     | 2.99            | 2.98     | ***             | 2.92     | 2.96            |
| First-time Freshman (Native to WU)  | 2.56     | ***             | 2.7      | ***             | 2.7      | ***             |

| Highland Students who Transfer to Kansas University with Comparison to Other KS CCs and Native Students |          |                 |          |                 |          |                 |
|---|----------|-----------------|----------|-----------------|----------|-----------------|
|   | New 2012 | Continuing 2012 | New 2013 | Continuing 2013 | New 2014 | Continuing 2014 |
| Number of HCC Students  | 29       | 72              | 28       | 66              | 17       | 45              |
| Highland CC   | 2.57     | 2.91            | 3.23     | 2.88            | 2.9      | 2.69            |
| Other KS CCs  | 2.71     | 2.92            | 2.71     | 3               | 2.8      | 2.95            |
| Other Transfers   | 2.79     | 2.95            | 2.98     | 2.95            | 2.78     | 2.97            |
| First-time Freshman (Native to KU)  | 2.88     | ***             | 2.95     | ***             | 2.89     | ***             |
| ***Not reported   |          |                 |          |                 |          |                 |

[Comparative data among all community college transfer students](#) is available on the Kansas Board of Regents website.

- *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

Highland faculty and staff pursue every available strategy to assist students in meeting their academic goals. These strategies include ensuring that programs and individual courses meet the high standards for relevance across all delivery modalities through systematic program review and curriculum oversight.

Refer to Category 2R2 in Table 2.7 for results on internal retention, completion, graduation, and employment goals.

A comparison among all Kansas community colleges (Source: Kansas Board of Regents Transfer Feedback Reports) shows that Highland students consistently rank 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> out of 19 in academic achievement when transferring to a Kansas university.

- *Interpretation of results and insight gained*

Results from the faculty PDCA course-level assessment project range from strict data analysis of students' grades to self-reported student satisfaction with a new learning resource. For example, 93% of students in Spanish I who used Vista Higher Learning (VHL) online course materials during the term reported that the videos should be required for the course. English faculty reported that post-test scores for the students who worked with intensive English tutors improved, but the faculty recommended some slight revisions to the tutoring process. A physical science instructor reported high student ratings for an Ozone Hole activity; however, the project was very time consuming and possibly too ambitious for available class time. An agriculture

instructor reported that his PDCA strategy for teaching “Marginal Physical Properties” resulted in an increase of 18% on the assessment. A team of Early Childhood instructors revised curriculum to align with new local, state, and national standards and reported that students were better prepared for the workplace based upon observational data. One College Biology instructor found that emphasizing the steps in the scientific method in both lecture and lab improved quiz scores on items where students were asked to differentiate the method. In psychology, an instructor used *Scantron* technology to expand individual item results to include an explanation of items that were incorrect, creating a study guide for future exams.

Overall, participation across all full-time faculty has been excellent, ranging from 92% to 100% across five terms since the project was implemented.

**113.** *Based on 1R3, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?*

Data from transfer reports indicate that students consistently struggle with follow-on courses in mathematics and chemistry. Faculty in these disciplines are reaching out to colleagues at nearby universities to isolate specific competencies where Highland graduates seem to struggle. Faculty will use the results of these meetings to enhance instruction and implement activities targeted to these gaps. Success in upper-level accounting courses has been another area of concern for Highland faculty, especially among students who wish to pursue a degree in business. Highland business faculty have reached out to business faculty at a local university where many students transfer for advice in improving student performance, and they plan to implement a revised accounting curriculum in Fall 2017.

Highland faculty have made significant changes to the second-year course offerings by reactivating sophomore-level courses with a goal of preparing students for the rigor of upper-level science and mathematics. The Highland instructional team will use transfer feedback reports and individual data obtained from colleges where Highland students transfer as a basis for continuous curriculum improvement.

After nursing students achieved a 70% first-time pass rate in 2015, the Highland nursing faculty implemented several major curricular improvements designed to assist program students in passing the NCLEX on the first try.

Ninety percent of the 2016 nursing cohort passed the NCLEX on the first try; however, the faculty is considering several changes in order to ensure that students are prepared for the rigors of the LPN to ADN Bridge curriculum.

The Assessment Team has continued to fine-tune the PDCA Course-Level Assessment Project with two goals in mind: first, it is hoped that faculty members will continue to increase the amount of data collected and to increase the quality of data analysis; and second, the Team is working with faculty members to broaden the scope of the project to include research-based best-practices, such as collaborative learning, flipped classrooms, and instructional technology.

### Academic Program Quality

**1P4.** *Academic Program Quality focuses on ensuring quality across all programs, modalities, and locations. Describe the processes for ensuring quality academic programming. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Determining and communicating the preparation required of students for the specific curricula, programs, courses, and learning they will pursue (4.A.4)*

Highland provides information about course prerequisites and placement scores; processes for admission into selection admission programs; course, clinical, laboratory, and internship requirements for academic programs; and additional graduation requirements in the printed catalog, individual program guides, and web-based sources:

- [College Catalog](#): Paper, web-based
- [Individual plans of study and advising guides](#): Paper, web-based
- [Common course syllabi](#): Paper, web-based
- [Selective admission program requirements](#): Paper, web-based

- *Evaluating and ensuring program rigor for all modalities, locations, consortia, and when offering dual-credit programs (3.A.1, 3.A.3, 4.A.4)*

The Highland Community College Academic Program Review process (3.A.1, 3.A.3) coordinates the processes of assessment, program review, and the consideration of available resources. Program Review is aligned with the College's Strategic Plan and responsive to external accrediting agencies. Systematic peer review of all programs and degrees affects positive change and continuous quality improvement in teaching and learning.

Under the direction of the HCC Instructional Council (IC), with membership composed of full-time faculty and instructional staff, each academic program presents a program review report and an oral summary of the review to IC members, who make an overall recommendation from the list below:

1. Continuation of the program: no improvements identified; with program improvements; with corrective action.
2. Development of a cooperative program with another institution.
3. Discontinuation of the program

IC may make a series of recommendations targeted toward program improvement, and may also recommend an interim "check-up" report prior to the next regular review cycle which targets specific concerns or require that a program present a complete review sooner than the regular cycle requires.

Programs are assessed according to the following metrics within the following Criteria:

- Criterion One: Program outcomes are congruent with the goals of the program.
- Criterion Two: Enrollment planning leads to student success.
- Criterion Three: Faculty members are qualified by academic background, experience, and continuing professional staff development.

- Criterion Four: Program is responsive to changing conditions within the field.
- Criterion Five: The program demonstrates a commitment to improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.
- Identified Internal Strengths, Identified Internal Weaknesses, Identified External Opportunities, Identified External Threats:

Professional and Terminal Programs only must supply additional data as part of the program review report: number of graduates annually and placement of graduates. This [link](#) shows HCC Program Review Forms, Program Review Orientation Guide; Sample Program Reviews and Recommendation Form.

- *Awarding prior learning and transfer credits (4.A.2, 4.A.3)*

The Highland Registrar's Office maintains these policies for awarding prior learning and transfer credits: all transcripts received must be official; registrar evaluates each course to determine transfer credits.

- *Selecting, implementing, and maintaining specialized accreditation(s) (4.A.5)*

Highland maintains accreditation for its *LPN to ADN Bridge* program through the [Kansas State Board of Nursing](#). A team from the State Board will conduct a site visit on the Highland campus and Highland Technical Center on April 19-20. Highland faculty and administration will also seek national accreditation status from the National League of Nursing (NLN) beginning in Summer 2017. The ADN Bridge program is the only discipline-specific curriculum which is separately accredited by a professional governing board (4.A.5).

- *Assessing the level of outcomes attainment by graduates at all levels (3.A.2, 4.A.6)*

Refer to Section 1P2 for a description of the process by which graduates of General Education/Transfer programs are assessed for competency in Highland's General Education Outcomes, and to Section 1R2 for assessment results for 439 students who earned 45 or more general education credits at HCC. Refer to Category 2R2 for retention, graduation rate and more complete information (3.A.2, 4.A.6).

- *Selecting the tools/methods/instruments used to assess program rigor across all modalities*

Faculty and instructional staff analyze *eWalkthrough* observations of on-ground, concurrent, and hybrid course sections and review of online courses by an external observer based on research-based best practices to ensure consistent content, rigor, and level of student outcomes assessment across all modalities.

A three-year program review cycle includes program data from courses taught in all delivery modalities, and is based on measures of student and employer satisfaction, grades by delivery type, input from adjunct instructors, course completion and program retention data, transfer

success, and full- and part-time faculty qualifications.

**1R4. What are the results for determining the quality of academic programs?**

- *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*
- *Summary results of assessments (include tables and figures when possible)*

Table 1.12 displays a summary of program review recommendations by type, where 1 = most relevant to the HCC Strategic Plan goals and best practices in student learning. Results illustrate the four most common types of recommendations given to programs based on enrollment and retention data, input from all full- and part-time instructors, self-reported facilities and resources concerns, and co-curricular activities and experiential learning available to program students. In most cases, program faculty was asked to report positive gains during the next review cycle; in a few cases, where program viability is in question due to low enrollment, faculty and instructional staff are implementing initiatives more quickly and will report back within 1-2 years. Detailed results, including recommendations and improvement plans created by program faculty, are available upon request. Here are some [sample completed program reviews](#).

- *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

**Highland Academic Program Review Results by Recommendation Category (2013-2016)**

Since academic programs at Highland were completed the first 3-year cycle during Spring 2016, having formally reviewed all academic programs for the first time, a comprehensive assessment (including comparative data from Year One Recommendations, Year Four Results, and so on) will be analyzed beginning Spring 2017. Faculty and instructional staff have identified four peer institutions using National Benchmark and IPEDs cohort institution data to establish external benchmarks and to compare results on similar measures.

- *Interpretation of results and insight gained.*

**Table 1.13: Summary of Recommendations for Programs**

Participating in Review Cycle One

| Year      | Instructor Collaboration | Facilities Equipment | Viability Recruiting | Program Relevance Outcome Support | Data |
|-----------|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|------|
| 2013/2014 | 62%                      | 22%                  | 56%                  | 13%                               | 58%  |
| 2014/2015 | 48%                      | 41%                  | 58%                  | 24%                               | 40%  |
| 2015/2016 | 43%                      | 44%                  | 51%                  | 14%                               | 32%  |

**1I4. Based on 1R4, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?**

The IC, made the following improvements:

1. Created a Program Review Orientation session for participating faculty,

2. Added a mid-term “check-in” session in January with participating faculty, and a one-on-one information session with the Director of Institutional Research.
3. Solicited feedback from participating faculty after each year’s cycle was complete; the IC used this feedback to improve the process in each of the three years.
4. Provided each program faculty member with a list of adjunct instructors who teach in his/her discipline, with teaching location and contact information.
5. Took an active role in advocating for facility improvements.

The HCC Instructional Council is beginning a second three-year cycle of program reviews for all general education/transfer programs. At the end of the Spring 2017 term, IC members will compare results for Year One (2013-14) programs at the end of their second cycle of reporting and analyze reviews for improvement on identified measures and progress toward meeting recommendations, repeating the analysis for Year Two (2014-15) in Spring 2018, and so on.

### Academic Student Support

**1P5.** *Academic Student Support focuses on systems designed to help students be successful. Describe the processes for developing and delivering academic support to students. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Identifying underprepared and at-risk students, and determining their academic support needs (3.D.1)*

HCC is transitioning from ACT Compass and Asset testing to College Board’s ACCUPLACER as our placement testing platform. The Kansas Board of Regents has set the cut scores for ACCUPLACER in the areas of reading, math, and writing to be used and benchmarks for the next 2 years by all community colleges across the state of Kansas. HCC has determined they will participate in this trial and use the scores set forth by the state. If the student has taken a placement test prior to attending HCC, we request to have scores sent to use for interpretation on our placement scale.

**Table 1.14: HCC Reading Placement Scores**

|                         | ACT   | SAT     | Compass | Asset | Accuplacer |
|-------------------------|-------|---------|---------|-------|------------|
| ENG 095                 | 0-12  | 0-209   | 0-53    | 23-34 | 0-34       |
| ENG 096                 | 13-15 | 210-304 | 54-72   | 35-38 | 35-68      |
| Adequate Reading Skills | 16-36 | 305+    | 73-100  | 39-54 | 69-120     |

**Table 1.15: HCC Writing Placement Scores**

|                 | ACT   | SAT     | Compass | Asset | Accuplacer |
|-----------------|-------|---------|---------|-------|------------|
| ENG 095/ENG 096 | 0-14  | 200-309 | 0-3     | 23-38 | 0-68       |
| Composition I   | 15-36 | 310+    | 4-8     | 39-54 | 69-120     |

**Table 1.16: HCC Math Placement Scores**

|  | ACT | SAT | Compass | Asset | Accuplacer |
|--|-----|-----|---------|-------|------------|
|--|-----|-----|---------|-------|------------|

|                           |       |         |        |       |              |
|---------------------------|-------|---------|--------|-------|--------------|
| Fundamentals of Math      | 0-15  | 200-420 | 0-25   | 23-29 | 0-39         |
| Beginning Algebra         | 16-18 | 421-499 | 26-40  | 30-35 | 40-59        |
| Intermediate Algebra      | 19-21 | 500-599 | 41-60  | 36-45 | 60-80        |
| College Algebra or Higher | 22-26 | 600+    | 61-100 | 46-55 | 81 or higher |

All new students undergo placement testing to determine their readiness for college and program of study. After testing, each student meets with an advisor to be placed in the appropriate level of Math and English classes. HCC technical programs require ACT Work Keys testing in Reading for Information and Applied Mathematics for all programs. Practical nursing students are required also to take the Tests of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS) assessment before acceptance. Students who do not achieve the needed scores for placement are placed into developmental courses and technical program students are given access to ACT KeyTrain accounts to help develop their skills and are asked to retest **(3.D.1)**.

- *Deploying academic support services to help students select and successfully complete courses and programs* **(3.D.2)**

At HCC, the academic advisor or testing coordinator provides placement test results to the student and recommends programs or general education courses the student should complete to experience successful course completion. Developmental courses are offered for reading skills, writing and math for those students that have test scores below the required level. Refer to Tables 1.9-11, above, for a list of courses available for given testing score ranges. All courses are offered in various learning methods (online, hybrid, Interactive, face-to-face) and multiple sections of courses are available at various locations to accommodate the needs of our students within our service area **(3.D.2)**.

- *Ensuring faculty are available for student inquiry* **(3.C.5)**

Per the 2014-2017 master contract, all professional employees are responsible to perform their job description at least six (6) hours per day unless otherwise approved by the Chief Academic Officer. All professional employees are responsible for posting, publishing and holding office hours for student consultation as needed and set forth by the College/Chief Academic Officer. Students have the ability to, and are welcome to, call or email their instructors at any time **(3.C.5)**.

- *Determining and addressing the learning support needs (tutoring, advising, library, laboratories, research, etc.) of students and faculty* **(3.D.1, 3.D.3, 3.D.4, 3.D.5)**

Highland Community College's faculty are encouraged to give their students formative feedback in a timely manner. This feedback is vital for students and faculty to determine individuals' learning support needs. HCC provides free tutoring to the Highland campus by paid student tutors during the day. Tutors are also available to students at all campuses in the evening through "Zoom" virtual conference software. The student tutors must maintain a 3.0 overall GPA, have a good understanding of college level academics, must have earned an "A" in the

course they wish to tutor in, go through extensive training each semester and possess strong oral and writing communication skills. Through Student Support Services, class notes are available within the department for all students to reference and make notes of, but may not be removed or photographed. HCC also has two academic specialists in Math and English available during the day for SSS students only **(3.D.1)**.

Academic advisors are available to all HCC students (on campus, online, and regionally). Students are also provided transfer assistance. Students that are selected as part of the TRIO Student Support Services program are provided additional assistance with a transfer advisor and retention coordinator. The retention coordinator works with SSS students who are not making satisfactory progress, to create a plan and monitor their progress. Non-SSS students who are not meeting satisfactory progress requirements and have self-reinstated will also work with the retention coordinator to develop an academic plan **(3.D.3)**.

HCC's library services department are competent in their work and train new staff to understand HCC's library services. Students are able to use the library for research and to access informational resources needed for their academic advancement. The library staff listen to the needs of their patrons and communicate effectively with students on their requests for resources and materials. The library services staff work as a team and draw on the knowledge and experiences of others to fill students' needs **(3.D.5)**.

Students with specialized needs must be self-reported and complete a self-identification form along with appropriate documentation to support their specialized need or disability. This information is kept confidential and accommodations are discussed with the students, their instructors and the disability coordinator.

Laboratories, clinics and shop areas provide the infrastructure and necessary resources to support effective learning and teaching in individual courses. These areas are evaluated for a safe working environment by faculty when they complete their program reviews and during the e-Walkthrough observation. Labs are provided virtually through our online learning system for students enrolled in a course that requires lab time. HCC's technical programs have many hands-on components within their programs that require time within the shops, clinics and labs that support the academic enrichment of all technical students **(3.D.4)**.

- *Ensuring staff members who provide student academic support services are qualified, trained, and supported* **(3.C.6)**

All persons providing student academic support services have earned the credentials or training certificates required to provide services. Staff training is provided through professional development opportunities both on and off campus or through webinars. Continual monitoring of demand and requirements occur at the administrative level of the College to ensure appropriate training and support is provided to all staff. Refer to Category 2P1 for information related to HCC safety and compliance table **(3.C.6)**.

- *Communicating the availability of academic support services (3.D.2)*

Academic support services are detailed both in the student handbook and planner, and online. The availability of support services is communicated to students through other means as well, such as campus tours, enrollment days, TRIO Student Support Services brochures and flyers, registration days on campus and in the regional centers, College Success & Orientation class, social media platforms and high school visit days. The most important and effective communication about academic support service is provided by the faculty in one-on-one appointments and in class discussions (3.D.2).

- *Selecting the tools/methods/instruments used to evaluate the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of support services*

HCC's change to ACCUPLACER resulted from a decision by ACT to stop providing Compass and Asset, but this change has created a movement across the State of Kansas for all community colleges to now use the same course placement software to develop appropriate course placement benchmark scores for a two-year period. These cut scores will then be re-evaluated and assessed by the Kansas Board of Regents along with administrators from community colleges to ensure appropriate scores correlate with course success.

Additional means of assessment are available within Category 2R1 – Summarizes the results from measures – table with student satisfaction survey and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement results tables. Other effective means for assessing student needs are one-on-one counseling and/or faculty sessions and staff observations.

**1R5. What are the results for determining the quality of academic support services?**

- *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized.*

The primary measure of quality in academic support services is whether students successfully complete developmental courses, program courses and/or successfully complete program related courses. HCC welcomes students with a wide variety of academic backgrounds. Our goal is to offer each one the chance to succeed. Some will fail and retake courses in hopes to succeed and others will change paths and career ambitions. In addition to course completion rates, within Category 2R1 the Student Satisfaction Survey table and the tables of results of the CCSSE provide outcomes tracked for academic support services.

- *Summary results of assessments (include tables and figures when possible) (4.C.2, 4.C.4)*

After the first three terms, following the integration in Spring 2016 of developmental writing and college reading into a combined two-course sequence, faculty will analyze student outcomes in following courses such as College Composition I and II and reading-intensive, reading-intensive courses such as PSY101 General Psychology, HIS101 U.S. History, BUS203 Macroeconomics. The analysis will compare student first-time pass rates in ENG 095 and ENG 096 and final

grades for the courses listed above with data from separate reading and writing courses between Fall 2010-Fall 2015.

[Table 1.17: Student Outcomes Results](#)

➤ *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks (4.C.4)*

The Highland Mathematics Department has set a goal of 80% first-time pass rate for the transitions from one level of math to another. This goal compares favorably with the statewide benchmark of 72.35% (2014-2015) among community colleges, although all Kansas colleges do not offer the same sequence or number of math courses.

Beginning with Summer 2016, HCC partnered with the National Community College Benchmark Project. The first round of data was submitted by the Director of Institutional Research and the HCC AQIP Team used some NCCBP preliminary results to write this portfolio. HCC student services and instructional staff members are aware of the need for additional tutoring and skills labs in response to Student Services surveys, especially for students in regional on-ground, hybrid, and online modalities. Evaluation of most academic and non-academic student support services have become more systematic, though tutoring and skills lab assessment is still in the reacting stage due to recent reorganization and staffing changes.

➤ *Interpretation of assessment results and insights gained (4.C.2)*

About 60% of Highland students continue to place into at least one pre-college level course when they first enroll. Further, students may fail their first level of developmental writing and reading and/or mathematics before moving into college-level courses. Factors include poor study habits, unwillingness to seek out college resources, and poor foundational skills in vocabulary, grammar, and basic arithmetic. Developmental instructors at the college level seek to support students in building these skills while ensuring that curriculum is appropriate and engaging for young adults.

**115.** *Based on 1R5, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years? (4.C.3)*

In addition to the curriculum revisions which combined Developmental Writing and College Reading (2 levels) into ENG 095 Developmental Writing/Reading, *Beginning*; and ENG 096 Developmental Writing/Reading, *Advanced*; based on learning strategies encouraged by the National Association of Developmental Educators (NADE), Highland developmental faculty members have also begun creating targeted, 1-credit supplemental courses to be used in addition to existing writing/reading and mathematics courses. These new modules can be required for students whose diagnostic assessments indicate a gap in a particular area which may cause them to fail an entire course. The goal is to develop, pilot, and implement these supplemental offerings no later than Fall 2017. Developmental writing/reading faculty are also visiting other colleges and consulting with regional and national experts to search for research-

based initiatives to improve HCC curriculum in these vital foundation disciplines.

The College's Student Services area has reorganized and developed a new position Director of Advising in the Spring of 2015. Academic advising duties were dispersed across the College to various people and now there is one dedicated individual. HCC has hired for this position and this candidate started in the summer of 2016. A main duty for the Director of Advising will be to provide leadership to all advisors throughout all of HCC's regional centers and main campus. In addition, the director of Student Support Services, also a new hire, is working to develop a close relationship with academic advising and students' needs. The College could not be more pleased with the changes made within the staff in these 2 departments and how this implementation will help with the assessing and meeting the needs for students.

As more data is compiled within NCCB, instructional research will be able to provide comparison data for internal and external benchmarking. This data will then be used to assess results of support services and developmental programming.

### **Academic Integrity**

**1P6.** *Academic Integrity focuses on ethical practices while pursuing knowledge.*

*Describe the processes for supporting ethical scholarly practices by students and faculty. This includes, but not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Ensuring freedom of expression and the integrity of research and scholarly practice*  
**(2.D., 2.E.1, 2.E.3)**

HCC communicates our commitment to academic freedom for students, faculty and the campus through the academic standards set forth by the Academics Standards Committee. Within the English and communication skills courses, required in all Associates programs, students learn to find and evaluate credible sources, and to use appropriate formats for citing and listing sources. All students who qualify for the TRIO program have access to the Student Support Services department, where they find guidance and free writing assistance in addition to ways to ethically use information resources. HCC's library services are available to all students and provide materials for accessing proper online databases, citing resources and evaluating research materials. The Highland Library Director offers presentations on various topics related to Academic Integrity, makes printed resources available to instructors and students, and offers assistance to individual students to ensure ethical, accurate citation of sources **(2.E.1, 2.E.3)**.

All research conducted by faculty, students and staff must be mindful of the rights of individuals, protect human research subjects and be in compliance with 45 CFR 46. Effective Fall 2016, all HCC data requests must be submitted to the Data Governance Team (DGT) for approval to use individuals' data that attend or work for HCC **(2.E.1)**. Please see Section 116 for a discussion of the Data Review Board, a sub-group within the Data Governance Team whose purpose is to review research requests from faculty, staff, and students.

Incorporated in effective teaching and learning is the freedom of expression and pursuit of truth. HCC has an Academic Standards committee, a non-governing committee designed to act as a

liaison between HCC administration and HCC faculty in matters related to academics, comprised of faculty representatives from across the college who meet regularly to discuss faculty-driven academic questions and concerns that should be discussed with members of the administration **(2.D)**.

- *Ensuring ethical learning and research practices of students **(2.E.2, 2.E.3)***

The [Course Catalog](#) (under College Regulations/Academic Standards - and the [Student Handbook](#) (under Academic Information) discuss Academic Integrity in depth. HCC faculty and students have the responsibility to maintain high academic standards. The Academic Integrity policy addresses academic dishonesty by students, which includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, and falsifying research or data. Students found violating Academic Integrity are recorded within HCC's Maxient program and violations are submitted to the Vice President of Academic Affairs for review. Integrity violations become part of a student's permanent record at HCC. All instructors are expected to enforce the Academic Integrity policy and Student Code of Conduct **(2.E.2, 2.E.3)**.

- *Ensuring ethical teaching and research practices of faculty **(2.E.2, 2.E.3)***

HCC currently does not have an official Academic Freedom policy. Due to this finding, we have included a summary of our plans to assess this section in the implementation section below.

- *Selecting the tools/methods/instruments used to evaluate the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of supporting academic integrity*

HCC's Academic Integrity policy in the Catalog and the Student Handbook includes specific language regarding plagiarism and cheating. Students learn the expectations of their instructors concerning plagiarism and cheating through the first day handout, examples shared within classroom and in the Handbook. In the 2016-2017 academic year, HCC will be piloting a version of *Turnitin*, a plagiarism checking software within a few select courses (please see Section 116 for details).

**1R6. What are the results for determining the quality of academic integrity?**

- *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

Academic Integrity incidents are typically handled at the department level. In the 2015-2016 academic year, HCC implemented the use of Maxient student conduct tracking software throughout the College. Violations of Academic Integrity are now recorded in Maxient. Students found in violation of academic integrity policy face penalties ranging from taking away partial or all points/credit on a given assignment, test, quiz, or lab, to removal from the course.

- *Summary results of measures (include tables and figures where appropriate)*

Below in Table 1.17 are the initial results from Maxient on Academic Integrity cases during the

academic year 2016. A more comprehensive picture will be available as we educate our instructors on how to identify incidents of academic dishonesty and to enter these incidents into Maxient.

**Table 1.18 Maxient Academic Integrity Cases 2015-2016**

| Academic Integrity  | Number of cases found responsible | Number of “NO finding” cases | Total number of cases |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Academic Dishonesty | 32                                | 18                           | 50                    |

➤ *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

The Maxient software was new in 2015-2016 and will be monitored in future years for performance based upon internal and external benchmarks as data becomes available.

➤ *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

Our current results are encouraging; our preliminary results are tracking:

- 1st Incident – “0” or reduced grade is given by instructor and an opportunity for the student to learn from their actions
- 2nd Incident – involvement not only from the instructor but also at the institutional level, along with a hearing and potential for suspension
- 3rd Incident – may result in withdrawal from all courses

HCC’s goal is to make more faculty aware of the Maxient software, to increase use of the system, and to involve the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Student Conduct Officer as needed to ensure equitable application of the discipline process.

**116.** *Based on 1R6, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?*

In response to the need for a formal procedure for reviewing requests for college data, the college has implemented a Data Governance committee during the Summer 2016. The purpose of this Board is to review and support research projects which are ethical and valid, and which support the College’s mission. Further, the Board is creating a structure in which faculty, staff, and students may use college data in responsible ways with respect to accepted research practices, particularly those concerned with the use of human subjects. The Board is in the process of creating committee bylaws and procedures which those requesting data must follow **(2.E.1)**.

Maxient was implemented in the fall of 2015 and has been very useful in collecting academic violations across all of HCC’s campus, regional centers, and online courses. An area for growth in the utilization of Maxient is to provide training in small modules which are easily accessible to all instructors employed by HCC. The VP of Academic affairs will work to develop this training within the next year.

The revised Academic Integrity statement has been added to all course syllabi or first-day handouts **(2.E.2)**. Academic Standards and Instructional Council members will review the statement and accompanying policies and procedures to assess their effectiveness in preventing, identifying, and responding to violations of academic integrity at Highland Community College.

The instructional division will pilot a plagiarism-checking software, *Turnitin*, in selected courses within in the 2016-2017 academic year. These courses represent a variety of delivery modes, such as on-ground, online, hybrid, and concurrent (high school dual credit); instructors will review the results, comparing the number of academic integrity violations pre- and post-implementation in the pilot courses, and recommend either full implementation or another tool or process **(2.E.3)**.

The HCC Instructional Council, whose membership represents full-time faculty and instructional staff, will draft a statement of Academic Freedom and Integrity Principles in Fall 2016. The policy will be reviewed by the Academic Standards Committee members, who will recommend any revisions. Upon approval by both standing committees, the draft will move to the full faculty membership for consideration and inclusion in master contract negotiations; concurrently, the policy will be reviewed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the College President. Upon approval by all parties, a final draft will become college policy, to be administered by the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

## **AQIP CATEGORY TWO: MEETING STUDENT AND OTHER KEY STAKEHOLDER NEEDS**

### **Introduction**

As concern over rising costs of college, college debt, and underemployment of college graduates looms, meeting college student and stakeholder needs becomes increasingly important. What do we do to engage our students in meaningful experiences so that they will transition to a four-year college, university, or the workforce prepared to meet their goals? How do we seek input from our business communities so that we offer viable programs leading to jobs? How do we partner with our local school districts so that our high school students not only have accessible postsecondary education, but are informed about their choices? What role do we have to keep parents and other stakeholders informed of the multitude of options? Highland Community College has kept these questions at the forefront of strategic planning for the past six years. While HCC continually strives to meet student needs, recent attention has been given to communicating with and supporting our business community and local school districts.

In Kansas, education funding has been cut significantly. HCC has experienced a 15% decrease in state funding over the past 7 years. These cuts translate to “doing more with less.” In order to fulfill its mission of providing lifelong learning opportunities for students and contributing to economic development amongst the communities it serves, the College is making decisions to reduce barriers for students seeking a degree and to intentionally offer and support programs that provide sustenance for Northeast Kansas communities. Enhanced communication with students, both prospective and current, parents, and departments at the College has played a significant role in reducing student barriers. Increasing business partnerships to determine local job market and skill level for employees has also been vital in making the school to work transition easier for students. The impending implementation of a new, user friendly, mobile portal called Full Measure will allow students, advisors, parents, and instructors to continuously focus on degree completion.

In addition to the actions listed above, the US Department of Education has made it increasingly clear through “Dear Colleague” letters, Title IX clarifications, VAWA Amendments, and clarification of the Education Amendments of 1972 that all campuses must prohibit discrimination and ensure equal access for all students. We have been mandated to change our campus cultures so that we respond appropriately to sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Training all employees and students is an important part of this work. Assessing student opinions on how these important issues are handled is also part of HCC’s strategic priority.

Another important part of meeting student needs and reducing barriers is assuring their safety as they access our academic, athletic, student service, and all extra and co-curricular activities associated with HCC. Safeguarding the security of students has taken on new meaning since the 2007 Virginia Tech Shootings. All campuses are duty-bound to follow the statutory requirements of Section 485 of the Title IV Higher Education Act of 1965. HCC has created a campus safety team structure, offered various trainings on campus safety, and is currently

working on responding to new Kansas gun laws that will allow concealed carry on Kansas college campuses in July, 2017. Assuring student and stakeholder safety and access across HCC is a priority. These processes have been aligned to allow the organization to manage crisis processes and regularly evaluate them for improvement.

| Reacting  | Systematic  | Aligned   | Integrated  |
|---|---|---|---|
| Isolated tasks and activities address immediate needs | Repeatable, proactive processes with clear explicit goals | Stable, consciously managed, regularly evaluate | Regularly improved through analysis, innovation and sharing |

The processes HCC employs to meet student and other stakeholder’s needs is shifting from systematic to nearly aligned. HCC regularly collects and assesses student satisfaction data, has developed and utilized a model to solicit business, school district, and parent feedback, has updated its equity grievance policy and accompanying processes, and has organized and managed crisis training and planning. The College is piloting eWalkthrough observation for student services personnel and is in its second year of refining student conduct data through the use of Maxient. As these two final processes become a stable part of the culture, HCC’s processes will be fully aligned.

| Reacting  | Systematic  | Aligned   | Integrated  |
|---|---|---|---|
| Isolated tasks and activities address immediate needs | Repeatable, proactive processes with clear and explicit goals | Stable, consciously managed, regularly evaluate | Regularly improved through analysis, innovation and sharing |

Student satisfaction results presented in Category Two provide evidence that student feedback has been regularly collected and analyzed. In addition, strategies to affect positive change have been implemented and improvement has been noted. Although collecting stakeholder feedback falls somewhat behind collection of student feedback, HCC has developed and utilized a model to solicit business, school district, and parent feedback for the purpose of meeting academic program and training needs in local communities. When Maxient data is collected and goals have been set to reduce various conduct incidents, and eWalkthrough data moves from the pilot status in student services to a college-wide process where goals are collected and data is analyzed, HCC’s results will be described as fully aligned. At this point, however, results at HCC are nearly aligned.

In the following pages, we will focus on processes, results and improvements related to:

- Current and Prospective Student Need
- Retention, Persistence, and Completion
- Key Stakeholder Needs
- Complaint Processes
- Building Collaborations and Partnerships

**Current and Prospective Student Needs**

*2P1. Current and Prospective Student Need focuses on determining, understanding, and meeting needs of current and prospective students. This includes, but is not limited to,*

*descriptions of key processes for:*  
 ➤ *Identifying key student groups*

HCC is assigned, through state statute, to serve a nine county service area in Northeast Kansas. HCC provides a main campus in Highland and regional centers in Atchison, Baileyville, Holton, Perry, and Wamego. In addition, HCC offers an extensive online program. Although postsecondary students make up the majority of HCC’s student population, there is a large group of high school students accessing technical and/or general education courses as well. HCC serves 30 high schools within the nine-county service area and typically serves just over 50% of the 1400 seniors in the service area. In 2012, the Kansas Legislature established SB 155, which provides free technical education for approved courses to high school juniors and seniors.

**Table 2.1: Key Student Groups**

| Prospective Students  | Currently Enrolled Students  |
|---|--|
| High School Students-Students enrolled in one of 30 high schools located within service area. HCC Admissions staff is assigned to recruit within all high schools. HCC Admissions staff also targets career classroom presentations for selected junior high schools. Regional Center Directors host special days for high school students in their center to provide career and educational information to prospective students within their radius. | Concurrent Students-High school 10 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> graders who are taking general education or technical courses in their high school or are enrolled in one of the technical programs in HCC’s region. Director of Concurrent Instruction is assigned to provide college courses for high school students. Director of Technical Education and Student Services staff provides SB 155 Technical education free of charge for qualifying students and courses. |
| Adult Basic Education-The ABE Director serves students in the nine-county area with preparation courses for the GED. These students are recruited to HCC from within the ABE/GED program and are offered scholarships based upon test scores.   | Traditional Aged HS Graduates-Students enroll at HCC directly from high school. Many of these students have taken credits from HCC or another institution while in high school.  |
| Non-traditional Students-Typically, this population of student is 25 years of age or older and are seeking a career change or advancement. The Director of Technical Education assists in recruiting these students through business partnerships with the Technical Center.  | Non-traditional Students-Typically enroll in a technical program or at a regional center or online.  |

A traditional campus experience is provided on the Highland campus. Students attending in Highland are typically traditionally-aged students who may choose to live on campus, earn a scholarship for participation in various academic or athletic programs, and participate in a variety of clubs and activities.

Students attending the Technical Center campus in Atchison may choose to have a traditional experience by living on the Highland campus and utilizing daily, college-provided transportation to the Technical Center, participating in the scholarship activity or athletic program, or may choose a more non-traditional experience by living and/or working away from campus.

Regional center students are typically either non-traditionally aged students, students who access higher education by combining online and face-to-face classes, or high school students accessing college courses or technical programs while in high school. In the case of the Wamego and Perry centers, students may be primarily enrolled in a neighboring university while accessing classes at HCC because of lower cost or to alleviate schedule conflicts.

HCC recruits heavily in Kansas, Northwest Missouri, and Southeast Nebraska. Coaches from one of the twelve intercollegiate athletic programs offered on campus recruit across the US and Internationally. Our online program also serves students across the country and internationally.

➤ *Determining new student groups to target for educational offerings and services*

In 2012, in an effort to enhance its workforce, the Kansas legislature passed a bill called SB 155. This allowed high school juniors and seniors to enroll in approved technical education courses tuition free. In order to offer extra incentive for Northeast Kansas high school students, the HCC Board of Trustees voted to offer free books and fees, making it free for high school juniors and seniors to take approved, technical education courses at no cost. SB 155 changed the landscape of technical education for high school students in Kansas.

As a result of SB 155, which provided new funding opportunities for high school technical students, HCC's President identified another opportunity to serve students in the western portion of our service area and led the charge to pursue a Title III grant to establish a fifth service center. Members of the President's staff accepted the challenge to work with Ramona Munsell and Associates to write the grant during the 2012-13 academic year. The grant was awarded in October, 2013 and HCC's Western Center was opened in the fall of 2014. Further explanation of the process to establish the new Western Center and its programs may be found in section 2P3 of this document.

Prior to the 2014 academic year, the state borders of Nebraska, located 10 miles from the Highland campus and Missouri, 30 miles from the campus, served as "invisible" barriers with regard to out-of-state students attending HCC at significantly more affordable rates than those colleges and universities located in within the borders of Southeast Nebraska and Northwest Missouri. Beginning in the fall of 2014, HCC shattered those barriers by offering the same low tuition rates for out-of-state students as in-state students.

In addition to the expanded opportunities listed above, HCC established a new Human Services degree program which began in spring 2015 and a Precision Agriculture program which began in the fall of 2016.

➤ *Meeting changing student needs*

HCC staff has been focused on meeting student needs in a variety of ways. Creating a campus culture that is safe for all students has been a top priority. Teams across all of HCC have re-written the Equity Grievance Policy, developed crisis response teams and procedures,

enhanced reporting opportunities, offered safe-zone training and safe spaces, and changed the focus of the campus CARE team from offering “soft” support for students to providing a proactive, coordinated, and planned approach to the identification, prevention, assessment, management, and reduction of interpersonal and behavioral threats to the safety and well-being of all students and staff. The [HCC Campus Safety and Compliance Management chart](#) is available at outlines much of the work that has taken place over the past five years to organize our staff around safety and compliance management.

In addition, HCC has spent significant time addressing academic advising needs of all students by establishing a study team in the fall of 2014. Plans to create a modified centralized advising space on the Highland campus were submitted by a team of Student Services and academic staff. In 2015, the BOT approved a new position, Director of Academic Advising, to bring the plan to fruition. The position was filled in the summer of 2016.

- *Identifying and supporting student subgroups with distinctive needs (e.g. seniors, commuters, distance learners, military veterans, developmental students -Core Component (3.D.1)*

On application/registration, HCC provides outreach, including:

- **Underprepared** – HCC provides placement and a variety of opportunities for students who need assistance in math, writing, and reading. Also see 1P5.
  - **Disabled** – Students who identify as disabled are provided reasonable accommodation through the disabilities coordinator. Many students with disabilities qualify for the SSS program, a Title IV federally funded TRIO program located on the Highland campus.
  - **Veterans** – The HCC registrar serves as administrator of the Veteran’s Benefits programs and helps students file appropriate forms to receive benefits.
  - **First Generation** – Many first generation students qualify for the SSS program.
  - **Commuters** – HCC Wamego provides an ATA bus for student transport. Transportation is provided to the Technical Center.
  - **Adult** – HCC offers adult basic education and GED programs.
  - **LGBT** – The Highland campus offers the GSA (Gay/Straight Alliance) organization and safe spaces to support LGBT students.
  - **Distance Learners** – HCC provides degree obtainment through the online program, interactive distance learning, and hybrid course offerings. Programs support students challenged to earn a degree without the flexibility that distance learning provides.
- *Deploying non-academic support services to help students be successful. Core Component (3.D.2)*

A number of non-academic support services are in place to meet the needs of all groups of students. A Block Party is held at the beginning of each academic year to acquaint students with a variety of these support systems and extra- and co-curricular opportunities. Orientation programs at all HCC sites provide information about these programs to students across all of

HCC. In addition, HCC supports the RAVE text messaging program and HCC's Student Engage application to further acquaint students with opportunities to support their success.

- **Counseling** – A Counselor is provided to students at Highland and Technical Center.
  - **Student Health 101** – Distributed via email to all students, helps to create a culture of wellness.
  - **Students in Crisis** – The campus CARE Team deals with students in crisis. The “Warren Fund” is utilized when students have an immediate financial need.
  - **Student Engage Application** – This mobile application is a free download to all students. It helps students engage with each other and with other staff members.
  - **Flex dollars** – Money is added to every student meal plan so that they have money available for gas, incidentals, snacks, and meals that are not available on campus.
  - **Tutoring** – Free tutoring is provided on the Highland campus and accessed at regional centers via “Zoom,” the College’s video conferencing software program.
  - **Clubs and Organizations** – Student organizations are located on the Highland campus and the Technical Center campus.
  - **Insurance for housing students** – For students living in campus housing, a secondary health insurance policy is included with the room rate.
  - **AOK** (Accelerating Opportunity in Kansas) – Adult learners have the benefit of utilizing tutors to assist in courses while they are learning a new skill or trade.
  - **RAs** (Resident Assistants) – Student RAs provide support to residential students.
  - **Wellness Center Personal Training** – Students wishing to work on their own personal wellness and wellbeing can work with a personal trainer at HCC’s Wellness Center.
  - **FAFSA Workshops** – The HCC financial aid office provides assistance to all prospective and current students.
  - **College Planning Conference** – The HCC Admissions Team hosts a college planning conference each year for prospective and current students.
  - **Academic Advising & Transfer** – Academic Advisors and Regional Directors provide advising and transfer assistance for all students.
  - **Co-curricular and Extracurricular Activities** – Students are provided a number of co-curricular and extracurricular opportunities throughout each academic year. See 2R1.
  - **Microsoft 365** – All HCC students and faculty have been given access to Microsoft 365 to make communication and collaboration on group projects much easier.
- *Ensuring staff members who provide non-academic student support services are qualified, trained, and supported. Core Component (3.C.6)*

All persons providing non-academic support services have earned the credentials or training certificates required to provide services. Staff training is provided through professional development opportunities both on and off campus or in webinars. Ongoing training is provided for all involved with supporting the Equity Grievance Policy including Title IX training, Student Conduct Training, and Behavior Intervention Team Training. Continual monitoring of demands and requirements occur at the leadership level of the College to ensure appropriate training is

provided to staff. Additionally, HCC is implementing an online training program for staff called Campus Answers, during the Fall 2016 semester. This program allows for anytime, anywhere training and support for instructors.

Student success at any institution relies on generous support from non-academic staff. Perhaps the most important of HCC's efforts to support non-academic staff has to do with the development of the structured eWalkthrough tool. It has long been known that frequent observation and follow up reflection in classrooms enhances student learning; however, the same observation and reflection opportunities have not been explored in student affairs work — until now. This tool allows staff to observe the performance of student services and other non-academic employees across the organization and give immediate feedback about their work. Its purpose is to support the staff with instantaneous feedback, clarify the intersectionality between expectation and practice, generate data to drive decision-making, create opportunity for employee self-reflection and metacognition, and provide content for collaborative dialogue and professional conversations. The tool has been designed using various student development theories and organized around the framework of Invitational Theory. Additionally, eWalkthrough allows observers to note the extent to which student service professionals are meeting HCC's SPEs. The tool was created in the summer and fall of 2015 and piloted in the spring of 2016. Pilot data from the project is shared in Tables 2.8, and 2.9

➤ *Communicating the availability of non-academic support services (3.D.2)*

Enrollment days for new students on the main campus and in all regional sites are held during the Spring and Summer prior to the fall semester. Prior to that, the admissions staff coordinates recruiting activities in all portions of the service area to inform students of the post-secondary opportunities provided through HCC. In addition, the Director of Concurrent Instruction and her staff provides information about support services offered at HCC in each of the high schools in HCC's nine-county service area. These formal and informal presentations offer many opportunities for students and their families to access information about HCC.

After students arrive on campus, they are encouraged to become active in one or more clubs or organizations such as Skills USA, Business, Ag, Education, or Art Club, Phi Theta Kappa, Gay Straight Alliance, Student Government Association, Student Leadership Team, or a variety of other clubs supported at HCC. Most of these clubs, as well as many all-campus activities, focus on applying in-class learning to co-curricular and extracurricular settings. These clubs are featured at the On Campus Block Party hosted during the first week of the fall semester.

Additionally, non-academic support services training availability is communicated by:

- HCC Student Engage App
- TV monitors – located throughout the Highland Campus
- Orientation Day – sponsored for all new students on the Highland campus
- [Student Handbook](#)
- All-Student Emails – sent to all enrolled students
- [Course Syllabi](#)

- [HCC Catalog](#)
- HCC Website, including [online calendar of events](#)

➤ *Selecting tools/methods/instruments to assess student needs*

HCC uses the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement to assess student needs and their perceptions of a variety of programs offered at HCC and to compare local data to national data. Further, we assess student satisfaction by utilizing a number of local surveys created using Survey Monkey including satisfaction with registration days, enrollment days, visit days, various activities, and campus climate. HCC has also collected and analyzed exit data since 2012 from students who drop out.

➤ *Assessing the degree to which student needs are met*

HCC staff has set goals for both nationally normed data and for data collected locally. Results are made available to the appropriate staff. HCC requires improvement or action plans for areas with gap scores on the SSI over 1.0 and for areas on the CCSSE that don't meet the required numerical goal set at the local level. A more informal process is utilized for local data collected through Survey Monkey surveys. Generally, brief summary data is provided to program organizers for the benefit of improving programming. HCC's Campus Climate Survey is reviewed to determine what training, if any, is needed campus-wide to further improve safety and security. The Student Exit Survey indicates that students usually leave for personal reasons. Just over half of the students dropping out at HCC intend to transfer to another institution. 49% do not intend to transfer. Generally, exiting students have been happy with the relationships established at Highland.

**2R1.** *What are the results for determining if current and prospective students' needs are met?*

➤ *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

The primary tools used to track the results of our efforts to meet current students' needs are the SSI and the CCSSE that can be compared to national benchmarks. HCC has also developed a set of six SPEs (see 1P1) that are measured through various local means, including the eWalkthrough mentioned above. HCC has mapped the SPE's to student development theories to determine whether or not we are offering activities that align with what we know, through research, to be important for college students.

With regard to prospective student needs, HCC has spent a significant amount of time in our service area building relationships with students, parents, schools, and the business community to determine needs. This is addressed in subcategory three and five of this section.

➤ *Summary of results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)*

**Table 2.2-Student Satisfaction Survey –FY10,12,14 Result Comparison**

Highland Community College Institutional Results and National Group Comparisons

| Scale-Rated on<br>1(low) to 7 (high) | 2010*<br>(Highland Campus Results) |                         |                           |                              | 2012                       |                         |                           |                              | 2014                       |                         |                           |                              |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
|                                      | HCC Order of<br>Importance         | Importance<br>HCC/Nat'l | Satisfaction<br>HCC/Nat'l | Performance<br>Gap HCC/Nat'l | HCC Order of<br>Importance | Importance<br>HCC/Nat'l | Satisfaction<br>HCC/Nat'l | Performance<br>Gap HCC/Nat'l | HCC Order of<br>Importance | Importance<br>HCC/Nat'l | Satisfaction<br>HCC/Nat'l | Performance<br>Gap HCC/Nat'l |
| Academic Services                    | 8                                  | 5.80/<br>6.06           | 5.38/<br>5.46             | .42/<br>.60                  | 8                          | 5.78/<br>6.09           | 5.20/<br>5.51             | .57/<br>.58                  | 9                          | 5.85/<br>6.12           | 5.53/<br>5.56             | .32/<br>.56                  |
| Academic Advising/<br>Counseling     | 1                                  | 5.98/<br>6.15           | 5.59/<br>5.21             | .39/<br>.94                  | 2                          | 6.0/<br>6.18            | 5.24/<br>5.23             | .76/<br>.95                  | 2                          | 6.10/<br>6.22           | 5.59/<br>5.26             | .51/<br>.96                  |
| Admissions/<br>Financial Aid         | 6                                  | 5.82/<br>6.04           | 5.16/<br>5.14             | .66/<br>.90                  | 5                          | 5.93/<br>6.09           | 5.21/<br>5.19             | .72/<br>.90                  | 6                          | 6.00/<br>6.13           | 5.55/<br>5.24             | .45/<br>.89                  |
| Campus Climate                       | 6                                  | 5.82/<br>5.98           | 5.23/<br>5.31             | .59/<br>.67                  | 7                          | 5.85/<br>6.01           | 5.37/<br>5.34             | .48/<br>.67                  | 7                          | 5.98/<br>6.05           | 5.54/<br>5.37             | .44/<br>.68                  |
| Campus Support<br>Services           | 11                                 | 5.17/<br>5.47           | 4.87/<br>4.97             | .30/<br>.50                  | 11                         | 5.27/<br>5.51           | 4.85/<br>5.0              | .42/<br>.51                  | 11                         | 5.46/<br>5.57           | 5.07/<br>5.05             | .39/<br>.52                  |
| Concern for the<br>Individual        | 2                                  | 5.95/<br>6.09           | 5.35/<br>5.24             | .60/<br>.85                  | 3                          | 5.98/<br>6.12           | 5.33/<br>5.25             | .65/<br>.87                  | 3                          | 6.05/<br>6.15           | 5.52/<br>5.28             | .53/<br>.87                  |
| Instructional<br>Effectiveness       | 5                                  | 5.86/<br>6.19           | 5.22/<br>5.42             | .64/<br>.77                  | 1                          | 6.02/<br>6.22           | 5.42/<br>5.44             | .60/<br>.78                  | 1                          | 6.12/<br>6.25           | 5.53/<br>5.46             | .59/<br>.79                  |
| Registration<br>Effectiveness        | 4                                  | 5.88/<br>6.17           | 5.38/<br>5.43             | .50/<br>.74                  | 4                          | 5.94/<br>6.20           | 5.42/<br>5.46             | .52/<br>.74                  | 4                          | 6.03/<br>6.23           | 5.67/<br>5.49             | .36/<br>.74                  |
| Safety and Security                  | 10                                 | 5.75/<br>6.02           | 4.73/<br>5.00             | 1.02/<br>1.02                | 10                         | 5.74/<br>6.05           | 5.11/<br>5.06             | .63/<br>.99                  | 10                         | 5.83/<br>6.08           | 5.17/<br>5.15             | .66/<br>.93                  |
| Service Excellence                   | 9                                  | 5.79/<br>5.97           | 5.20/<br>5.28             | .59/<br>.69                  | 9                          | 5.75/<br>6.00           | 5.25/<br>5.31             | .50/<br>.69                  | 8                          | 5.90/<br>6.04           | 5.55/<br>5.34             | .35/<br>.70                  |
| Student<br>Centeredness              | 3                                  | 5.90/<br>5.99           | 5.27/<br>5.38             | .63/<br>.61                  | 6                          | 5.92/<br>6.02           | 5.48/<br>5.41             | .44/<br>.61                  | 5                          | 6.03/<br>6.06           | 5.66/<br>5.43             | .37/<br>.63                  |

Tables 2.2 and 2.3 show student satisfaction results from the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory conducted in the fall of 2010, 2012, and 2014. As Student SSI results are reviewed, we consider the performance gap score, which is defined as the difference between student expectations and the services provided by HCC. Students are asked to rate their expectations for each item on a scale, and then asked to rate their satisfaction with the same items using the same scale. In general, large performance gap scores (1.50 or more) indicate that the institution is not meeting students' expectations. Small or zero gap scores (.50 or less) indicate that an institution is meeting students' expectations. Negative gap scores indicate that an institution is exceeding student's expectations. Stakeholders from each department are presented with specific scores so they can determine specific areas of strength and weakness.

- HCC performs above the national average in the top four areas of importance.
- HCC has performed above the national average in all areas except for Safety and Security in 2010 and scoring lower in Student Centeredness in 2010.
- HCC does not have any areas of gap that are over 1.0. HCC decreased the gap scores in every area except Safety and Security.
- HCC has made significant improvements from 2010-2014 by having gap scores of less than .50 in 7 out of 11 areas and by eliminating gap scores over 1.0.

HCC staff considered it necessary to add ten institutional questions to the SSI, dealing with student satisfaction in two student service areas: housing and student activities.

**Table 2.3 HCC Specific Questions Regarding Student Life and Housing (SSI)**

| Scale-Rated on<br>1(low) to 7 (high)                      | 2010                    |            |              |                 | 2012                    |            |              |                 | 2014                    |            |              |                 |
|---|-------------------------|------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------------|------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------------|------------|--------------|-----------------|
|   | HCC Order of Importance | Importance | Satisfaction | Performance Gap | HCC Order of Importance | Importance | Satisfaction | Performance Gap | HCC Order of Importance | Importance | Satisfaction | Performance Gap |
| Adequate on-campus student activities on weekends         | 5                       | 5.32       | 4.68         | .64             | 5                       | 5.55       | 4.48         | 1.07            | 4                       | 5.58       | 4.71         | .87             |
| Adequate on-campus student activities during the weekdays | 3                       | 5.45       | 5.33         | .12             | 2                       | 5.65       | 5.01         | .64             | 3                       | 5.65       | 5.16         | .49             |
| Reasonable variety of on-campus activities                | 2                       | 5.65       | 5.25         | .40             | 4                       | 5.62       | 5.03         | .59             | 2                       | 5.73       | 5.24         | .49             |
| Student government responsive to students                 | 4                       | 5.37       | 5.00         | .37             | 2                       | 5.65       | 4.92         | .73             | 5                       | 5.45       | 4.92         | .53             |
| Student leaders contribute to positive campus experience  | 1                       | 5.78       | 5.27         | .51             | 1                       | 5.85       | 5.13         | .72             | 1                       | 5.85       | 5.57         | .28             |
| Campus housing well maintained                            | 1                       | 5.94       | 4.63         | 1.31            | 1                       | 6.13       | 4.74         | 1.39            | 1                       | 6.21       | 5.11         | 1.10            |
| The housing staff is helpful                              | 2                       | 5.87       | 4.85         | 1.02            | 2                       | 6.12       | 5.40         | .72             | 2                       | 6.08       | 5.59         | .49             |
| Housing policies and procedures reasonable                | 3                       | 5.84       | 5.08         | .76             | 5                       | 5.93       | 5.04         | .89             | 4                       | 6.00       | 5.27         | .73             |
| Campus housing atmosphere inviting                        | 5                       | 5.76       | 5.06         | .70             | 4                       | 5.96       | 5.20         | .76             | 4                       | 6.00       | 5.28         | .72             |
| Housing staff fair and unbiased                           | 4                       | 5.82       | 5.07         | .75             | 3                       | 6.10       | 5.24         | .86             | 3                       | 6.06       | 5.36         | .70             |

- It is most important to our students that student leaders contribute to a positive campus experience. Gap scores for all three years are well below 1.0, indicating that student leaders are contributing to positive experiences for other students.
- In 2012, students indicated a need for more weekend activities. That need was addressed and resulted in a lower gap score for the 2014 assessment.
- There are no gap scores above 1.0 in 2014, which indicates that students are generally satisfied with student activities.
- Students expect campus housing to be maintained and for the housing staff to be helpful. The surveys indicated they are not satisfied with housing maintenance; it has been rated the most important of the housing questions.
- With the exception of maintenance, students are generally satisfied with housing.

**Table 2.4 Community College Survey of Student Engagement**

CCSSE Results: Support for Learners

| <i>Indicator:<br/>1.0=Very Little; 2.0=Some;<br/>3.0=Quite a bit; 4.0=Very Much</i>  | <b>HCC<br/>Goal</b> | <b>2012</b> |                                     | <b>2014</b> |                                     | <b>2016</b> |                                      |
|--|---------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|
|  |                     | <b>HCC</b>  | <b>2012<br/>National<br/>Cohort</b> | <b>HCC</b>  | <b>2014<br/>National<br/>Cohort</b> | <b>HCC</b>  | <b>2016<br/>National<br/>Cohort*</b> |
| How much does this college provide the support you need to help you succeed at this college?                                   | 3.0                 | 2.78        | 3.00                                | 2.94        | 3.03                                | 3.14        | 3.06                                 |
| How much does this college encourage contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds? | 3.0                 | 2.31        | 2.55                                | 2.28        | 2.59                                | 2.63        | 2.63                                 |
| How much does this college emphasize helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)?            | 3.0                 | 1.95        | 1.97                                | 1.97        | 2.02                                | 2.01        | 2.05                                 |
| How much does this college provide the support you need to thrive socially?  | 3.0                 | 2.04        | 2.19                                | 2.10        | 2.23                                | 2.23        | 2.26                                 |
| How much does this college provide the financial support you need to afford your education?                                    | 3.0                 | 2.37        | 2.56                                | 2.42        | 2.59                                | 2.58        | 2.58                                 |

\*National 2016 sample sizes above in, respectively, from top item to the bottom item:

N = 426,401; N = 425,180; N = 425,393; N = 423,717; N = 424,716

Table 2.4 describes student perception of support for learners at the College.

- Improvement has been made from 2012 to 2016 in all five identified support categories.
- HCC is meeting its goal providing support needed to succeed at this College.
- HCC is falling short of its goal of 3.0 in four categories.
- HCC falls below the national average in 2016 in two categories.

**Table 2.5: CCSSE Quality of Relationships**

| <i>Indicator: 1.0=Unfriendly, unsupportive,<br/>sense of alienation 7.0=Friendly,<br/>supportive, sense of belonging</i> | <b>HCC<br/>Goal</b> | <b>2012</b> |                                     | <b>2014</b> |                                     | <b>2016</b> |                                      |
|--|---------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|
|  |                     | <b>HCC</b>  | <b>2012<br/>National<br/>Cohort</b> | <b>HCC</b>  | <b>2014<br/>National<br/>Cohort</b> | <b>HCC</b>  | <b>2016<br/>National<br/>Cohort*</b> |
| Other Students   | 5.2                 | 5.56        | 5.49                                | 5.51        | 5.46                                | 5.46        | 5.43                                 |
| Instructors  | 5.6                 | 5.65        | 5.68                                | 5.85        | 5.70                                | 5.62        | 5.71                                 |
| Administrative Personnel and Offices   | 5.6                 | 5.11        | 4.97                                | 5.03        | 5.03                                | 5.55        | 5.08                                 |

\*National 2016 sample sizes are approximately: N = 426,534

Table 2.5 describes student perceptions of the quality of relationships with other students at the College, instructors, and administrative personnel and offices.

- HCC students were satisfied with relationships established with other students and rated the quality of relationships with other students above the national cohort ratings.
- Although student ratings exceed the campus goal relative to establishing relationships with instructors, HCC fell below the national cohort rating in 2012 and 2016.

- In relation to administrative personnel and offices, student ratings meet or exceed the national goals, but fall below the institutional goal in two of the three years.

**Table 2.6 CCSSE Student Satisfaction Scores**

| Indicator: 1.0=not at all;<br>2=Somewhat; 3=Very<br>How satisfied are you with these services? | HCC Goal | 2012 |                      | 2014 |                      | 2016 |                       |
|--|----------|------|----------------------|------|----------------------|------|-----------------------|
|  |          | HCC  | 2012 National Cohort | HCC  | 2014 National Cohort | HCC  | 2016 National Cohort* |
| Academic advising/planning   | 2.25     | 2.08 | 2.23                 | 2.26 | 2.41                 | 2.35 | 2.29                  |
| Career counseling  | 2.25     | 1.81 | 2.05                 | 2.08 | 2.12                 | 2.03 | 2.11                  |
| Job placement assistance   | 2.25     | 1.64 | 2.81                 | 1.85 | 1.85                 | 1.88 | 1.88                  |
| Peer or other tutoring   | 2.25     | 2.12 | 2.19                 | 2.22 | 2.32                 | 2.32 | 2.23                  |
| Skill labs (writing, math, etc.)   | 2.25     | 2.20 | 2.29                 | 2.30 | 2.22                 | 2.32 | 2.31                  |
| Financial aid advising   | 2.25     | 1.98 | 2.24                 | 2.25 | 2.34                 | 2.39 | 2.26                  |
| Computer lab   | 2.25     | 2.28 | 2.50                 | 2.50 | 2.40                 | 2.44 | 2.48                  |
| Student organizations  | 2.25     | 1.94 | 2.01                 | 2.04 | 2.16                 | 2.33 | 2.06                  |
| Transfer credit assistance   | 2.25     | 2.01 | 2.07                 | 2.09 | 2.28                 | 2.34 | 2.11                  |
| Services to students with disabilities   | 2.25     | 1.83 | 2.04                 | 2.07 | 2.12                 | 2.26 | 2.10                  |

\*National sample sizes (2016) above, approximately, for Importance, Usage, and Satisfaction, respectively: N = 405,989; N = 367,808; N = 354,690

Table 2.6 describes student satisfaction in ten areas of their college experience. HCC's goal is to attain a 2.25 satisfaction rating out of a possible 3.

- In 2016, HCC exceeded its goal in all categories except career counseling and job placement assistance.
- In 2016, HCC met or exceeded the national average in all categories except computer labs and career counseling.
- HCC scores made noticeable improvement from 2012 to 2016 in all areas except career counseling and computer labs.

**Table 2.7: HCC Extra and Co-Curricular Activities Offered/Student Participation**  
 Aligned with SPE's 2015-16

|   | Highland                   | Atchison                   | Holton                     | Perry                      | Wamego                     | Western                    | Total                      |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Fall 2015   |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |
| Area/SPE  | #Activities/<br># Students |
| Academic & Professional-1                         | 27/362                     | 1/12                       | 7/7                        | 0/0                        | 1/5                        | 3/19                       | 38/393                     |
| Culture & Diversity-3,5                           | 6/724*                     | 0/0                        | 2/8                        | 0/0                        | 0/0                        | 2/37                       | 10/769                     |
| Health & Wellness-4,6                             | 14/953                     | 3/240                      | 0/0                        | 2/110                      | 0/0                        | 1/6                        | 17/1,069                   |
| Leadership & Service-3,5                          | 38/725                     | 6/478                      | 0/0                        | 0/0                        | 3/10                       | 1/50                       | 42/7,85                    |
| Personal Development & Social Engagement-2, 4,5,6 | 42/3,496                   | 7/447                      | 2/10                       | 0/0                        | 3/21                       | 0/0                        | 47/3,527                   |
| Total Fall  | 127/6,260                  | 17/1,177                   | 11/25                      | 2/110                      | 7/36                       | 7/112                      | 189/7,720                  |

| Area/SPE   | Spring 2016                |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
|  | #Activities/<br># Students |
| Academic & Professional-1                        | 17/311                     | 4/340                      | 4/24                       | 0/0                        | 0/0                        | 5/173                      | 30/848                     |
| Culture & Diversity-3,5                          | 9/441                      | 0/0                        | 0/0                        | 1/12                       | 0/0                        | 0/0                        | 10/453                     |
| Health & Wellness-4,6                            | 10/790                     | 1/35                       | 0/0                        | 0/0                        | 0/0                        | 1/8                        | 12/833                     |
| Leadership & Service-3,5                         | 14/478**                   | 5/85                       | 0/0                        | 0/0                        | 0/0                        | 0/0                        | 19/563                     |
| Personal Development & Social Engagement-2,4,5,6 | 30/1,337                   | 1/225                      | 2/16                       | 0/0                        | 0/0                        | 0/0                        | 33/1,578                   |
| Total Spring                                     | 80/3,357                   | 11/685                     | 6/50                       | 1/12                       | 0/0                        | 6/181                      | 104/4,285                  |
| Total 2015-16                                    | 207/9,617                  | 11/685                     | 17/75                      | 3/122                      | 7/36                       | 13/293                     | 293/10,828                 |

\*Included Poster Campaign of 300

\*\*Included No More Campaign of 300

SPE's are numbered as per the Table 1.3.

Table 2.7 provides a graphical representation of extracurricular and co-curricular activities. Drawing from various student development theories, a team of student services professionals created five categories identified as important for student success. All staff members at HCC reported the number of extracurricular and co-curricular activities offered and the number of students attending each activity. (Table 2.7) Activities are reported in one of the five areas of emphasis noted above and linked with the SPE's.

- 66% of total activities took place in fall semester.
- The least activities provided were in the area of culture and diversity.
- The most activities were in personal development and social engagement.
- 71% of the activities were offered on the Highland campus, 29% at the regional sites.
- Rank of types of activities provided:80 Personal Development and Social Engagement; 68 Academic and Professional; 61 Leadership and Service; 29 Health and Wellness; 20 Culture and Diversity.

**Table 2.8 Invitational Nature of 5 P's, eWalkthrough Pilot, Spring 2016**

| Place (Environment for Providing Services) | % of Time Observed |
|--|--------------------|
| Physically safe                            | 100%               |
| Emotionally safe                           | 80%                |
| Inclusive                                  | 71%                |
| Functional and efficient                   | 91%                |
| Invitational                               | 86%                |
| Confidentiality assured                    | 40%                |

| <b>People (Staff and Interaction with Others)</b>                            | <b>% of Time Observed</b> |
|--|---------------------------|
| Respectful   | 100%                      |
| Optimistic and positive  | 80%                       |
| Equitable  | 83%                       |
| Organized  | 71%                       |
| Available  | 100%                      |
| Intentional  | 80%                       |
| Engaging and interactive   | 74%                       |
| <b>Processes/Policies (Implements HCC Policies and Processes)</b>            |                           |
| Assists in resolving problems and providing clear directions                 | 43%                       |
| Asks probing follow-up questions   | 51%                       |
| Provides opportunity for collaboration between the employee and the customer | 31%                       |
| Consistently follows and implements policy                                   | 23%                       |
| Refers to electronic and other resources to support decision-making          | 37%                       |
| Facilitates or guides on-going support and assistance next steps             | 63%                       |
| Internal processes clear and efficient                                       | 43%                       |
| <b>Programs (Promotes research-based student development opportunities)</b>  |                           |
| Develop competence   | 71%                       |
| Establish identity   | 0%                        |
| Provide opportunity to engage and connect with community                     | 0%                        |
| Assist with managing emotions  | 3%                        |
| Develop purpose in career and/or life  | 11%                       |
| Develop integrity  | 0%                        |
| Enhance interpersonal interaction  | 11%                       |

Table 2.8 displays pilot data collected from the eWalkthrough. Invitational Theory suggests that when an organization's people, places, policies, programs, and processes are invitational, the organization's culture is healthy. These results note the percentage of time that observers noted each of the areas listed in the left column. Pilot data indicates that places are generally physically safe, functional, efficient, invitational, and emotionally safe and interactions between staff and students are positive. Although the confidentiality score was low, the calibration team determined that confidentiality should be observed at all times and left unmarked only if the space was not confidential. Pilot data in processes and policies indicate that there may be opportunities for staff training in organizational policies and processes, or that there could be a need to communicate reliance on policies and processes already in place.

**Table 2.9 HCC SPEs, eWalkthrough Pilot, Spring 2016**

| <b>SPE</b>                | <b>Spring 2016</b> | <b>SPE</b> |
|---------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Be competent at your work | 100%               | 1          |
| Communicate effectively   | 94%                | 2          |
| Respect others            | 100%               | 3          |
| Make good decisions       | 69%                | 4          |
| Act responsibly           | 94%                | 5          |
| Work effectively on teams | 31%                | 6          |

Table 2.9 indicates the frequency of student services employees exhibiting HCC’s SPEs during eWalkthrough observations.

Five of the six SPE’s are evident in most eWalkthrough observations. The calibration team identified that pilot observations were not made during meetings when staff members would be working on teams.

**Table 2.10: HCC Student Exit Survey 2012-Present**

|   | 1             | 2           | 3            | 4           | 5            | Total |
|---|---------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------|
| Academic Reasons                                | 62.59%<br>92  | 6.12%<br>9  | 10.88%<br>16 | 4.76%<br>7  | 15.65%<br>23 | 147   |
| Athletic Reasons                                | 70.95%<br>105 | 4.73%<br>7  | 3.38%<br>5   | 4.73%<br>7  | 16.22%<br>24 | 148   |
| Financial Reasons                               | 61.07%<br>91  | 6.71%<br>10 | 12.08%<br>18 | 4.03%<br>6  | 16.11%<br>24 | 149   |
| Concerns about HCC Housing                      | 77.93%<br>113 | 7.59%<br>11 | 3.45%<br>5   | 2.76%<br>4  | 8.28%<br>12  | 145   |
| Concerns about HCC Student Life                 | 76.22%<br>109 | 7.69%<br>11 | 6.29%<br>9   | 4.20%<br>6  | 5.59%<br>8   | 143   |
| Concerned about distance from home              | 60.69%<br>88  | 8.97%<br>13 | 10.34%<br>15 | 6.90%<br>10 | 13.10%<br>19 | 145   |
| Concerns about faculty                          | 88.89%<br>128 | 3.47%<br>5  | 3.47%<br>5   | 1.39%<br>2  | 2.78%<br>4   | 144   |
| Concerns about other staff                      | 88.97%<br>129 | 4.14%<br>6  | 3.45%<br>5   | 2.07%<br>3  | 1.38%<br>2   | 145   |
| Personal reasons other than those listed above. | 34.69%<br>51  | 5.44%<br>8  | 7.48%<br>11  | 8.84%<br>13 | 43.54%<br>64 | 147   |

1=Not why I’m leaving HCC, 3=Somewhat of a reason I’m leaving HCC, 5=One of the main reasons I’m leaving HCC

Table 2.10 lists 2012-2016 results of HCC’s surveys given to students who drop out of HCC prior to completing a semester.

- Personal reasons are the number one cause for students dropping out of HCC.
- Concern about staff ranks the lowest in a student’s reason for leaving.
- Athletic, financial, and academic concerns are reasons to leave under 20% of the time.

➤ *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

(See explanations below Tables 2.2 to 2.10.)

➤ *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

As described in section 2R1, students at HCC are overall very satisfied with their experiences at the College. Although there are specific areas cited for improvement and explained below in 2I1, HCC generally meets or exceeds its goals in providing appropriate instructional services,

support for student learning, and a culture where students can grow both academically and socially.

Many areas of opportunity noted throughout the data will be addressed with intentional programming. Students have identified needs pertaining to encouraging the development of relationships with students from different backgrounds (Table 2.4). There is a need for enhanced programming in culture and diversity (Tables 2.4, 2.7). Another identified need is to help students thrive socially; further interpretation is needed to understand how students may be assisted in that area. There are numerous opportunities across HCC to do just that (Table 2.7). The gap in perception of social opportunities could be at the regional centers, where significantly fewer activities in that programming area are offered. Finally, students want additional help in coping with non-academic areas and in providing financial support for their education. These areas are addressed in 2I1.

Students are less satisfied with job placement and career counseling services than many of the other services provided at HCC (Table 2.6). Improvements in these areas are addressed in 2I1. A final insight into the data indicates that students are not fully satisfied with HCC computer labs. More information is needed in order to assess more specific needs.

*2I1. Based on 2R1, What Improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?*

One area of opportunity that has recently been addressed at HCC is the student concern of financial support coming from the College. In the Spring of 2016, HCC implemented a service that allowed students to make payments toward their current semester's bill. In the past, students who could not access enough financial aid or who didn't have their own financial resources could not pay for their education. When the payment option called NelNet was implemented in Spring 2016, 574 students signed up for the service. As a result, HCC's Spring enrollment was the highest it has been since 2011. In the summer of 2016, 231 students took advantage of the payment plan. So far, 627 students have signed up to access the payment plan for Fall 2016. This number is just under 25% of the entire HCC student population.

The data identifies three areas for programming improvement: culture and diversity, balancing work and family, and opportunities for social development in Tables 2.4, 2.7. To address these deficits, the focus in 2016-17 is to offer programming intentionally targeted in those areas. Regional directors and the student activities director have set goals to enhance culture, diversity, and balancing work and family programming at all sites and opportunities to develop socially at regional sites.

As HCC continues to offer a variety of resources for students with decreased financial support from the state, we have to be creative about how we address these deficits in career counseling and job placement services. HCC has already established a [Career Placement and Student Employment page](#) on its website to inform students of jobs available in the area. One of the planned improvements is the purchase and implementation of a mobile software product called

“Full Measure,” an integrated planning and advising software that allows each individual student to design their own pathway toward a major based on the coursework offered at HCC. The software assists in making each student’s experience highly personalized and streamlined. It is designed to assist students in making career decisions that will allow them to be competitive in the new economy and it is our hope that students will see this as a career counseling tool that surpasses all others. Of course, this service is not limited to one location, but will be available for all HCC students, regardless of where they attend classes. Additionally, through HCC’s Title III grant, career services opportunities will be launched in the fourth year of the grant, which starts October 1, 2016. These services will be available for all HCC students.

Other areas that will be addressed by HCC include improving campus housing maintenance. This fall, plans are being made for remodeling one or two campus apartments within the next two years. A long range plan for addressing all of the campus apartment maintenance will be addressed in the next strategic plan.

### **Retention, Persistence, and Completion**

*2P2. Retention, Persistence, and Completion focus on the approach to collecting, analyzing, and distributing data on retention, and completion to stakeholders for decision-making. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Collecting student retention, persistence, and completion data (4.C.2 and 4.C.4)*

Highland Community College regularly compiles and analyzes student retention data, graduation rates, and transfer out rates. HCC relies on the IPEDS data and identified peer groups for comparisons. In addition, HCC has recently re-joined the National Community College Benchmarking Project, which will allow further comparisons of data points with peer institutions.

- *Determining targets for student retention, persistence, and completion. Core Component (4.C.1 and 4.C.4)*

According to the [NCHEMS Information Center](#), the retention rate, fall to fall, for students attending two-year public institutions in Kansas is 52%. The three-year graduation rate for students in Kansas attending public two-year institutions is 34%. The President’s staff makes recommendations for retention goals across HCC that align with this data.

- *Analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion*

HCC’s goal is to recruit, enroll, and serve students so that they may complete their educational goals either by successfully transferring to a four-year institution or entering the workforce. In Table 2.11, readers will note the percentage of students graduating or transferring out successfully. This measurement is one that reflects HCC’s success with students.

- *Meeting targets for retention, persistence, and completion (4.C.1)*

The targets for full time student fall to fall retention rates and graduation rates are equal to the Kansas rates provided by the NCHEMS data referenced above. The College has not set targets for part-time students. Two of HCC's service centers are located near large Kansas universities. Often, HCC offers courses that are more affordable, classrooms with lower enrollment and times more convenient for university students, so they choose to take a part-time load course from HCC. HCC is obviously meeting the needs of these students, but they do not intend to stay enrolled or graduate. Although the goal is to serve all students well, full- and part-time, the importance of part-time student retention rates is low.

- *Selecting tools/methods/instruments to assess retention, persistence, and completion (4.C.4)*

Retention, persistence, and completion data is pulled from HCC's student information system, PowerCampus. The student services directors, in their monthly meetings, review data and make recommendations for program additions or changes to address retention. The student success advisor on the Highland campus reviews grade and attendance data in PowerCampus at three-week intervals, prepares an early alert list of students who are struggling academically, and refers them to receive support from their coach, scholarship sponsor, and advisor.

In the spring semester, several strategies are utilized to be sure students who are not graduating are enrolled for the summer or fall semester. These strategies include faculty making announcements in the classroom, advisors contacting their advisees to schedule enrollment meetings, and social media blasts announcing the opening of enrollment. Goals are set to reflect the number of returning students and credit hours to be enrolled before the end of the spring semester. The Financial Aid office holds workshops to assist students with their FAFSA.

HCC's academic programs on the Highland campus offering scholarships have goals to retain at least 35% of their first time students on academic scholarship for the second year. Although this number is lower than the overall retention rate goal, it accounts for students who lose their scholarship by not meeting satisfactory academic progress or not completing the scholarship requirements. That number is not reflective of students who return the HCC the next fall, only those who still have their scholarship.

**2R2. What are the results for student retention, persistence, and completion?**

- *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

The graduation rate and transfer out rate is tracked using data gathered for the IPEDS report. At Highland, graduation rates and transfer rates are combined to equal a combined graduated/transfer out percentage of students. This figure represents the percentage of students who have met their goals based upon their graduation or appropriate time to transfer to another institution. Fall to Fall retention rates are also tracked.

In the summer of 2016, Highland re-joined the National Community College Benchmarking Project. Comparison data with Kansas peer colleges has been included in Table 2.12.

- Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)

**Table 2.11: Retention Table (Source: NCES IPEDS Data)**

| Category                           | Item      | 2009 Cohort HCC/Peer | 2010 Cohort HCC/Peer | 2011 Cohort HCC/Peer | 2012 Cohort HCC/Peer | 2013 Cohort HCC/Peer | 2014 Cohort | 2015 Cohort         | 2016 Cohort Target   |
|------------------------------------|-----------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Graduation Rate                    |           | 34%                  | 32%                  | 27%                  |                      |                      |             |                     | 35%                  |
| Transfer Out Rate                  |           | 27%                  | 26%                  | 28%                  |                      |                      |             |                     |                      |
|                                    |           | 22%                  | 17%                  | 38%                  |                      |                      |             |                     | 35%                  |
|                                    |           | 22%                  | 23%                  | 20%                  |                      |                      |             |                     |                      |
| Total Graduated or Transferred Out |           | 56%                  | 49%                  | 65%                  |                      |                      |             |                     | 70%                  |
|                                    |           | 49%                  | 49%                  | 48%                  |                      |                      |             |                     |                      |
| Retention (Fall to Fall)           | Full Time |                      | 50%                  | 53%                  | 50%                  | 56%                  | 38%         | Preliminary HCC=44% | 51% (NCHMES KS Rate) |
|                                    | Part Time |                      | 59%                  | 55%                  | 58%                  | 59%                  | 59%         |                     |                      |
|                                    |           |                      | 21%                  | 35%                  | 20%                  | 19%                  | 22%         |                     |                      |
|                                    |           |                      | 44%                  | 43%                  | 47%                  | 44%                  | 42%         |                     |                      |

As noted in Table 2.11, Fall to Fall retention rates remained consistent from 2010 through 2013. However, in 2014, there was a significant drop. The targeted goal for Fall to Fall retention is 51%. Since the College did not notice a significant retention change within its culture in 2014 and 2015, and, due to the fact that high-level data transformation moves were begun in 2014 through the PowerCampus Reimplementation, this statistical anomaly is being investigated in order to ensure consistent data definitions and analysis are being accurately represented. Preliminary figures for the 2015 cohort indicate a fall to fall retention rate of 44%. Although that number is moving in the right direction, the data continues to be monitored for accuracy.

**Table 2.12: Full Time Students Completed or Transferred in 3 Years**

Compared to Kansas Peer Institutions (National Community College Benchmarking Project)

|      | Highland  |               | Kansas Community Colleges |                          |
|------|-----------|---------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
|      | Benchmark | National Rank | Peer Group High Benchmark | Peer Group Low Benchmark |
| 2011 | 57.84%    | 94%           | 70.09%                    | 41.41%                   |
| 2012 | 73.73%    | 98%           | 93.41%                    | 46.26%                   |
| 2013 | 77.87%    | 100%          | 77.87%                    | 29.74%                   |
| 2014 | 74.34%    | 99%           | 87.24%                    | 33.60%                   |

HCC's goal is that 75% of students complete or transfer within three years.

Table 2.12 reveals the percentage of students who complete their associate's degree or transfer within three years of initial enrollment. In 2012, 2013, and 2014, 75% of HCC students have been successful in completing their degree or transferring. This data is very competitive with peer institutions. HCC was in the 98<sup>th</sup>, 100<sup>th</sup>, and 99<sup>th</sup> percentiles respectively in 2012, 2013, and 2014.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Student success is essential at every college and university. Measuring success is dependent upon each student's academic goals. Some students intend to graduate from HCC and some tend to transfer before graduation. For these reasons, the combined graduation and transfer out rate is more reflective of HCC's success than considering graduation and transfer rates separately (Table 2.11).

HCC's graduation rate compared to its peers is generally higher; however, HCC has not met its goal of 35% of students graduating within three years. HCC's transfer out rate is generally above its peers. HCC's 2011 cohort transfer out rate was significantly above its peers. At the last IPEDS collection period, HCC was 5 percentage points short of meeting its total graduated or transferred out goal of 70%.

Retention rates from Fall to Fall for HCC's full-time students are slightly below the rates of peers. Our goal for Fall to Fall retention rates is to meet or exceed the Kansas average of 51%.

Retention rates for part-time students at HCC are significantly below the rates reported by peer colleges. The only explanation offered here is that student coding in PowerCampus has been a problem. That problem is being addressed through the PowerCampus Reimplementation Project and part-time retention rates will continue to be analyzed.

➤ *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

Although an average of 25% of HCC students are not successful in meeting a goal of graduation or transfer within three years, the 75% success rate is encouraging considering that 62% of HCC first-time students qualify for at least one developmental education course; some students either take longer to complete or drop out. HCC will continue to refine data coding and monitor student retention rates to be certain HCC student's meet or exceed HCC goals, which are aligned with peer Kansas colleges.

**2I2.** *Based on 2R2, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years? (4.C.3)*

As described in 2I1, HCC is implementing the software, Full Measure, in Spring 2017. Full Measure is a mobile software platform designed to keep students engaged, informed, and making progress toward their chosen degree. This information will allow students to receive up-to-date information on their degree progress.

Additionally, research shows that students who are engaged in academics and activities throughout college will be more successful. Beginning in Fall 2016, the Highland campus and each regional site will offer intentional student programming to address the five categories outlined above in Table 2.7. This strategy will not only allow all students to access important activities, but will assure that the topics cover all aspects of student development. Each of the academic scholarship areas will be required to offer some sort of regular student engagement

opportunity within their areas by Fall 2017. Intentional programming and focus on degree completion will contribute to enhanced student retention and completion across all of HCC.

### **Key Stakeholder Needs**

**2P3.** *Key Stakeholder Needs focuses on determining, understanding, and meeting needs of key stakeholder groups including alumni and community partners. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Determining key external stakeholder groups*

HCC defines stakeholders as those who are vested in in the college's success, but do not necessarily have direct responsibilities and tasks like a partner. Administrators, faculty, and staff interact with parents, alumni, government officials, public school personnel, advisory committees, business and industry employers, and system administrators to seek feedback and suggestions for program/curriculum development, best practices for student support services, and investments that support instruction, student services, and community events.

Part of the College's mission is to provide lifelong learning opportunities and contribute to economic development to enhance the quality of life in the communities we serve, which include those stakeholders who have an absolute interest in the success of the College.

### **Table 2.13: Methods for Determining Stakeholder Groups' Needs and Requirements**

HCC advisory boards for CTE programs are comprised of individuals from local businesses, school districts, and government offices. These members assist in identifying changing needs in the workforce. In turn, representatives from the College participate in local chambers of commerce, economic development corporations, community service clubs, and serve on boards of directors for area businesses employing HCC graduates. HCC keeps its stakeholder groups viable by continuing to reach out to new employers and advisory council members.

- *Determining new stakeholder to target for services or partnership*

As HCC employees interact with advisory council members and business and industry in the nine county service area, employees become aware of industry trends and business needs that affect academic programs at HCC. In response, HCC offers training, new programming, or offers updates in curriculum.

Recently, HCC has made a huge impact in the Western portion of its service area (Nemaha County) by taking an opportunity provided through the Title III grant to establish a new service center. As part of an effort to renew community partnerships by providing accessible workforce training in its service area, HCC met with and surveyed school district leaders, students, parents, business and industry leaders, and Chambers of Commerce to determine local educational needs that would benefit the community by developing the local workforce. As a result of the collaboration, HCC purchased and retrofitted an abandoned high school that now serves five school districts and three communities in the western portion of HCC's service area.

HCC's Western Center opened its doors in Fall 2014 and currently offers area high school and postsecondary programs in diesel, construction technology, precision agriculture, welding, and medical office assistant. There are also numerous general education courses offered through the Western Center. The model created by HCC was replicated in 2015-16 in Brown and Doniphan counties and is scheduled to be used again in 2017 in Atchison and Jefferson counties. Each time the model has been utilized, new stakeholders are identified. Center and program directors continue to develop these relationships as students are recruited and programs continue to grow.

The HCC Klinefelter Barn and Conference Center was established as a result of a significant bequest in 2012. The Klinefelter farm, located 10 miles west of the HCC campus in Brown County, has been utilized by a number of new stakeholders because of its close proximity to Hiawatha, KS. As a result, HCC has capitalized on building relationships with this new stakeholder group by offering a variety of programming at the farm to include [Arts at the Barn](#), a challenge course, [walking and running trails](#), and partnerships with Kansas State University, [The Land Institute](#), [Quails Unlimited](#), Hiawatha Community Gardens Project, and the Boy Scouts of America, to name a few. These partnerships have resulted in a number of stakeholders accessing HCC that would not have typically done so, had it not been for the extended offerings at the [Klinefelter Conference Center and Farm](#).

In the Spring of 2016, the HCC Board of Trustees partnered with the [HCC Foundation Board](#) to hire an Executive Director of the Foundation. This new hire is responsible for developing partnerships with alumni and friends of the College who are interested in supporting HCC's efforts financially. Building relationships with these new stakeholders has the potential to help sustain the College's efforts significantly. The strategy has already yielded results. In October 2016, the inaugural group of donors to the Heritage Society will be recognized at a special luncheon. Additionally, business partners supporting HCC's growing diesel program have shown strong interest in helping to fund a new diesel facility at the HCC Technical Center in Atchison. This August, the Executive Director of the Foundation partnered with a former HCC football coach to host over 60 alumni at a pre-game luncheon and halftime recognition. Not only were new stakeholders garnered, financial donations were also made on behalf of the team.

In the summer of 2016, HCC's President, Executive Director of the Foundation, and Director of the [Viticulture and Enology program](#) met with a group of stakeholders in Pottawatomie County to determine how HCC could support development of a "Wine Trail in the Flint Hills." Bankers, developers, grape growers, and interested investors who didn't want wind turbines disturbing the beauty of the Flint Hills, but thought that development of a wine trail would be a wonderful solution to bring people to the area, were very interested in HCC's offer to build a business incubator for wine makers. This is just another example of the wide variety of relationships that HCC continues to build with its stakeholder groups.

- *Meeting the changing needs of key stakeholders*

Meeting the changing needs of all stakeholder groups is a responsibility shared by the Board of Trustees and leaders across HCC's nine county service area from the President to the Vice Presidents and various Center and program directors. In Kansas, taxes to support community colleges are levied only in the county where the main campus is located. Accordingly, the HCC Board of Trustees is elected from Doniphan County, only one of the nine counties served by the College. The College is cognizant that both taxpayers and a significant number of non-taxpayers are stakeholders. As a result, many different faces of the HCC organization meet regularly with stakeholders to ensure alignment of vision and values across Northeast Kansas. As described in the examples above, HCC leaders are plugged in to the needs of stakeholders throughout Northeast Kansas and have partnered with community members to create some very innovative programs to include many types of learners.

➤ *Selecting tools/methods/instruments to assess key stakeholder needs*

Employers are engaged in multiple ways at the College to ensure HCC is meeting their workforce needs. HCC's program advisory boards are examples of formal partnerships strategically forged with local employers. Each Career and Technical Education program meets at least once a year with its advisory board to get input and to share information about current program offerings. Employer representatives are recommended by industry professionals or recruited by program coordinators or other academic leaders. The advisory board provides the College with guidance for curriculum development, revisions, internships, and job placement. As described above, HCC is paying particular attention to engaging alumni and friends. There will be a number of opportunities to showcase as these relationships are developed more fully.

The interaction with business, public education institutions, and governmental stakeholders provides the College participants with relevant information in meeting changing student and workforce needs. In addition to the local external stakeholders, a number of faculty, staff, and administrators attend local, regional, and national conferences to stay current with trends and best practices. The survey model HCC uses for garnering input from business owners, students, parents, and school districts also yields significant results.

➤ *Assessing the degree to which key stakeholder needs are met*

The primary methods used to assess stakeholder needs and satisfaction are both formal and informal. Formal methods include interviews, advisory committee meetings, community/board meetings, and electronic surveys. Informal methods include casual conversation and interaction on local boards and in community organizations.

HCC's work in development of the Western Center with business leaders, students, and school leaders identified gaps in educational opportunities, so HCC developed the programs offered there today. Enrollment at the Western Center continues to grow. The students in Diesel I have expressed an interest in advancing to the Diesel II program. Since retention is a key indicator of success, HCC is investigating opportunities to develop a Diesel II facility.

The Brown-Doniphan County survey of businesses, students, parents, and school districts identified gaps between important qualities needed by employees and those possessed by students. As a result of that data, HCC is focusing on training students to work in a team structure and enhancing their ability to make decisions and solve problems. Both of these qualities are identified and assessed in HCC's SPE's.

Meeting the needs of HCC employees is vitally important to the organization. As a result, a climate survey for employees is administered every three years. Results of the survey are summarized for the entire staff. This year, employees were given the opportunity to create a "wish list" that was passed to their supervisors. In addition, 18 recommendations were made to the President's staff based upon employee feedback.

**2R3. What are the results for determining if key stakeholder needs are being met?**

➤ *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

HCC has utilized a home-grown school/business/parent survey and climate survey to collect stakeholder information. There will be a follow-up satisfaction survey for the Nemaha County next spring and in Brown/Doniphan County in the Spring of 2018. These follow-up surveys will help HCC determine where gaps have been filled and where they still exist. The employee climate survey has been given twice, 2013 and 2016.

➤ *Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)*

The [HCC School/Business/Parent survey](#) given in Brown/Doniphan counties both confirmed opportunities provided by HCC and identified areas of need. Confirmations included satisfaction with programs offered through HCC and very limited barriers for students to enter programs. Parents and students indicated that the programs are affordable and generally fit into their high school schedule. Students who do not enroll in a technical program are generally not interested in technical education. When asked what technical programs not offered at HCC might interest high school students, they indicated interest in graphic communications, health information, human services, and pharmacology technology. In response, HCC developed the program with a concentration in Allied Health, Family, Child, and Juvenile Services, Early Childhood, and Gerontology. A business partner in St. Joseph, Missouri, the Family Guidance Center, has also expressed a need for more graduates in this field. As a result, program articulation is currently underway so that students will have the opportunity for job placement at the center.

Another direct result of this survey was for the College to add a [Career Placement and Student Employment](#) page on the HCC Web site.

The final table of results shared in this section are from the HCC Employee Climate Surveys. Tables below list the gap scores from the 2013 and 2016 surveys. Table 2.14 shows improvement in communication, trust, and effectiveness. Table 2.15 shows improvement in all areas except one question: having support from my co-workers. Table 2.16 shows improvement in all scores except employees having the resources needed to do their job well. Since that gap score is over 1.0, HCC has addressed that gap by asking employees what they need in order to

do their jobs well. The President's Staff and Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) will review requests and respond to those needs. Finally, there is also significant improvement shown in Table 2.17. Only one area went down in 2016. Employees felt that their own contribution to student success through their jobs diminished from 2013-16.

**Table 2.14: Communication/Trust/Effectiveness**

| Topic   | Gap Score 2016 | Gap Score 2013 |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Open, two-way communication between employees     | 0.89           | 1.16           |
| Open, two-way communication between staff & admin | 1.15           | 1.42           |
| Cooperation within my work unit                   | 0.39           | 0.60           |
| Cooperation between work units                    | 0.80           | 1.04           |
| Trust between members of my work unit             | 0.43           | 0.66           |
| Trust between different work units                | 0.84           | 1.17           |
| Trust for high level administration               | 0.95           | 1.19           |
| Trust for immediate supervisor                    | 0.50           | 0.63           |
| Effectiveness of my work unit                     | 0.42           | 0.57           |
| Effectiveness of other work units                 | 0.58           | 0.74           |

**Table 2.15: Roles/Expectations/Recognition/Support**

| Topic   | Gap Score 2016 | Gap Score 2013 |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Feeling comfortable in expressing my opinion on College issues    | 0.71           | 0.87           |
| Having my opinion considered in decision-making                   | 0.48           | 0.79           |
| Having an active role/influence in actual decision-making         | 0.56           | 0.70           |
| Having work expectations made clear by superior                   | 0.44           | 0.59           |
| Getting private recognition for doing a good job                  | 0.02           | 0.38           |
| Getting public recognition for doing a good job                   | -0.33          | -0.33          |
| Having support from my co-workers                                 | 0.33           | .031           |
| Having support from my superior                                   | 0.45           | 0.31           |
| Having support from upper-level administration                    | 0.69           | 0.95           |
| Upper-level admin's use of valid evidence in making key decisions | 0.78           | 1.20           |
| My own use of valid evidence in making decisions                  | 0.35           | 0.57           |
| Administration response to employee concerns                      | 0.87           | 1.22           |
| Administration response to my concerns                            | 0.62           | 1.22           |

**Table 2.16: Resources/Opportunities/Reward/CQI Embedded**

| Topic   | Gap Score 2016 | Gap Score 2013 |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Having the resources I need to do my job well                     | 1.02           | 0.94           |
| Opportunities in my job to use my best talents                    | 0.47           | 0.61           |
| Opportunities to get additional training to improve my job skills | 0.55           | 0.69           |
| Recognition and/or reward for doing my job well                   | 0.22           | 0.40           |

|   |      |      |
|---|------|------|
| Opportunity to actively participate in continuous improvement | 0.24 | 0.44 |
| Opportunities for career advancement here at HCC              | 0.63 | 0.68 |
| Continuous improvement as an active, embedded process at HCC  | 0.61 | 0.91 |

**Table 2.17 Effectiveness and Focus**

| Topic  | Gap Score 2016 | Gap Score 2013 |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| College's effectiveness in communicating with the public/external community    | 0.92           | 1.10           |
| Admin's effectiveness in communicating with the HCC community                  | 0.84           | 1.06           |
| Admin's effectiveness in identifying & responding to needs of community        | 0.48           | 0.75           |
| College effectiveness in building/sustaining good relationships with community | 0.58           | 0.78           |
| College's focus on student success   | 0.76           | 1.02           |
| College's effectiveness at providing a good environment for learning           | 0.63           | 0.87           |
| My own contribution to student success through my job at the College           | 0.63           | 0.38           |

➤ *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

As described above, evidence exists to show that HCC is meeting needs of stakeholders in the service area and beyond. However, since this has been the first school/business/parent survey given, HCC is still in the process of determining internal goals. The HCC Climate survey target is to have gap scores less than 1.0.

➤ *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

HCC has developed a format to collect information from key stakeholders that has been replicated in three service area counties. This format will continue to be used and refined during the 16-17 academic year in two additional counties. The unique collection method that involves face to face meetings with business and school district personnel has served the College well and provided results described above. As discussed above, the employee climate survey document shows improvement in most areas.

**2I3.** *Based on 2R3, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?*

HCC is deeply ingrained into the fabric of the communities it serves. With each new initiative that serves the community, there is a meaningful exchange of ideas and values that keep HCC relevant to local workforce needs, enrich the quality of lives through cultural activities, and provide a service to HCC's community constituents. It is imperative that HCC conduct an updated Environmental Scan in 2017 to inform the next strategic planning process. The Environmental Scan will aid HCC in understanding and responding effectively to the changes in its service area over the past five years. Furthermore, the Environmental Scan can validate our SPEs in relationship to the needs of our key stakeholders.

Improvements already implemented include the responses made to the Employee Climate Survey. The employee wish lists have been collected and items on those lists are being addressed by the President's staff and the SPC. Items included in the 18-point summary report are also being addressed.

The School/Business/Parent model survey developed for use in Nemaha, Brown, and Doniphan counties will be extended to Atchison and Jefferson Counties in Spring 2017. Students, parents, businesses, and school district leaders will be included in the research to determine program and workforce education needs in those areas. New donors and alumni will be cultivated through continuing work from the Executive Director of the Foundation and Alumni office. Data to include gifts and the number of friends and alumni re-united with the College will be collected. Additionally, a capital campaign as well as a number of smaller campaigns will be launched.

Evidenced in the development of the new Precision Ag and Human Services programs, HCC will solicit and develop new programs to serve its stakeholders. Graphic Design is one of the programs that students identified as being of interest. HCC will also no doubt be involved in Viticulture and Enology projects in the Wamego area of the Flint Hills. HCC will offer a business incubator in Wamego for newly certified wine-makers.

### **Complaint Processes**

**2P4.** *Complaint Processes focuses on collecting, analyzing, and responding to complaints from students or key (non-employee) stakeholder groups. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Collecting complaint information from students*

During the 2014-15 academic year, a group of five HCC employees re-wrote the College's Equity Grievance Policy. The policy was approved by the Board of Trustees in May 2015. The College invested in the software program, Maxient, allowing student complaint data to be collected and reviewed in a consistent fashion. Academic concerns generally flow through VPAA while conduct concerns flow through the Student Conduct Officer. Appeals are generally made through the office of a group of trained eighteen employees serve on the Equity Grievance Panel when it becomes necessary to hear cases.

As a part of the process to re-write policy, HCC established a number of opportunities for students to lodge complaints related to conduct or complaints that fall under Title IX. Students can simply express concern about a peer and have the expectation that their concern will be addressed. Forms may be found on the HCC website with the most complete explanation found on the [Compliment and Complaint Process](#) page. All complaints are documented through Maxient with a case manager assigned to each situation. Resolutions are also documented in the software.

In addition, there is a [feedback form](#) located on the Compliment and Complaint Process page. This feedback is informal in nature, is documented in a notebook with the specific emailed

requests, discussed with the persons involved, and written responses are included in the notebook.

- *Collecting complaint information from other key stakeholders*

All persons wishing to lodge a complaint may do so via the online forms located on HCC's website. HCC's [incident form](#) is general in nature and is designed to be sent to the person dealing with the behavior marked on the form. Complaints lodged personally will be directed to the appropriate persons as described.

- *Learning from complaint information and determining actions*

Behavior concerns documented throughout each semester are addressed by the CARE Team; academic concerns are addressed by the faculty and staff through the VPAA office; student conduct complaints are addressed by staff through the VPSS office; and stakeholder/employee complaints are addressed through the President's and/or Human Resources office. Depending on the complaint, recommendations for policy changes, process changes, or training may be considered by a variety of standing committees or teams. Recommendations for policy changes are ultimately made through the President's Staff, while process changes may be made through the appropriate Vice Presidents.

- *Communicating actions to students and other key stakeholders*

The person receiving the complaint is responsible for following up with the complainant. For student conduct issues, the student conduct officer responsible for the case responds in writing with an explanation of the situation and the action taken. If the issue is appealable, all applicable information for the appeal is offered to the student. A complete flowchart detailing the adjudication process may be found online in the [2016-17 student handbook](#) on page 5.

External stakeholders lodging complaints typically receive feedback from one of the Vice Presidents or the President.

- *Selecting tools/methods/instruments to evaluate complaint resolution*

Prior to HCC purchasing Maxient, records of student conduct had been kept in spreadsheet form in the housing office, student conduct office, and academic affairs office. Behavioral issues referred to the CARE Team were kept in a separate spreadsheet. As of August 2015, all records are housed in Maxient and may be accessed only by those who have a need to know.

**2R4.** *What are the results for student and key stakeholder complaints? This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of the following:*

- *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

As a direct result of the purchase of Maxient conduct software, HCC can provide extensive reports outlining various conduct issues and how they have been handled beginning with the 2015-16 academic year.

- *Summary of results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)*

**Table 2.18: Complaints Logged Through Maxient**

| Type of Complaint | 2015-16 |
|-------------------|---------|
| Conduct           | 202     |
| Academic          | 107     |
| CARE              | 37      |
| Total             | 346     |

Complaints logged through Maxient are typically behavior issues in student housing, plagiarism or classroom disruption, or extreme concern about student behavior.

**Table 2.19: Complaints Received Through Feedback Form**

| Complaints Received | 2015-16 |
|---------------------|---------|
| Number logged       | 7       |

- *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

HCC has not set benchmarks with regard to conduct issues managed each academic year, but will be working on that now that a software system has been implemented to assist in tracking.

Complaints received through the feedback form varied from one each for perceived lack of helpfulness from an office, tutoring quality, phone system, advertising, employment listing, and two complaints on food quality. Overall, students and stakeholders are happy with services.

- *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

Complaints are taken seriously and addressed immediately. As a result of the implementation of Maxient, the College can appropriately track various categories of complaints and will be able to set appropriate goals for the future. Conduct incidents in housing have typically been documented separately from conduct in the classroom. It is important to note that now HCC can link housing conduct, academic integrity, and classroom discipline incidents to the overall conduct system. In order for students to live in an environment that allows students to thrive academically, HCC is focused on lowering the number of total conduct complaints that occur each year.

- 214.** *Based on 2R4, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?*

The College will take advantage of the centralized reporting in Maxient and determine targets for upcoming years. This process will allow HCC to provide appropriate training for students and employees to assist in reducing the number of campus incidents. The College will continue to deal with verbal complaints via the President's Staff and appropriate Vice Presidents.

**Building Collaborations and Partnerships**

**2P5.** *Building Collaborations and Partnerships focuses on aligning, building, and determining the effectiveness of collaborations and partnerships to further the mission of the institution. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Selecting partners for collaboration*

HCC develops collaborative partnerships with businesses, education entities, government agencies, and non-profit organizations to ensure that the needs of the college's stakeholders are regularly being reviewed. Key partners include K-12 school districts, employers, universities, and professional organizations. Healthy partnerships assist the College in promoting student access and support, engaging in continuous improvement, assisting with enrollment management, and expansion and diversification of College resources in order to maintain fiscal integrity. When needs that align with the College's Mission, Values, and goals are identified, HCC collaborates with key partners to fill the gaps.

- *Building, maintaining, and evaluating effectiveness of partnerships*

HCC builds and maintains its relationships with partners through a variety of formal and informal mechanisms. Formal agreements help define the parameters of partnerships for specific purposes. For example, HCC's Western Center serves as an example of a formal partnership between HCC and the employers, as well as the K-12 districts, to make higher education more accessible in the western portion of the service area. Similarly, HCC's formal agreements for concurrent credit and dual enrollment courses demonstrate intentional and strategic outreach to area high schools. HCC has collaborated directly with 30 high schools within the College's service area, as well as two high schools outside of the College's service area to offer concurrent credit for high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Over half of the seniors in the service area high schools earn concurrent credits from HCC.

HCC has a history of partnerships with other educational institutions and organizations that receive HCC students through development of formal articulation agreements. For example, the College collaborates with the Kansas Board of Regents, Kansas public universities, and community colleges to provide a system of seamless transfer between state community colleges and universities. Currently, HCC is teaming with Cloud County Community College to offer their students courses and field experiences within HCC's Precision Ag program.

Employers are some of HCC's key partners. HCC builds and maintains relationships with employers to serve on HCC's CTE program advisory boards and potentially hire HCC graduates. College program directors establish relationships, facilitate internships, and secure clinical sites for HCC students.

Informally, HCC sponsors events on campus and participates in area partner events to foster positive relationships and establish vital communication links to potential students and

community organizations. HCC hosts Art Day and Ag Day to over 50 high schools to create relationships with potential students. HCC also hosts collegiate athletic, theatrical and musical productions, and community events such as “Arts at the Barn” as a means of building and maintaining relationships. HCC also sponsors events at the regional locations, including a 4<sup>th</sup> of July event in Wamego and a basketball clinic for area youth at the Western Center.

Communication with partners is critical in maintaining strong relationships. For this reason, many HCC employees attend local chamber meetings, sit on various boards, and are active members of many Northeast Kansas communities. HCC understands that involvement with these boards and committees ensures that HCC’s programs and services remain relevant to community needs.

A brief description of integral partnerships is outlined in:

[Table 2.20: HCC Business Collaborations](#)

- *Selecting tools/methods/instruments to assess partnership effective*

As previously discussed, informal surveys have been used to assess the effectiveness of partnerships with school districts and businesses.

- *Evaluating the degree to which collaborations and partnerships are effective*

This is clearly an area of needed development. Besides using informal surveys to gather effectiveness of partnerships and monitoring enrollment in various programs, HCC does not collect extensive data to prove effective partnerships.

**2R5. What are the results for determining the effectiveness of aligning and building collaborations and partnerships?**

With the exception of locally developed satisfaction surveys, HCC has not used a specific tool or instrument to evaluate the effectiveness of its partnerships. In most cases, each partnership has a specific goal related to a program as addressed in the strategic plan. Assessment strategies used by HCC to determine program effectiveness contribute to evaluating the effectiveness of these partnerships. Anecdotal data includes the enthusiasm of various entities who partner with the College. While no specific tools have been utilized within the partnerships, the College does regularly evaluate program effectiveness through its academic program review process.

The [Title III grant awarded to the College](#) in October, 2013, allows HCC to expand access to high demand programs and support services in order to connect students with growing area employment opportunities. Valuable partners were created throughout the process and can be used as an example of determining effectiveness of aligning and building collaborations and partnerships.

- *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

This is clearly an area of needed development. Alignment with HCC's strategic plan and growth at the Western Center, concurrent programs, technical programs, and the College as a whole, gives some indication of partner satisfaction. However, HCC will identify more specific outcomes and measurement tools as a part of the strategic planning cycle.

- *Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)*

To date, no results have been collected.

- *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

HCC has spent significant time establishing partnerships throughout this accreditation cycle and will work to improve stated benchmarks as partnerships mature.

- *Interpretation of results and insight gained*

HCC is proud of the many partnerships it has forged on behalf of faculty and staff and most importantly, on behalf of students; however, it is apparent that HCC could benefit from a partnership feedback system to determine effectiveness.

Additionally, the College will address the following:

- The growing need to build upon concurrent enrollment partnerships to align student offerings in high-growth, high-demand career pathways
- The need to collaborate with K-12 districts in ways beyond offering credit to raise the level of college and career readiness of graduates
- Development of well-communicated agreements and transfer policies for other institutions that are imperative for student success
- Creating formal agreements with business partners so students find employment
- The need to work with local businesses to develop, customize, and find training needed locally to expand and upskill the workforce

**215.** *Based on 2R5, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?*

HCC created the Western Center to address the lack of offerings, particularly career and technical offerings, in the western side of our service area. With the development of the Western Center came collaborations among high schools and business and industry to ensure needs were being met. The Western Center continues to grow as HCC continues to create new programs to meet the changing needs of our state and service area. One particular program to address the changing needs of our partnerships is our new precision agriculture program.

HCC created the precision agriculture program to support career and technical education offerings in the service area but as well as to continue to offer a high-growth, high demand career pathway for high school students. The College will grow the program to include online and interactive distance learning delivery to create offerings for all high school students in and

potentially out of our service area.

HCC has and will continue to create collaborations and partnerships through the school and business survey model. This model has proven to be successful in Nemaha, Doniphan, and Brown counties. The College is currently developing a survey for the Atchison and Jefferson counties off our service area. This survey thus identifies areas of weakness and partnership opportunities for HCC to address.

Amid difficulty, hiring and retaining qualified teachers to teach concurrent coursework HCC began collaborating with districts in their service area to provide plans of continuing education to continue offering concurrent coursework at the local school districts. Those districts that are unable to continue offering concurrent credit will continue to partner with HCC in offering college credit through a variety of delivery methods including but not limited to online, interactive distance learning, and release time to attend classes at local regional centers, as well, as new opportunities to share qualified teachers among school districts.

In the next one to three years, HCC leadership will create a feedback system to determine effectiveness and seek input from its partners. HCC leadership can take the opportunity to determine which partnerships should be evaluated and how that could be done without being a burden to the partners. HCC staff and faculty view these partnerships as ways to stay connected to the community and service area, as well as to maximize resources for students, staff and faculty. Specific ways in which each partner views effectiveness toward supporting this mission will strengthen the HCC service area.

## AQIP CATEGORY THREE: VALUING EMPLOYEES

### Introduction

Highland Community College's processes for Valuing Employees have been consistently improving. The College has made great strides toward streamlining processes, increasing access to and enforcing adherence to policies, and focusing attention on valuing and developing its employees.

The College's commitment to the hiring, development, and evaluation of faculty, staff, and administrators is currently at the systematic level and even aligned in some but not all respects. In order to have aligned processes, we must still improve coordination and communication among units, sharing of lessons learned, and alignment of processes with institutional goals and strategies.

| Reacting  | Systematic  | Aligned   | Integrated  |
|---|---|---|---|
| Isolated tasks and activities address immediate needs | Repeatable, proactive processes with clear and explicit goals | Stable, consciously managed, regularly evaluate | Regularly improved through analysis, innovation and sharing |

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Results of our hiring, development, and evaluation of employees are at the reacting level. The College does not currently collect, aggregate, and analyze data in these areas, though some data is being collected and consistent processes for employee evaluation are being developed. Several improvements are already in progress to address this reacting level of maturity.

According to the 2016 HCC Climate Survey results, the majority of employees felt the College valued their work (79% agreed or strongly agreed). Morale and job satisfaction was also high individually (79% agreed or strongly agreed), and within their work units (76% agreed or strongly agreed). However, employees perceived lower morale and job satisfaction across the College as a whole which indicates definite room for improvement.

### Hiring

**3P1.** *Hiring focuses on acquisition of appropriately qualified/credentialed faculty, staff, and administrators to ensure that effective, high-quality programs and student support services are provided. This includes, but not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Recruiting, hiring, and orienting employees*

Whenever a position opens, the supervisor and appropriate Vice President review the job description and determine whether the position fits into the current needs of the department. If the position remains essential, they complete a Personnel Requisition form, and submit the form

to the HR Manager. If a change is required, they revise the job description before forwarding it along with the Personnel Requisition for approval. The HR Manager reviews the revised description for consistency and adherence to legal guidelines. If the supervisor and VP eliminate the position, the duties are realigned and any revised job descriptions are sent to Human Resources and then to the President for final approval.

The HR Manager advertises all open positions through the HCC website, employee email, Facebook, local newspapers, national websites such as [higheredjobs.com](http://higheredjobs.com), [insidehighered.com](http://insidehighered.com), [healthcareers.com](http://healthcareers.com), [nursingjobs.com](http://nursingjobs.com), and outside organizations. Between January and August 2016, the majority of applicants heard about an opening via a Web site. The use of Web advertising helps us reach a broader, more diverse set of applicants.

As referenced in 4P3, the development of leaders from within has become increasingly important. More employees are taking advantage of the tuition assistance program offered by HCC (3P3). As they complete additional credits and degrees, they become eligible for positions requiring a higher level of education. Internal hires are cost effective for the College because the employee is already familiar with College processes, facilities, and fellow employees.

One way the College attempts to attract candidates is with its benefits package. Benefits at HCC are generous compared to the area private sector and often make the decision to apply more appealing. When an application is requested, the HR Manager includes information regarding the benefits package along with the salary or salary range in the packet.

Highland Community College has developed a [hiring process for permanent employees](#) that is clear, efficient, inclusive, and designed to not only meet departmental needs, but strengthen the College's Mission by hiring employees who will advance the core values as expressed in the College's SPE's. The HR Manager leads the hiring and recruiting processes to ensure consistent, fair, and equitable hiring practices that follow federal and state laws.

Once a position has been posted, the HR Manager collects applications and a Screening/Interview Committee is assembled. Committee members are determined by the supervisor and VP for that position and included on the Position Requisition Form originally submitted at the beginning of the process. Committee makeup is dependent on the position and includes anywhere from two to six members with the HR Manager serving as an ad hoc member of all committees. The supervisor and HR Manager select a committee with cross-sectional representation of HCC. The VP over the department participates in the process when deemed necessary. When available, the President will meet with candidates as well. If necessary, committee members may participate remotely via Zoom Video Conferencing. The review of applications may also be completed remotely via email.

The HR Manager provides the committee members with the job description for the position, points out minimum qualifications, and provides a rubric outlining those qualifications for committee members. The HR Manager cautions committee members against contacting references or conducting online searches of applicants and instructs them on applicable state

and federal laws. After reviewing applications, committee members submit their top three to five candidates to the committee chair or to HR and turn in all notes and rubrics to the HR Manager who maintains them with the job file. The Committee Chair instructs the HR Manager as to who will be invited for interviews and provides a schedule of possible dates and times.

The HR Manager contacts the selected applicants, answers any questions, and discusses details including the job's location, demographics, travel requirements, benefits information, and interview and moving expenses (President and Vice President level only). If the applicant accepts an interview, the HR Manager sets a date and time. Applicants may interview over Zoom to eliminate travel. Zoom allows applicants the freedom to participate in interviews and the College to consider applicants who may otherwise have turned down an interview.

The HR Manager maintains a database of past interview questions and shares those with the Committee Chair who then selects the interview questions. The HR Manager confirms the questions meet legal guidelines and then prepares an interview script and scoring rubric. Some positions require a demonstration of skills. These demos are a part of the overall selection process and are given a score on the interview rubric.

Committee members use the interview script to ask questions and score each candidate using the scoring rubric. After the last interview, the committee discusses the candidates and determines who they would recommend for hire. The HR Manager gathers all scored rubrics and associated notes and keeps them with the applicant files for one year.

The Committee Chair completes a Recommendation for Hire form with the Committees' top two or three choices and submits it to the appropriate VP for approval. The form is then forwarded to the President for approval with the top candidate recommended by the VP to the President. Once approval is given, the HR Manager contacts the candidate's references and former employers. If there are no concerns, the HR Manager calls the applicant and offers them the job. If there are concerns raised during the reference checks, the HR Manager shares this information with the Committee Chair. If the Chair needs further explanation the HR Manager contacts the applicant and asks any follow-up questions. The Committee Chair may also request reference checks for a second candidate when necessary. Consistency is maintained by having the HR Manager conduct all reference checks.

After accepting the job offer, new employees are handed or mailed a hard copy of all payroll, benefit, and insurance paperwork. The employee must complete them by hand and return them to HR. The payroll clerk then inputs all information by hand into the appropriate systems.

There is a different [hiring process for adjunct faculty](#).

The College has implemented, and is in the process of improving, several processes to orient new employees. In the past, onboarding of new staff and faculty was somewhat haphazard with no defined process. This resulted in supervisors being inconsistently informed about policies and new employees not always having email set up or access to the College's student

information system in a timely manner. In 2015, the IT Department and the HR Department developed a [new staff hire process](#).

Digitized HR policies are another recent improvement. Prior to 2016, employee personnel policies were available only in print format. In the Summer of 2016, the HR Department digitized the policies and placed them on the College's Intranet. Policies are always accessible and updates are announced via email. New employees are directed to review the policies within their first month of employment.

A Staff Professional Development Team is developing a formal orientation program for new and existing employees through a self-paced, interactive online training platform called CampusAnswers. This program allows new employees to be trained on the College's policies, unlawful harassment, sexual harassment prevention, Title IX, codes of conduct, academic integrity, and safety issues (See 3P3). The new employee will be tested on the subject matter and required to retest on a particular module(s) if a low score is indicated. Final results are documented in the employee's personnel records.

- *Designing hiring processes that result in staff and administrators who possess the required qualification, skills, and values (3.C.6)*

Our rural geographic location is a major external factor influencing the recruitment, hiring, and development of employees. The main campus is located in Highland, Kansas, a small community of 1,102, in Doniphan County. Agriculture is the main industry in the area. All of our regional centers are also located in small, rural, predominantly white communities and counties as shown in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: City and County Populations in HCC Service Area**

| Center Located in City of: | Total Population | Center Located in County of: | Total Population | Other Counties in HCC's Service Area | Total Population |
|----------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Highland                   | 1,102            | Doniphan County              | 7,945            | Brown County                         | 9,984            |
| Atchison                   | 11,021           | Atchison County              | 16,924           | Marshall County                      | 10,117           |
| Baileyville                | 181              | Nemaha County                | 10,178           | Wabaunsee County                     | 7,053            |
| Holton                     | 3,329            | Jackson County               | 13,462           |                                      |                  |
| Perry                      | 929              | Jefferson County             | 19,126           |                                      |                  |
| Wamego                     | 4,372            | Pottawatomie County          | 21,604           |                                      |                  |

Retrieved from [www.suburbanstats.org](http://www.suburbanstats.org), 9/27/2016

Attracting qualified, credentialed, and diversified faculty and staff from within our own service area is not always possible. It is a challenge to draw from larger metropolitan cities on the outskirts of our service area because of the lower salaries offered by HCC. Several of our locations are in small towns with limited housing options so commuting is often necessary. This is especially true of support staff positions such as office assistants whose starting rate of pay may be as low as \$10 per hour. Instructors in STEM fields and nursing as well as Allied Health

and Nursing Directors are difficult to recruit and retain because of the salaries those candidates can earn with graduate degrees in their fields compared to the salaries HCC can offer.

In recent years, we have been pinched by state funding shortages which have forced us to react immediately rather than strategize proactively. For example, in 2014, a shortage of state funding dollars necessitated a layoff. The President and his executive staff reviewed all positions at the College and determined which positions to cut and how to realign duties.

Providing a detailed application packet is another hiring process designed to recruit qualified staff and administrators. Application packets, typically emailed, may vary slightly depending on the position, but all contain these core pieces:

- A letter from the HR Manager explaining what is required for a completed application (cover letter, resume, completed HCC application, list of at least three references, college transcripts and/or certifications)
- An HCC Profile briefly explaining the history of the College and its current programs
- Job description
- Salary or salary range
- List of benefits appropriate to the position
- Copy of the SPE's and an explanation of their importance to HCC
- Link to the HCC College Web sites
- Eligibility for employment with any employer in the United States documentation
- Instructions on how to submit application materials (email, fax, mail)
- Applicants for full-time instructor positions, the current negotiated Master Contract

Accurate job descriptions, diverse search committees, complete review of job applications, in-person or video conference interviews, skills or teaching demonstrations, detailed reference checks, and receipt and review of official transcripts are all hiring practices that are designed to hire qualified staff and administrators who possess the required qualifications, skills, and values.

- *Developing and meeting academic credentialing standards for faculty, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortia programs (3.C.1, 3.C.2)*

Full-time faculty are required to have a master's degree in their discipline except for those who teach in technical programs. Technical Program instructors must have certifications and/or applicable training in their discipline. If a faculty member is hired without enough graduate hours in a certain subject area, they are placed on a Plan of Continuing Education which must be completed by a particular date determined by the VPAA.

With the exception of Technical Program instructors, all adjunct instructors must have at least 18 graduate hours, preferably a master's degree, in their teaching discipline. The College has taken steps to meet new regulations established by HLC which require all concurrent instructors have a master's degree with at least 18 graduate hours in the discipline.

- *Ensuring the institution has sufficient numbers of faculty to carry out both classroom and non-classroom programs and activities (3.C.1)*

According to the NCCBP, for average credit section size, HCC placed first among the ten Kansas community colleges who participated in the study; first among 14 Midwestern community colleges, and first among 20 random peer group colleges. Our student to faculty ratio was also the best among Kansas and Midwestern community colleges, and second against our random peers. We were in the 98<sup>th</sup> percentile for that measure. Additionally, we scored in the middle range of our peers on faculty load percentages by credit hours and faculty load percentages by full-time faculty taught sections.

Each semester, the class schedule is rolled over in PowerCampus and distributed to various parties. On the main campus, the Course Schedule Team is a faculty standing committee. This committee reviews the schedule, evaluates prior semesters, and determines which classes and how many sections should be offered for the upcoming semester. At the regional centers, the Regional Center Directors make these evaluations and decisions.

Data provided in Table 2.7 lists the number of extracurricular and co-curricular activities offered across HCC in 2015-16. Although this is baseline data, the sheer number of offerings suggest that HCC provides a number of non-classroom programs. Readers will also note that HCC is in the process of setting goals for each of the five categories described below Table 2.7 in Category 2 so that programming will be targeted to student developmental needs. HCC non-academic personnel now have an awareness of programming offered versus programming needed and are beginning to create intentional programming in deficit areas. Those areas have been described in 2R1, "Interpretation of Results and Insights Gained" and 2I1, "Improvements Implemented or Planned in the Next One to Three Years."

- *Ensuring the acquisition of sufficient numbers of staff to provide student support services*

The College examines the necessity of each position whenever there is an opening. This is a timely and cost-effective way to confirm we have sufficient numbers to carry out student support services. When funding is limited by budget cuts, the supervisor and VP determine a realignment of duties to ensure student support services are still covered.

A recent study by Kansas community college business officers compared the number of full-time staff to student FTE. Out of the 19 Kansas community colleges, HCC ranked fourth highest in the number of faculty and non-faculty employees to student FTE with a ratio of 1:12.8. Thirteen colleges were between ratios of 1:10 and 1:5.6. While it is clear, that HCC has an adequate instructor to student ratio, it is also clear the College is doing more with less staff. Realignment of duties and improvement of processes has become absolutely necessary to our success. HR Solutions should also help us identify any uneven areas of employee coverage once we implement the Compease software with our data. See 3P2, Establishing Employee Recognition... for an explanation of Compease.

**3R1. What are results for determining if recruitment, hiring, and orienting practices assure effective provision for programs and services?**

➤ *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

The College has very little data or trackable information for recruitment, hiring, and orienting employees. The hiring, orientation, and payroll processes are currently all manual. In an effort to streamline this process, HCC is considering outsourcing payroll to a third party. Baselines will be established as we move forward with the new payroll processes and with the new CampusAnswers orientation and training software. HR has begun tracking where applicants are finding out about position openings in order to strategically target advertising. Faculty credentials are being reviewed and tracked as we align with the new HLC guidelines.

➤ *Summary results of measures*

More results to summarize once more data is collected and benchmarks are established. A study of applications submitted between January and August of 2016 revealed that 66% of applicants found out about the position online; 21% were referred by others, 13% read about the opening in the newspaper. No results are available regarding hiring and orientation at this time.

➤ *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

The new HLC guidelines have resulted in consistent credentialing targets for current instructors and future hires.

HR Solutions should be able to assist the College with an analysis of our staffing once the salary study is complete. The Compease software will give us a salary comparison between HCC and the local, regional, and national markets. It will also identify any salary disparities or inequalities within the organization. We will then be able to use those internal targets and external benchmarks moving forward.

The NCCBP report and the Kansas business officers study established external benchmarks for our faculty to student and staff to student ratios. We appear to have efficient staffing levels and now we must examine staffing levels in specific areas.

No other internal targets have been established or external benchmarks compared; plans to establish both are underway as new software is put into place and processes are developed.

➤ *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

The 2016 HCC Climate Survey defined new employee orientation as an area that needs improvement. The need for formalized training for both new and existing personnel was also recognized, resulting in the purchase of the CampusAnswers online training platform.

**3I1.** *Based on 3R1, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?*

Improvements that have already been implemented include:

- Placement of personnel policies on the College's Intranet
- Purchase of CampusAnswers
- Purchase of Compease
- Exploration of outsourcing payroll

Improvements planned over the next one to three years include:

- Development CampusAnswers for online/remote orientation/hiring processes
- Review of adjunct approval procedures to improve flow, transparency, and efficiency
- Online database of approved adjuncts accessible by all regional directors and HR staff
- Compease implementation, including review of salary/pay structure to remain competitive and meet new FLSA standards
- Outsourcing of payroll functions
- Survey recently onboarded employees regarding their experiences to confirm the processes are achieving desired results
- Implement a scheduled review personnel policies to ensure compliance and reflective of actual practices
- Develop consistent applicant screening process/rubric for committee use
- Include questions that emphasize our SPEs and values in job interview scripts
- HCC Climate Survey in two years shows progress on these changes

### **Evaluation and Recognition**

**3P2.** *Evaluation and Recognition focuses on processes that assess and recognize faculty, staff, and administrators' contributions to the institution. This includes, but not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Designing performance evaluation systems for all employees*

**Full-time Faculty** – The evaluation process for full-time faculty is defined in the negotiated Master Contract. Under the current Master Contract (which is up for renegotiation for the 2017-18 academic year), the instructor's immediate supervisor (VPAA) holds a pre-evaluation conference with the instructor to outline objectives, methods, and materials of the evaluation. The supervisor then conducts a classroom visitation of 20 minutes or longer followed by a post-evaluation conference with the instructor within 10 days. The purpose of the post-evaluation conference is to provide feedback to the instructor including, but not limited to, a discussion of student assessments since the last evaluation, classroom visitation notes by the supervisor, plans of action since the last evaluation, the current job description, the evaluation report and the evaluation recommendation summary. Evaluation schedules are shown in Table 3.2:

### **Table 3.2: Master Contract Evaluation Schedule**

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| In first 2 consecutive years of employment                 | At least one time per semester by not later than the 60 <sup>th</sup> school day | Additional evaluations may be scheduled as needed to provide assistance in strengthening/improving job performance.                             |
| In 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> years of employment | At least one evaluation per year no later than February 15                       | Additional evaluations may be scheduled as needed to provide assistance in strengthening/improving job performance.                             |
| After the 4 <sup>th</sup> year of employment               | At least once every three years no later than February 15 of that year           | During off-evaluation academic years, instructors are evaluated by students on a rotating three-semester schedule based on academic discipline. |

Should the evaluation reveal potential problems in job performance, the evaluator shall use the professional employee evaluation recommendation summary to inform the employee of the specific problem area(s) and provide suggestions and recommendations for improvement.

The paper-and-pencil tool used to evaluate teaching effectiveness is based on the following criteria:

- Faculty/student engagement
- Effective use of technology
- Demonstrated competency in the discipline
- Demonstrated knowledge of discipline trends
- Adherence to common course syllabus and related competencies
- Varied instructional methods to meet students' diverse learning styles

The faculty member and administrator meet within a few days of the teaching evaluation to discuss the results and any improvement strategies or professional development recommendations. Evaluations are signed by both instructor and supervisor with the opportunity for the instructor to affix a response to the report. The results of these evaluations are retained in the faculty member's professional file and are used as one factor in making personnel decisions.

**Adjunct and Concurrent Faculty** – Adjunct and concurrent instructors receive “just-in-time” feedback from supervisors using the five to seven minute eWalkthrough tool described in 1P1 Common Learning Outcomes (SPEs). This tool provides a brief snapshot of the instructor/student classroom interaction and engagement. The evaluator may revisit the instructor's classroom several times per semester to evaluate over time. Additional evaluations or classroom observations may be scheduled as needed to provide assistance in strengthening and improving job performance.

**Administrative and Support Staff** – For a number of years, the evaluation process for administrative and support staff has been inconsistently conducted across departments. A new Performance Evaluation Tool called Compease has been developed and piloted that aligns evaluated items with the SPEs. Additionally, it necessitates the review of job descriptions annually by both the supervisor and the employee rather than only when an employee leaves and the new opening is advertised. This evaluation tool has been piloted and will be rolled out in the next year.

In this new evaluation process, the employee and supervisor review the employee's current job description for accuracy. Any required changes are forwarded to the HR Manager for update and the evaluation continues using the updated job description. The employee and the supervisor each separately complete the [current year performance review](#) and the suggested performance goals for the upcoming year. Then meet to discuss and reach a consensus on future goals using a Consensus Form identical to the Improvement Plan.

**Table 3.3: Job Description Review for Current Year**

| Job Description Item                                 | Relevant SPE's | Exceeded | Met | Did not meet | Comments  |
|--|----------------|----------|-----|--------------|---|
| EXAMPLE<br>Mediate conflicts among students in dorms | B, C, T        |          | X   |              | I am effective most of the time in this area but would like to develop my skills. |

**Table 3.4: Improvement Plan for Next Year**

| Goal                            | Benefit of Goal                                    | Alignment  | Plan of Action                             | Measurement                                      | Timeline   | Analysis of Results   |
|---------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| What do you want to accomplish? | Who will benefit from what you want to accomplish? | How does your goal align with the College CLO's? | How are you going to accomplish this goal? | How will you know that you have accomplished it? | When will major pieces of the Plan of Action take place? | Evidence that your actions were effective and how did or will you use them for improvement? |

- *Soliciting input from and communicating expectations to faculty, staff, and administrators*

The HCC Climate Survey, conducted every two or three years (most recently in 2016), is our primary way of soliciting input from all employees. The survey is sent to all employees who have access to their HCC email. This year's survey had 105 respondents. The survey results are collected and reviewed by a small committee representing multiple locations and campus sectors. The committee provides feedback and analysis to the Director of Institutional Research who then prepares formal recommendations for the Board and President's staff. The recommendations are also shared with the Strategic Planning Council and future strategic goals are based on employee input from the survey.

A page on our Web site called the [HCC Compliment and Complaint Process](#) which talks about the SPEs and the value of providing feedback to staff, and a link to an [online feedback form](#) on how to give face-to-face feedback or file formal complaints.

- *Aligning the evaluation system with institutional objectives for both instructional and non-instructional programs and services*

Both the adjunct/concurrent instructor eWalkthrough evaluation and the administrative and support staff performance evaluation tool were developed to align with the SPEs. An eWalkthrough evaluation has also been piloted for student services staff (Table 2.9). Aligning SPEs and full-time faculty evaluations will be discussed during Master Contract renegotiations.

- *Utilizing established institutional policies and procedures to regularly evaluate all faculty, staff, and administrators (3.C.3)*

As indicated above, we have inconsistently evaluated staff and administrators. New policies and procedures are being established and are scheduled to start in Spring 2017. Full-time faculty are regularly evaluated under the Master Contract's well-established procedure. Evaluation of adjunct and concurrent instructors has improved with the use of eWalkthroughs.

- *Establishing employee recognition, compensation, and benefit systems to promote retention and high performance*

Employees at HCC fall within four broad classifications: administrators, full-time faculty, adjunct/concurrent faculty, and classified or support staff. The full-time faculty base rate is negotiated annually in the Master Contract. Salaries for all other employees are subjective, which sometimes results in turnover and difficulty in filling certain positions.

The College currently has no formal process to evaluate the appropriateness of our salaries in the job market. New Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) laws regarding salary and exemption status have prompted the College to invest in Compease through HR Solutions, a comprehensive, web-based salary administration program to ensure that our compensation program is competitive in our market, equitable within our organization, flexible enough to recognize individual differences in performance, and able to build and maintain a competitive pay structure that aligns with the goals of the College while meeting FLSA regulations.

All salaries will be studied and salary or exemption status changes will be made by the FLSA deadline of December 1, 2016. Compease will also give the College an accurate salary planning and budgeting tool.

HCC will confirm the competitiveness of our benefits package through the Compease salary study's determination of its market value. Our current benefits include health and dental insurance paid by the College, and the opportunity for the employee to purchase the same for their family; life insurance paid by the College; retirement under the Kansas Public Employee Retirement System (KPERs); and optional vision and retirement packages which can be purchased by the employee. A benefits fair is held annually where employees can meet with insurance and benefits plan representatives. A Wellness Committee is also currently working on the development of a Wellness Program for employees.

HCC holds two major activities for full-time employees: a holiday luncheon and an end-of-year luncheon in May. If budget allows, all employees are given a gift such as a shirt or a jacket with

the HCC logo. At a May luncheon, employees are recognized by the President for their good work throughout the year. Prior to the luncheon, the President provides students the opportunity to nominate an instructor or staff member for a “Make A Difference” Award. The student is asked to describe how that individual made a difference in their college career or life. Student comments are memorialized on a certificate and presented to each recipient. The President’s Staff also gives a “Shooting Star” Award to an individual or group of individuals who have gone above and beyond for the College. Finally, years of service certificates are given in increments of five years. There are also many informal departmental recognitions given throughout the year. Adjunct instructors are invited to an in-service annually which includes a meal and training.

➤ *Promoting employee satisfaction and engagement*

Administrators at the College foster and promote employee satisfaction and engagement through one-on-one interactions and group meetings. The College holds two annual all-employee functions as mentioned above. Academic Affairs holds annual in-services for adjuncts and bi-annual meetings for full-time faculty. The Athletic Director holds meetings with all coaches and other athletic staff three times per semester and invites the President. Student Services Directors meet once a month to discuss relevant topics and share information. Departmental meetings, College-wide guest speakers, and professional development opportunities also promote employee engagement.

**3R2.** *What are the results for determining if evaluation processes assess employee’s contributions to the institution?*

➤ *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

We recognize the need to develop policies and processes for consistent evaluation of all employees and until those improvements are made, we lack data in this area. We do have initial reports from our eWalkthrough processes for adjunct/concurrent instructors (1R1) and the Student Services eWalkthrough pilot (2R1). Those evaluations are collected and stored electronically and reports provide comparison over time. A new Performance Evaluation Tool based on the SPEs has been piloted and will be implemented for non-instructional staff in Spring 2017 and annually thereafter to track employee/institution goals and objectives. Our 2016 HCC Climate Survey data also included a few items related to work performance and participation in continuous improvement.

➤ *Summary results of measures*

Beyond the results shared in 1R1 for eWalkthrough adjunct and concurrent data and 2R1 for the eWalkthrough student services pilot, other results have not yet been measured beyond the 2016 HCC Climate Survey. On the 2016 survey, 60% of respondents were highly or very highly satisfied with “Opportunities in my job to use my best talents” which 83% of respondents believed was of high or very high importance. Respondents were also satisfied with having the “Opportunity to actively participate in continuous improvement” (92% ranked it medium, high, or very high). The College showed significant improvement on both of these survey items from 2013 to 2016.

➤ *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

Our eWalkthrough data for adjunct and concurrent instructors gives us some internal benchmarks as will the student services eWalkthrough evaluations in the future. No other results are available to compare with internal targets and external benchmarks regarding employee evaluation and contribution.

➤ *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

According to the 2016 HCC Climate Survey, the majority of respondents thought it was important to have work expectations made clear by their supervisor and were moderately satisfied with that survey item. From 2013 to 2016, the College showed significant improvement on employees' satisfaction with "Having my opinion considered in decision-making," "Having work expectations made clear by my superior," "Administration response to employee concerns," and "Administration response to my concerns" (2R3 for gap scores for the entire survey).

**3I2.** *Based on 3R2, what Improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?*

President Reist already holds monthly meetings with full-time faculty and with administrative and support staff to update them on the most recent actions and discussions of the Board of Trustees, current HCC activities and plans, and to answer any questions they may have. Based on recommendations from the 2016 Climate Survey, the Vice Presidents have also established "no set agenda" sessions open to anyone in order to communicate information, gather feedback, and answer questions. A "We're Listening to You" poster was also created to display progress made toward employee's concerns on the survey.

Other Climate Survey recommendations include the creation of more employee awards and rewards; fostering more internal interactions between faculty, staff, and coaches; a regular-cycle message tool used to communicate upcoming events and procedure changes to all employees; and enhanced website usability and accuracy for employees.

Improvements that have already been implemented include:

- Improved communication tools as recommended by 2016 HCC Climate Survey
- Implementation of eWalkthrough evaluations for adjunct/concurrent faculty
- Development and piloting of eWalkthrough evaluations of student services staff
- Development and piloting of an annual Performance Evaluation Tool for non-instructional employees

Improvements planned over the next one to three years include:

- Implement annual performance reviews for non-instructional staff
- Review evaluation process for full-time faculty during next Master Contract renegotiation

- Implement of eWalkthrough evaluations for student services staff
- Consult HR Solutions to determine sufficient staff and team/departmental balances

### **Development**

**3P3.** *Development focuses on processes for continually training, educating, and supporting employees to remain current in their methods and to contribute fully and effectively throughout their careers within the institution. This includes, but not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Providing and supporting regular professional development for all employees (3.C.4, 5.A.4)*

HCC believes training and development for faculty, staff, and administration allows employees to contribute fully and effectively to the Mission of the College and the SPEs. College sponsored in-services and training (CPR, Title IX, software training) are offered regularly

Tuition assistance is available for all full-time employees. Up to \$250 per credit hour is reimbursed to faculty members for graduate hours in their discipline. Up to \$200 is reimbursed for continuing education hours. Faculty are encouraged to attend training, seminars, conferences, or clinics provided the item has been budgeted or is grant-funded. Full-time faculty are provided the opportunity for sabbatical leave to pursue an approved degree program or other appropriate study, to do research and publication in their academic field, to pursue appropriate post doctorate work, or to participate in an approved work experience.

Full-time administrative and classified employees may be reimbursed up to \$200 per credit hour for courses taken towards any degree from any accredited institution. All full-time employees and their dependents may take any course from HCC at a reduced rate, only paying tuition with books and fees being waived, which cuts the cost in half. Part-time employees may receive a waiver on books and fees if the course they are taking is directly related to their position. In some cases, the tuition is paid by the College if the course is relevant to their work.

Administrative and classified staff may attend trainings, seminars, conferences or clinics that are relevant to their field of work providing the item has been budgeted. Examples include national and regional AACRAO Conferences for Registrar and Admissions staff, Power Campus regional and national training, Financial Aid training, NASPA Conferences for those in Student Affairs, Title IX investigator training, VAWA and Clery Act training, skill development for IT staff through on-the-job training.

- *Ensuring that instructors are current in instructional content in their discipline and pedagogical processes (3.C.4)*

Full-time faculty attend bi-annual in-services which include additional training on effective teaching and pedagogical techniques. Within their disciplines, they attend annual statewide meetings to ensure the College's curriculum aligns with other Kansas public higher education institutions. Faculty are also encouraged to seek out professional development opportunities.

Annual adjunct faculty in-services also include training on classroom management, in-class assessment techniques, course content breakout discussions by discipline, and using technology effectively in the classroom. Full-time faculty also supervise and mentor the adjuncts in their discipline and are able to offer leadership, guidance, and assistance when necessary.

The VPAA oversees two assessments to determine whether full-time faculty remain current and competent in their teaching discipline and whether they regularly employ effective classroom practices. First, full-time faculty hired under the Master Contract are evaluated for discipline competency and teaching effectiveness according to the negotiated agreement and as described in 3P2. Second, faculty participate in a three-year Academic Program Review cycle as discussed in 1P4 and use the rubrics in Table 3.5.

**Table 3.5: Faculty Members Qualified Backgrounds**

Academic, experience, and continuing professional staff development

| Yes | No |     |   |
|-----|----|-----|---|
|     |    | 3.1 | Faculty members are involved in professional organizations and/or other scholarly activities.   |
|     |    | 3.2 | Faculty members are sufficient in number and diverse preparation to provide effective instruction; include number of adjunct faculty as a full-time equivalent. |

- *Supporting student support staff members to increase their skills and knowledge in their areas of expertise (3.C.6)*

HCC supports development of student support staff members by offering training as needed. Internal training is offered by fellow faculty and staff. For further instruction, support staff might also enroll in HCC business courses. The College is responsive to support staff training needs across all campus departments. Most recently, the IT staff offered training for all campus employees in Microsoft 365. Support staff typically attend the regional PowerCampus trainings organized and offered on peer college campuses and even hosted by HCC in 2015. Financial Aid support staff regularly attend state and regional training. Advising support staff attended Accuplacer training this summer. Several support staff are registered to attend a Kansas Board of Regents sponsored culture and diversity training. Although HCC has experienced significant budget cuts, great care has been taken to fund training opportunities for support staff.

- *Aligning employee professional development activities with institutional objectives*

The College encourages employees to participate in professional development activities as one way of meeting our SPEs. To “Be Competent at Your Work,” “Make Good Decisions,” and “Act Responsibly” requires employees to be adequately trained on the daily processes of their jobs. This may include training provided by HCC staff or faculty as well as regional or national training and conferences. The College also frequently uses webinars, Zoom video conferencing, or even outside trainers when necessary.

Through guest speakers, department trainings, and campus-wide programs the College encourages professional development on the need to “Respect Others.” Programming representing different perspectives and cultures is an area where the College continues to strive for growth and improvement.

The SPEs “Communicate Effectively” and “Work Effectively in Teams” are recognized as areas of improvement according to the 2016 HCC Climate Survey. The eWalkthrough data from staff and instructors also indicated a need for more professional development on team-based instructional techniques and working in teams.

**3R3. What are the results for determining if employees are assisted or supported in their professional development?**

➤ *Outcomes/measured tracked and tools utilized*

Our primary tool for determining if employees are assisted or supported is by their feedback on the HCC Climate Survey. Employee use of our tuition assistance program is tracked, but employee attendance of trainings, conferences, and workshops is not tracked.

➤ *Summary results of measures*

According to the 2016 HCC Climate Survey, respondents were satisfied with the support they received in their job. The highest level of satisfaction was for support from their supervisor, then from co-workers, followed by support received from upper administration. The majority of respondents also felt comfortable expressing their opinion on College issues.

Results also indicated 79% of the respondents felt the opportunity to get training was highly or very highly important to them. Of those, 51% were highly or very highly satisfied with the opportunities to get additional training to improve their job skills. The gap score improved from .69 in 2013 to .55 in 2016.

Since the tuition assistance program for non-instructional employees was implemented in Fall 2013, fourteen administrative and classified employees have taken 287 credit hours, during which time two have completed their master’s degrees and three have completed their bachelor’s degree. Three employees have resigned, but the remaining nine are actively pursuing degrees. In addition, one employee is receiving reimbursement for hours towards a Licensed Specialist Clinical Social Worker (LSCSW) Licensure.

➤ *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

Consistent internal targets have not been set across the College for professional development. Establishing internal targets and external benchmarks will be a goal for the future as well as documenting implementation and progress on these goals.

➤ *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

The HCC Climate Survey and the use of tuition reimbursement show our employees consider development important to their success at HCC. Employees also indicated communication was very important and needed improvement. “Communication from Administration” and “Communication between Employees” were ranked the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> most important survey items respectively on this year’s survey and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> most important in 2013. Open, two-way communication between employees and between administration and staff improved from 2013 to 2016. However, in 2016, a noteworthy gap still remained between the importance and the employee satisfaction with these forms of communication.

***313.** Based on 3R3, what Improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?*

Based on a Climate Survey recommendation, HCC collected wish list items that employees believe are needed to do their jobs better. The first Wish List has been collected and is being analyzed, a process that will be repeated annually. There are plans to continue our efforts to grow leaders from within including our tuition reimbursement program. The College also plans to increase programming, activities, and training related to culture, diversity and respecting others in line with both extracurricular/co-curricular strategic plan goals and our SPEs. Additionally, over the next one to three years, many HCC employees will undergo training and learn new skills related to the implementation of CampusAnswers, Compease, and our outsourced payroll functions.

## AQIP CATEGORY FOUR: PLANNING AND LEADING

### Introduction

| Reacting  | Systematic  | Aligned   | Integrated  |
|---|---|---|---|
| Isolated tasks and activities address immediate needs | Repeatable, proactive processes with clear and explicit goals | Stable, consciously managed, regularly evaluate | Regularly improved through analysis, innovation and sharing |

Highland Community College's planning and processes for Mission, Vision, Values, and Strategic Plan have been consistent for the last six years. These processes associated with planning and leading are at the systematic level with many areas approaching aligned. Our processes for strategic planning, goal and strategy setting, review of Mission, Vision, and Values are well established. The implementation of the Strategic Planning Council, a cross section of institutional employees, greatly enhances monitoring the progress made with our objectives and serves as a communication tool back to all entities of the institution. In other words, they monitor the planning process. This strategic operational situation, along with Kansas Statutes and coordination from the Kansas Board of Regents, provides a framework for effective leadership and planning. The one point that keeps HCC from being at the aligned level is many of our employees still do not relate what they do to the institution's goals and strategies.

| Reacting  | Systematic  | Aligned   | Integrated  |
|---|---|---|---|
| Isolated tasks and activities address immediate needs | Repeatable, proactive processes with clear and explicit goals | Stable, consciously managed, regularly evaluate | Regularly improved through analysis, innovation and sharing |

Although much progress has been made since the last portfolio, the maturity level of Category Four results is also at the systematic level. The HCC Climate Survey results for 2013 and 2016 are used in many of the Results sections of this Category. The data has been good, meaningful, and has driven change at the institution. External benchmarks are probably minimal in this section, which keeps our results from approaching the aligned level of maturity.

### Planning and Leading

**4P1.** *Mission and Vision focuses on how the institution develops, communicates, and reviews its mission and vision. Describe the processes for developing, communicating, and reviewing the institution's mission, vision, and values and who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Developing, deploying, and reviewing the institution's mission, vision, and values*  
**(1.A.1, 1.D.2, 1.D.3)**

Mission and Vision statements are reviewed for relevancy each year at the Board's summer work session, but formal strategic planning with an outside consultant took place six years ago. The current Mission and Vision were developed in that two-day work session involving the Board, President's Staff, a group of employees representing all aspects of the institution, and a consultant from Datatel. This group developed into our present Strategic Planning Council. The College's Values, referred to at Highland Community College as our SPEs, were developed

after the current Mission and Vision statements, and in a process where virtually every employee and student was given the opportunity to participate through a series of focus groups.

The Strategic Plan review process takes place annually and looks at not only the Strategic Plan, but also the Mission, Vision, and the SPEs. The process begins with the Strategic Planning Council making recommendations to the Board at their annual Summer Work Session. After the Board's input, the modifications are made and disseminated across the institution. A change due to this review process was a clarification of the how we refer to our value statements. When developed, they were Common Learning Outcomes. After reviewing the values during the 2014-15 year, they are now more accurately referred to as SPEs.

It is during this annual review process that we will determine the continued relevancy of the Mission, Vision, and SPEs, particularly after a few years of data on the SPE's and how well we're incorporating them into the fabric of the institution. The College's Mission, Vision, and Values (SPEs) are included in the Overview of this portfolio.

HCC has a nine-county service area in Northeast Kansas. We take care each year to include the interests and needs of the communities in that area into the goals of the Strategic Plan.

Community Colleges in Kansas fall under the coordination of the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) which has a 10 Year Strategic Agenda named Foresight 2020. In order to assist KBOR with its goals, Highland's Strategic Plan must also include strategies for community colleges set up by the Kansas Board of Regents.

Our Mission reflects HCC's commitment to our service area and our commitment to provide affordable and easy access to students, businesses, and communities in those nine counties. Strategies in our Strategic Plan support this idea in our Mission.

- *Ensuring that institutional actions reflect a commitment to its values*
- *Communicating the mission, vision, and values (1.B.1, 2.B.2, 1.B.3)*

HCC's Strategic Plan and institutional policies are the primary means to make sure the institutional values align with the College's actions. Currently, the College has instituted its SPEs in course outcomes as detailed in 1P1, and has completed a pilot employee performance evaluation using our values as detailed in 3P2. These initiatives began through the HCC strategic planning process and assist us in maintaining our values across our enrollment profile.

The College uses a variety of avenues to communicate Mission, Vision, and Values across the institution and our service area, as they are referenced in our publications, Web site, staff meetings, Board meetings, and new employee orientation. The next two examples illustrate how we live the process as we plan.

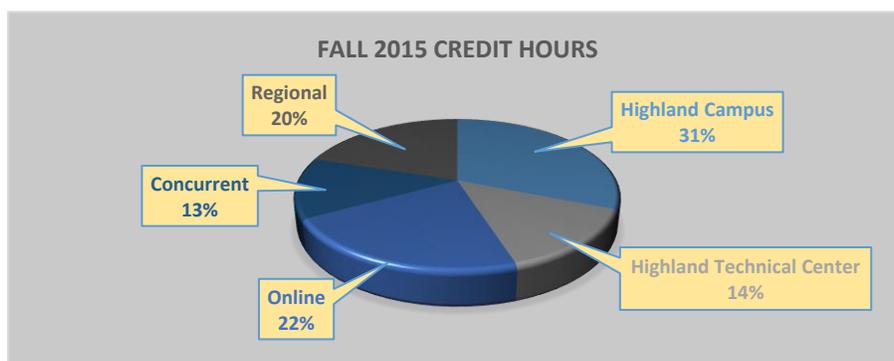
The Highland Campus is located in the extreme northeast part of our nine-county service area. In order to serve the people in our entire service area, we have five regional sites in Atchison,

Perry, Holton, Wamego, and Baileyville. HCC had been in Atchison, the same location as Northeast Kansas Technical College (NEKTC), offering general education courses for years. In 2007, the Kansas Board of Regents required all the two-year technical colleges in Kansas to become accredited institutions or to merge with an accredited institution. NEKTC reached out to HCC and the two institutions began merged operations on July 1, 2008. The planning process for this merger took about two years with approvals from the College Board of Trustees, NEKTC, the Kansas Board of Regents, the Higher Learning Commission, and the Federal Department of Education. Also, the establishment of the Western Center at Baileyville also came about from the HCC Mission and began operations in August of 2014. HCC had a hole in the northwest corner of our service area, the facility at Baileyville became available and after about 18 months of planning with the school districts and businesses and industries in the local area, HCC made the decision to proceed with the Western Center.

Each year, the Strategic Planning Council, the President's Staff, and the Board of Trustees determine if the goals of the Strategic Plan have adequate funding. Because the State of Kansas financial picture has been weak the past few years, this generally means shifting resources to fund the goals of the Strategic Plan. On a smaller scale, HCC has implemented a budget request process that involves each employee in charge of managing the budget for an area justifying that budget by determining which institutional goals the budgets are addressing.

A quick look at our enrollment demographics from Fall 2015 illustrates the need for planning and responding to budget-sensitive areas and all aspects of the institution. The number of credit hours taught in Fall 2015 was 28,930 and the pie chart below illustrates the distribution of those credit hours. Only 31% were taught at our Highland Campus. The rest are spread across our institution and online. Our strategic plan cannot lose sight of any of the components without doing significant harm.

**Table 4.1: Fall 2015 Credit Hours Demographics**



- *Ensuring that academic programs and services are consistent with the institution's mission (1.A.2)*

A heavy increase in Technical Education offerings across the service area is making a significant contribution to local economies and trained workers ready to be employed. Kansas Senate Bill 155 has been a boon for high schools, their students, and community colleges.

SB 155 was passed in 2013 and had an immediate impact the following year. SB 155 provides several benefits:

- Secondary students receive free tuition for technical courses and programs
- High Schools are reimbursed for transportation costs associated with those students enrolled in technical programs
- High Schools receive \$1,000 per student completing a technical program while in high school or up to six months following high school graduation
- Community Colleges are reimbursed tuition costs established for approved technical courses. The reimbursement is based on a funding model and is significantly larger than state reimbursement received for post-secondary students in the same course.

Concurrent enrollment courses (high school students enrolled in a college class for college credit during the normal high school day taught by an instructor qualified to deliver college-level coursework) are offered in several districts across HCC's service area and are on the increase.

Full-time College employees provide Student Services and support services for regional students in the form of financial aid assistance, tutoring, academic advising, and testing.

- *Allocating resources to advance the Institution's mission and vision, while upholding the institution's values (1.D.1., 1.A.3.)*

To efficiently allocate resources, HCC has implemented several new budgeting processes to help meet our Mission and goals of the Strategic Plan. Budgets for each regional location have been established for the first time. Marketing dollars are allocated now to each regional location, enabling a nimbleness for Regional Directors to react quickly to key stimuli in their areas.

The Western Center is a great example of planning that took place to allocate the resources to meet our mission in the northwest corner of our services area. The SPC, President's Staff, and the Board of Trustees put a plan in place to purchase, remodel, and equip a new facility. The HCC Foundation entered into a lease purchase agreement with HCC to buy the facility and assist with part of the remodel costs. A Title III grant funded the main remodel and assisted with some staffing. Perkins and Capital Outlay funds equipped the new facility. HCC reallocated money from other budgets to finish the staffing costs and incidentals.

**4R1.** *What are results for developing, communicating, and reviewing the institution's mission, vision, and values?*

- *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized (e.g. brand studies, focus groups, community forums/studies, and employee satisfaction surveys)*

A climate survey was conducted in 2011, 2013, and 2016 as part of our planning process to give employees an opportunity to provide feedback. One of the sections of the survey asks how well we are doing with our Mission. On the survey were seven questions on goals related to the College Mission. Employees (105) from across the institution completed the survey on 2016.

### Table 4.2 Summary Results of Measures

- *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

When comparing the 2013 survey results on the seven items related to Mission, the 2016 survey result were significantly better in six of the seven categories. When looking at the level of employee acceptance for the ratings for Commendable and Exceptionally Well for the seven categories, results are in Table 4.3.

### Table 4.3: Goals Related to Mission Comparison From 2013 and 2016

The only survey item showing a decrease in the percentage of employees rating the item Commendable or Exceptionally Well was Encouraging Economic Development in the Area. All other items related to Mission increased significantly since 2013.

- *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

The Board, President's Staff, and the SPC have made a concerted effort since the 2013 Climate Survey to communicate the Strategic Plan as well as Mission, Vision, and Values. The results above substantiate this. Two comments from the 2016 survey on the items related to Mission:

- "We have a long way to go, but we are making progress in the areas marked adequate."
- "A lot of ground has been gained in the last two years in meeting HCC's Mission."

As for the economic development questions related to Mission, there is not an explanation and the College has expanded its efforts in this area with no comment from survey participants. However, a look at the ratings, including the top three levels (Adequate, Commendable, and Exceptional), shows the rating for the 2013 and 2016 surveys are only 2.4 percentage points apart. This may be simply an education or communication issue.

**4I1.** *Based on 4R1, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?*

Addressing the economic development questions, this year the College has begun to engage business partners more aggressively with two of our technical programs: one existing program, Diesel Technology, and one new program, Precision Agriculture. Partnerships are being sought, with the assistance of program instructors and our Executive Director for the HCC Foundation, for equipment and facilities based on the businesses' experience with hiring our good students, especially the Diesel Technology program. As for Precision Ag, the serious need for trained Precision Ag Techs in the expanding Agri-Service industry has enticed many gifts of equipment and software. If this model continues to meet with success, it will be expanded to other existing and new programs to serve business, industry, and economic development needs.

HCC is also engaging the Economic Development entities in the counties related to the Diesel Technology and Precision Ag programs. An Enterprise Facilitation Group has been engaged that encompasses five of our service area counties.

### **Strategic Planning**

**4P2.** *Strategic Planning focuses on how the institution achieves its mission and vision. Describe the processes for communicating, planning, implementing, and reviewing the institution's plans and who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Engaging internal and external stakeholders in strategic planning (5.C.2)*
- *Aligning operations with the institution's mission, vision, values (5.B.3)*

Highland Community College's strategic planning process was discussed briefly in the section on Mission, Vision, and Values. Our aim is to set up goals and strategies for the ensuing three years. Although those goals and strategies are reviewed and tweaked every year, the major idea is to leave the goals and strategies in place for three years. Each year, new objectives for all strategies are developed.

During the year, HCC attempts to involve as many internal stakeholders as possible in the process by employees working on teams addressing the goals and strategies for their work units. External stakeholders are involved through Advisory Groups for various disciplines, business partnerships, athletic booster clubs, and alumni events.

HCC uses a variety of venues to solicit input from both external and internal stakeholders:

- HCC Climate Survey of Employees, Student Satisfaction Surveys and CCSSE
- Survey Monkey surveys: for both employee and external stakeholders.
- Monthly Meetings (*i.e.* Faculty/President, Administrative/Classified/President)
- HCC Complaints Process
- Public Comment Sections of Board of Trustee Meetings
- Quarterly Alumni, HCC Foundation Board meetings, Social Media
- Aligning operations with the institution's Mission, Vision, Values (5.C.2)

The College has made a concerted effort to design a process around the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle (PDCA). After the summer work session reviewing the previous year's goals and strategies, and receiving input from the various groups in attendance, the Strategic Planning Council and President's Staff develop the details of the Strategic Plan. The Plan is communicated College-wide, and the work process is implemented under each Vice President's area. The monitoring and reporting is accomplished through the SPC, which reviews reports from groups responsible for the current year's strategies. In addition, a section of the Strategic Plan is provided to the Board of Trustees each month at their regular meeting.

By involving several groups in the PDCA cycle of strategic planning, our institution is attempting to link more of our processes for assessment of student learning, operations, planning, and budgeting. HCC is not where we need to be in this regard, but progress is being made. For the

assessment of student learning, described in 1P1, 1R1, and 1I1, a commitment was made from academic affairs for personnel time, planning, and budgeting. This was one of our successful strategies in the last Strategic Plan cycle and involved representatives from the Board, President's Staff, Strategic Planning Council, faculty, and Regional employees.

- *Aligning efforts across departments, divisions, and colleges for optimum effectiveness and efficiency (5.B.3)*

The creation of our Western Center (4P1) provides an example of alignment efforts across the institution for optimum efficiency and effectiveness. When a school district partner was closing a high school building, our VPFO, with the HCC Foundation Board, made a deal to purchase the building. At the same time, College personnel wrote and received a Title III Strengthening Institutions Grant, obtaining federal funding for remodeling, equipment, and personnel. After two years, this has proved to be one of our most successful regional operations. Technical Education, Allied Health, HCC Maintenance, IT, Admissions, eLearning, and Concurrent Enrollment were also involved. This process is replicable and it may be used to reevaluate our position at other locations in our region.

The development of HCC's Western Center illustrates that our processes already in place enable collaborative efforts that encourage effectiveness and efficiency.

- *Capitalizing on opportunities and institutional strength and countering the impact of institutional weaknesses and potential threats (5.C.4, 5.C.5)*

In HCC's annual strategic planning process, the summer work session devotes time to discuss the changing environment of Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats facing the institution, and our goals and strategies are built around those changes in our environment.

In FY09, the College's state appropriation was calculated based on enrollment. If HCC grew in enrollment more than the average of the community colleges for that year, our state appropriation went up. After FY09, the College's appropriation became a block grant. Furthermore, that block grant is declining to the point that HCC's state appropriation for FY17 will be almost one million dollars less annually than it was in FY09, resulting in a cumulative loss during that time of about \$6.5 million. To counteract this loss in revenue, intentionally goals and strategies have been added to the Strategic Plan in the following areas:

1. Taking advantage of SB 155 funding at our Technical Center in Atchison, the Western Center at Baileyville, through concurrent enrollment at area high schools, and through our online programs and courses.
2. Some areas of the institution have been repurposed to take advantage of people retiring or leaving the institution. Nineteen positions were reconfigured along with some layoffs.
3. Purposefully manage enrollment rather than attempt increases in all areas.
4. Cut expenditures, increase student costs without harming enrollment, and manage an increase in the County valuation without alarming taxpayers.

5. A three-year reimplementation of Power Campus with implementation of new software in Financial Aid and the Business Office (5P1). This Reimplementation Process will provide more timely data for making decisions on viable courses, programs, locations.

- *Creating and implementing strategies and action plans that maximize current resources and meet future needs (5.C.1, 5.C.4)*

The VPFO has implemented a new budget planning form that requires showing the percentage of budgeted funds tied to the goals in the strategic plan (5P2). This budget planning process, our newest AQIP Action Project, is essential to our strategic directions, and the new Action Project will reinforce the correlation of budget to goals. Each Vice President has developed their budget with the goals and strategies in mind and has the authority to reallocate money from various areas under their jurisdiction. With this new process, any employee who manages a budget, regardless of size, will have the opportunity to tie spending to our institutional plan. This will provide another avenue for employees to participate in the institutional improvement process and to understand how their budget dollars can affect outcomes in the Strategic Plan.

Budget documents filter upward to each Vice President, the President's Staff, and then the Board of Trustees. The College's budget is published prior to a budget hearing. At the hearing, the public may respond to the Board, and the Board may consider that input before approval.

**4R2.** *What are the results for communicating, planning, implementing, and reviewing the institution's operational plans?*

- *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized (e.g. achievement of goals and/or satisfaction with process)*

The chart below represents the tool used by SPC to monitor progress on the Strategic Plan. This chart has been shortened and the working document we utilize has additional columns. The HCC Strategic Plan follows HLC's five criteria for accreditation. This chart includes the objectives for each criteria. Strategies are developed for each objective. In our working document, in addition to the strategies and results, are columns for the person responsible for the strategy, the standing team for each strategy, the AQIP Category the strategy relates to, the Department or team members, the results, and a last column for notes on each strategy.

- *Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)*

#### **Table 4.4: Strategic Plan**

- *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

Internal targets are determined for each strategy through input from all factions during the development of the strategic plan. Most are set for our own strategic purposes, are not defined or measured in the same way for every strategy, and may not be measured the same for other colleges, making it difficult to do external benchmarking.

➤ *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

Based on the number of strategies completed; the number of groups involved in putting the Strategic Plan together, the large number of employees involved in completing strategies, and the monitoring that takes place during the year, it is evident HCC's development and review processes are inclusive and productive. From the last two climate surveys, two items on the survey relating to this issue showed significant improvement:

- Having my opinion considered in decision-making: gap score for this item improved from 0.79 to 0.48 from 2013 to 2016.
- Having an active role/influence in actual decision-making: gap score for this item improved from 0.70 to 0.56 from 2013 to 2016.

Although there are many priority items HCC need to complete each year, this last Strategic Plan has shown that HCC may be too aggressive, from the standpoint of number of strategies in some areas of our organization. When one area is overloaded, the limited number of people in that area get worn thin and begin to feel underappreciated.

**4I2.** *Based on 4R2, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?*

HCC's Strategic Plan is comprehensive and involves many employees in the process. Goals are established based on HCC needs and projections. Benchmarks are set based on our history. Although, HCC does look at external factors, especially Kansas community colleges, the College needs to improve in comparing itself to other external benchmarks. HCC has joined the NCCBP and is just beginning to evaluate how the data from a random peer group can be relevant to our Strategic Plan.

Part of the communication process with employees starts when new employees are hired. HCC must work on and implement a new employee orientation process – and objective from last year that was not completed. HCC must provide the resources to accomplish this objective.

Another incomplete objective from our last Strategic Plan was to begin work on developing an equitable salary structure for HCC staff members who are not on the Master Contract. At the August 24 Board of Trustees meeting, the Board voted to contract with HR Performance Solutions for this issue, along with getting our institution ready for the new Department of Labor Fair Labor Standard Act regulations to be implemented by December 1, 2016.

### **Leadership**

**4P3.** *Leadership focuses on governance and leadership of the institution. Describe the processes for ensuring sound and effective leadership of the institution and who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Establishing appropriate board-institutional relationships to support leadership and governance (2.C.4)*

The Highland Community College Board of Trustees is a six-person board elected from the College's home county. State statutes allow for either a six- or seven-person board. All members of HCC's Board are elected at large. There are no Board districts established within the County. Although HCC serves all or part of nine counties in northeast Kansas, Doniphan County is our taxing district; therefore, our Trustees are elected from that district. State statutes define the Board's powers and local by-laws establish how the Board operates. Board meetings are subject to the State's open meetings laws and the President's staff and a faculty representative are at each meeting. Because they are open meetings, any other citizen may attend and there is a section in the agenda for public comment.

In addition to regular business, the Board hears reports from each Vice President, the President, and the Board Chair at each meeting. At many meetings, there may also be reports on HCC's regional locations, specific programs, and other items of interest to the institution.

- *Establishing oversight responsibilities and policies of the governing board (2.C.3, 5.B.1, 5.B.2)*

The Board, in accordance with the statutes of the act governing the community colleges of Kansas and rules and regulations of the Kansas Board of Regents, has custody of and is responsible for the property of the College and is responsible for the management and control of the College. The powers of the Board are specified in the Kansas Community College Act and the mode of operation is outlined in Board Bylaws.

The Board selects the President and empowers that position to establish and maintain efficient Administrative Procedures to ensure the College's actions are in alignment with Board bylaws. The Board Bylaws state that accepting the responsibility of administering the financial affairs of the College is a trust given to the President and the Board by the taxpayers of the district. The President will at all times conduct the affairs of the College in the light of this trusteeship, consistent with the best educational practices, to serve the community.

- *Maintaining board oversight, while delegating management responsibilities to administrators, and academic matters to faculty (2.C.4)*

The Trustees and President's Staff have promoted the idea that it is better to have decisions made at the appropriate level rather than top-down. Faculty are certainly involved with course outcomes and content, course activities, delivery methods, developing attendance requirements, academic integrity and classroom disruptions policies. Faculty are also encouraged to attend annual Core Competency Meetings for courses in their discipline held by the Kansas Board of Regents to give their input on statewide course transfer. KBOR regulations provide for an institutional course and program approval process that starts with the C&I team before they will entertain any new programs. Staff are encouraged to look at our systems and processes and come up with a "better mousetrap."

All employees and students recently had an opportunity to participate in reshaping our facilities master plan. Some ideas discussed during this revision will involve significant resources and the involvement of many levels of personnel to make recommendations and decisions.

- *Ensuring open communication between and among all colleges, divisions, and departments*

The need for improved communication is a topic in the Climate Surveys and the last portfolio. After each of the last three Climate Surveys, a Climate Survey Feedback Team made recommendations on what it viewed as priorities for the College. SPC reviewed the recommendations and the appropriate areas addressed those that were quick fixes. Those recommendations that were not quick fixes were included in the Strategic Plan. Last year's Strategic Plan (4R2) shows the resolution of several items dealing with communication.

The Strategic Planning Council was formed to give employees across the College an opportunity to be more intimately involved in the planning and decision-making, but also to bolster communication from that group back to the various work units.

The President holds separate meetings for faculty and staff on the Friday following the monthly Board meetings to address that month's Board actions. The Vice Presidents hold regular meetings with their work groups to inform and hear information to communicate up and down the organization. Information on our improvement is reported in the Results section.

- *Collaborating across all units to ensure the maintenance of high academic standards (5.B.3)*

The C&I Team and the Student Services Directors Group have had the most collaboration on working to ensure academic standards. There has been a regular review of policies on Academic Integrity, Attendance Requirements, Classroom Disruptions, Academic Problems, Student Code of Conduct, and Satisfactory Academic Progress. When needed, *ad hoc* teams of representatives from faculty, staff, athletics staff, and students are formed. Online courses and programs have added to the need for reviewing processes in regard to academic standards, and those issues have been handled through the same processes involving the IT and eLearning groups.

- *Providing effective leadership to all institutional stakeholders (2.C.1, 2.C.2)*

The Highland Community College Board of Trustees, through its member makeup and bylaws, encourages diversity in viewpoints. Board Bylaws contain sections on:

- Operating as outlined by State statutes so as to protect the public and its employees
- Community relations relating to Board committees, agenda items, listening to constituents concerns and handling complaints
- Conflicts of interest

- Acceptance of the responsibility of administering the financial affairs through purchasing, financial records, annual audits, an annual budget meeting.
  - *Developing leaders at all levels within the institution*

The College intentionally uses methods to promote and develop leaders at HCC. For every open position, there is an internal notification to promote applications from within, and there are several examples of internal hires taking place in the last several years. The College, for both faculty and staff, has a tuition reimbursement program to encourage our employees to get a degree or advanced degree. The faculty process has been in place for several years, but the process for Administrative and Classified Staff is relatively new and has been a success. HCC also has made use of interim appointments for institutional stability and leadership development opportunities. At the student level, HCC has taken great advantage of a Student Leadership Team to assist with campus culture and the dissemination of information.

The Kansas Association of Community College Trustees has embarked on a statewide Leadership Initiative to develop our own community college leaders from within. The KCCLI (Kansas Community College Leadership Institute) just finished year one and is headed into its second. Highland had one employee attend the nine monthly sessions on nine Kansas community college campuses. HCC hosted one of the monthly events, has two participants this year, and will host another monthly event.

- *Ensuring the institution's ability to act in accordance with its mission and vision*  
**(2.C.3)**

Keeping the Mission, Vision, and Values relevant, in front of internal and external stakeholders, and touting them as the reason for our goals and strategies whenever possible, helps ensure HCC's ability to act in accordance with its Mission and Vision. The development of the Western Center two years ago is a prime example of the entire institution, plus external stakeholders, working to fulfill HCC's Mission and Vision.

At our most recent summer work session, internal and external stakeholders reviewed the Master Facilities Plan and collaborated to come up with three facility projects to be a target of a capital campaign. The discussion centered on how the three projects could be aligned with our goals. This type of discussion takes place at all levels, including the Board, staff, and students who have defined processes and policies to follow. The Board has oversight to ensure the decisions are based on evidence and in the best interest of our stakeholders.

The three targets of a capital campaign determined at the work session are:

1. Obtaining a new winery facility for Viticulture and Enology at our Wamego location. HCC is involved with a group in the area whose goal is to establish a four-county wine region in Kansas. HCC will host a Winery Incubator in our new facility to encourage beginning entrepreneurs in the Kansas wine industry.

2. Expanding facilities for Diesel Technology at both the HCC Technical Center in Atchison and the Western Center in Baileyville. We are aggressively working with existing partners and establishing new partnerships for this campaign.
3. Refurbishing athletic facilities for baseball, track, and football.

**4R3. What are the results for ensuring long-term effective leadership of the institution?**

- *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

Highland can point to three measurable activities to ensure long-term effective leadership: the number of staff members who have received internal promotions, the number of alumni working at the institution, and the new policy that provides tuition assistance for classified employees, administrative staff, and faculty. These measures are tracked as a measure of effectiveness and evidence of success in leadership development.

Another measure of leadership effectiveness is how employees view their leadership and how willing leadership is to be open and aware of employee concerns. The HCC Climate Survey is a tool to make leadership aware of problems and concerns within the institution.

- *Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)*

**Table 4.5: Climate Survey**

Of the current 175 full time employees, 38 have been promoted to their present position, 42 are alumni, and 18 are currently taking advantage of the College's tuition reimbursement to work on advanced degrees. Two classified employees have received their Bachelor's and three employees have completed their Master's degrees.

- *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

Table 4.4 shows items from the HCC Climate Survey gap analysis from the last two surveys. The participants rate how important each item is and then how satisfied they are with that item. The difference between importance and satisfaction is a gap score. Of the 11 items on the survey, improvement has been made on 10 of those items. There were no internal targets and external benchmarks established.

- *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

As noted above, HCC improved in all of the areas but one on the Climate Survey. Our goal is to have all gaps below 1.0, and we achieved that in the 2016 Climate Survey.

**4I3. Based on 4R3, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?**

Although the gap score declined for "Having support of my superior", the gap is insignificant.

HCC would like to see smaller gaps in these three survey items, and will develop objectives to address administration response to employee concerns, the College's effectiveness in communicating with the public/external community, administration's effectiveness in communicating with the HCC community.

### **Integrity**

***4P4.** Integrity focuses on how the institution ensures legal and ethical behavior and fulfills its societal responsibilities. Describe the processes for developing and communicating legal and ethical standards, monitoring behavior to ensure standards are met, and who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Developing and communicating standards*

Developing and communicating standards begins with our SPEs. These six standards were developed with the assistance of everyone at the institution. Though they were created as a guide for our students, it became obvious these standards should become part of our culture and be a guide for our employees as well. HCC is incorporating the SPEs into our courses and programs, and we have completed a pilot to institute these standards into employee performance evaluations.

HCC also addresses standards of behavior through our job descriptions, administrative policies, employee and student orientations, and employee and student handbooks.

- *Training employees and modeling for ethical and legal behavior across all levels of the institution*

New employee orientation needs to be revamped at HCC and falls short of expectations at this time. Actually, a team reviewing the results of the 2016 Climate Survey made suggestions for new employee orientation and a better, more formal mentoring system. Reworking these two processes will aid in ensuring legal and ethical behavior.

One standing faculty team is the Professional Development Team. It develops an agenda for a faculty development day each February. In addition to training on timely topics, legal and ethical behavior sessions also frequent the agenda.

The Campus Answers Team (new) is scheduling the first round of training on: Uncovering Implicit Bias; HIPAA; FERPA; Unlawful Harassment/Sexual Harassment Prevention; ADA (Disabilities) ACT; Preventing Discrimination and Sexual Violence; Ongoing Awareness Campaign; The Power of Respectful Language; Data Security Basics. These sessions are conducted by our own employees.

Employees in several critical areas such as Financial Aid, Registrar, and Business Office regularly attend state training which includes ethical and legal behavior for their areas.

New employee orientation currently includes review of the employee handbook and College policies. Specific training on issues involving Title IX, FERPA, sexual harassment, and other policies are conducted at all employee or large group meetings as necessary.

- *Operating financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions with integrity, including following fair and ethical policies and adhering to processes for the governing board, administration, faculty, and staff (2.A.)*

HCC policies and state and national regulations define appropriate ethical standards for specific areas of our operation. The College undergoes several regular external compliance evaluations such as our annual independent audit, external evaluators for grants, Perkins funds audit, NJCAA Athletic Program Audits, Federal Financial Aid reviews, Student Support Services (SSS) and Title III Strengthening Institutions Grant compliance reviews, and EEOC and ADA compliance monitoring.

- *Making information about programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships readily and clearly available to all constituents (2.B.)*

The College's Web site provides information about courses, programs, costs, financial aid, admissions, and accreditation relationships. In addition, targeted communications through print, social media, radio, and TV provide similar information on specific topics. HCC has made great strides in communicating information to our constituents as technology advances. Additional resources are provided to improve targeted communications to our external constituents.

**4R4. What are the results for ensuring institutional integrity?**

- *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized (e.g. achievement of goals and/or satisfaction with process)*

In the latest Strategic Plan, there were eight strategies directly related to one of our SPEs and other strategies incorporated one or more of them into their activity. The fact that our Strategic Plan is organized around the five criteria with one of the criteria being Integrity illustrates the importance of institutional integrity to Highland Community College.

As pointed out in other results sections under Category Four, the HCC Climate Survey questions our employees about communication at the institution and their perceptions about certain aspects of our operations.

- *Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)*

**Table 4.6: Communication Questions for Faculty**

| Survey Items  | Gap<br>2016<br>Survey | Score<br>2013<br>Survey | Results  |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------|
| Open, two-way communication between employees                     | 0.89                  | 1.16                    | Improved |
| Open, two-way communication between staff & admin                 | 1.15                  | 1.42                    | Improved |
| Upper-level admin's use of valid evidence in making key decisions | 0.78                  | 1.2                     | Improved |

➤ *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

Table 4.6 shows three items on the survey that directly relate to institutional integrity. As with other results of the Climate Survey, responses from employees are on two scales: how important each survey item is to the employee, and how satisfied the employee is with that item. HCC has improved in each item from the 2013 survey. Gap scores greater than 1.0 are of concern to us. “Open, two-way communication between staff and administration” has improved considerably since the 2013 survey, but because the gap is still 1.15, it remains a concern to us.

➤ *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

Communication needs to be an ongoing improvement process with employees, Alumni and Foundation Boards, Trustees, taxpayers, and with more communication about decision making.

**414.** *Based on 4R4, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?*

Two things stand out after reviewing information in this Category: New Employee Orientation and HCC Board of Trustee Bylaws. These items need to be a focus in our next Strategic Plan update and improvement will be made.

## AQIP CATEGORY FIVE: KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP

### Introduction

The central goal of all knowledge and data management efforts at Highland Community College is to serve the College’s decision-making processes, functional operations, learning culture, and constituent populations in an efficient and accessible manner with clean, transparent, and highly reliable information. To this end, the College has put considerable ongoing work toward improving its technological and information infrastructures. The College’s recent knowledge management improvement initiatives include a top-level overhaul of our Student Information System or SIS, an extensive three-year information technology (IT) infrastructure systems rebuilding and renovation project, a migration of our core Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software from an application platform made by Management Advisory Computer Systems (MACS) to the Microsoft Dynamics GP (Dynamics GP) software platform, an integration of our core SIS data with our core ERP (Dynamics GP) application, and an integration of our core SIS data with our Financial Aid Management System (PowerFails).

| <u>Reacting</u>                                       | <u>Systematic</u>   | <u>Aligned</u>                                   | <u>Integrated</u>   |
|---|---|--|---|
| Isolated tasks and activities address immediate needs |  Repeatable, proactive processes with clear explicit goals | Stable, consciously, managed, regularly evaluate | Regularly improved through analysis, innovation and sharing |

HCC’s knowledge management and resource stewardship processes may be described as moving from reacting to systematic at this time. HCC’s technology and knowledge management and resource stewardship had slipped below acceptable levels of support, maintenance, information transparency, and sustainability with no reasonable systematic improvement measures in place. There is now ample evidence to support the conclusion that HCC has risen from this reactive state into a systematic culture where we are moving steadily towards an integrated status where constant improvement cycles are initiated and sustained.

| <u>Reacting</u>                                       | <u>Systematic</u>   | <u>Aligned</u>   | <u>Integrated</u>   |
|---|---|--|---|
| Isolated tasks and activities address immediate needs | Repeatable, proactive processes with clear and explicit goals |  Stable, consciously, managed, regularly evaluate | Regularly improved through analysis, innovation and sharing |

Over the last three years, HCC’s knowledge management, technology infrastructure, and resource stewardship results have moved from systematic towards aligned by clearly communicating the needs that had to be answered in order to move us forward. The results of our ongoing projects, initiatives, and transformative changes have already produced a substantial shift towards alignment within the HCC institutional culture.

In 2013, it became apparent that HCC needed some high-level knowledge management and technology redesign plans. Aiming at long-term sustainability and effectiveness, HCC began to lay out a strategy for far-reaching improvements. The strategy began in July of 2014 with a process the College now refers to as our “PowerCampus Reimplementation” Plan. This

reimplementation process began effectively revamping our core SIS (cleaning up the College's organizational data) in order to make our existing information better serve our needs (SPEs #1, #4, #5). The College then rolled out an aggressive three-year IT infrastructure systems rebuilding and renovation campaign. Planning centered around three "R's": rebuild (year one), retune (year two), and rethink our technology needs (year three). The measure for effectiveness and success was straightforward: if this plan proved to be effective, by year four, HCC would have something it never had previously – a technology platform that provided room for growth and educational innovation (SPEs #1, #4, #5).

This strategy, now known as the "R3 Campaign", provided solutions to technology needs across the College (see 4P3). This process created space for other much needed improvements across the College, such as our ERP upgrade, our data integrations, and implementation of other outside applications.

### **Knowledge Management**

**5P1.** *Knowledge Management focuses on how data, information, and performance results are used in decision-making processes at all levels and in all parts of the institution. Describe the processes for knowledge management and who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Selecting, organizing, analyzing, and sharing data and performance information to support planning, process improvement, and decision-making*

The College's core platform for knowledge management, our main SIS, is Ellucian's PowerCampus product. PowerCampus houses all of the College's central data: (1) student records, (2) staff records, (3) billing data, and (4) academic data. Our ERP platform is Microsoft's Dynamics GP product. Dynamics GP houses all of the College's financial data. Our Manage Accounts Payroll Personnel (or MAPP) software currently holds all of our staff and faculty payroll data supplements Dynamics GP. Our third largest data source, our student Financial Aid Management System, is the College Board's PowerFaid's product.

All of the data housed in these three main data sources is available to the appropriate staff and faculty personnel for College operational, planning, and decision-making purposes. The data is available to personnel through the software systems listed above and through custom-written reports. New custom reports are always available by request through the IT Department. Staff, faculty, and students can also access PowerCampus information that is relevant to their needs by using MyHCC, HCC's customization of Ellucian's web-based Self-Service product. For example, students can access their academic, payment, personal, and class information by means of MyHCC, our online self-service portal.

The HCC IT department has also assisted our personnel teams with implementing additional software tools that have enhanced the accessibility, accuracy, and usefulness of our available data. Some specific highlights and outstanding examples of this are included in the [IT Implementation chart](#), also excerpted in Table 5.1 below (SPE #6). This shows the magnitude of what has been accomplished in the last five years.

**Table 5.1: Additional Software Tools**

| Software / Solution                                      | Year Implemented | For Office/Team   |
|--|------------------|---|
| Papervision  | <b>2010</b>      | <b>Admissions, Registrar, Financial Aid</b>   |
|  |                  | In 2010, HCC began a project to scan and digitize all historical student records. HCC's Registrar's office was running out of space for paper files. Without additional file storage space available, HCC contacted American Micro, a digital document management company, to engage in the process of moving all paper files to a software program called Papervision where digitized files are scanned and saved on a server. All student files, twenty day rosters, and grades have been digitized relieving the issue of storage space. Papervision is allowing HCC staff to view historical transcripts inside of PowerCampus (our core SIS). Papervision has since been used in the Financial Aid and Admission offices. The HCC Financial Aid office also began using Papervision in the spring of 2016 to try to make the storing of the financial aid documents more secure. Before the Financial Aid office was storing student documents in filing cabinets in the office which was inconvenient, unsecure, and took up a lot of room. Since switching to Papervision, locating documents for students is almost immediate. Also, it has made in-house financial aid documents more secure since the documents themselves are scanned into the system. |
| Enterprise Managed Wireless Network                      | <b>2010</b>      | <b>Students, Staff, and Faculty (All Campus Populations)</b>  |
|  |                  | Around 2010, HCC's networking needs (in general) were scaling up at rapid rate. Student tickets, troubles, and requests for improved wireless access were doubling and tripling on a weekly, monthly basis. The College had wireless access available, but it was not an enterprise wireless network with a central management point and a consolidated network sign-on structure, related to our wireless network names or service set identifiers (SSIDs). Because of this, our wireless offering was (at best) inconsistent, difficult to manage, and hard to use. The College invested in the hardware necessary to implement a new enterprise, managed wireless network. The impact was broad, hugely impacting, and the feedback was immediately positive.  |
| New College Website with Content Management System (CMS) | <b>2011</b>      | <b>Students, Staff, and Faculty (All Campus Populations) Plus Outside Communities Such As Prospective Students, Parents, and Those Interested in the College.</b>   |
|  |                  | HCC's website needs had massively outgrown its existing website in 2010. Information publicly posted on the website was inconsistent, hard to navigate, unhelpful, and often plainly inaccurate. In addition to this, HCC's website did not have a backend content management system or CMS that could provide staff quick and easy access to update web content. Following this recognition, the College engaged an external web development company and embarked on a website redevelopment and redesign project. The new, completely revised HCC website was made public and live in 2011. The revised website was also delivered with a custom-built CMS called "Caffeine" which allowed HCC staff to update content with ease.   |

- *Determining data, information, and performance results that units and departments need to plan and manage effectively*

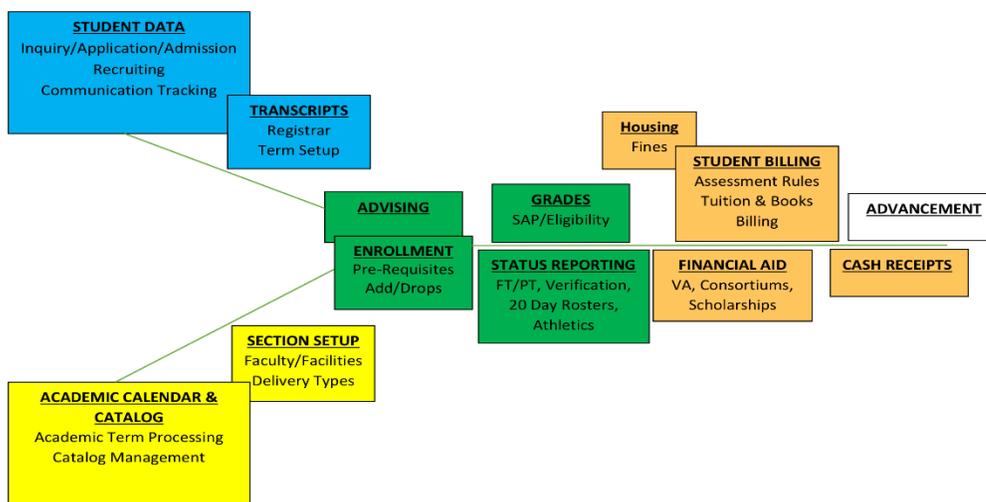
As the College analyzed and audited its core information planning, managing, and delivery processes, two noteworthy discoveries were made: the College was not making the optimal use of PowerCampus; and there were massive and wide-ranging technology infrastructure updates needed in order to keep the College in a sustainable, growing, and viable position. In response to the first discovery, the "PowerCampus Reimplementation" project was set in motion in four phases. During phase zero, all of our business processes housed within PowerCampus were analyzed. All data workflows were mapped and placed into colorized "process flow" groups. Cross institutional teams met to verify that all business process information had been accurately captured and sufficiently clarified (*SPE #6*). The resulting "process flow" group insights are shown below. All data in PowerCampus is entered and owned by one of five staff groupings:

- *Blue Group:* Student data. Inquiry, application, admission, and so on
- *Yellow Group:* Academic data. Catalog/sections/courses, facilities, faculty

- *Green Group:* Enrollment, transcripts
- *Peach Group:* Business office. Student finance data
- *White Group:* Advancement

In addition to this, a clearer data lifecycle was set forth: all PowerCampus data flowed from left to right on the Table 5.2 grid below. All new information entered PowerCampus either through the academic/course or student/admissions channel. This data then flowed into the main stream of information that the College uses to serve our students, faculty, and staff. This data stream carried directly over into our other core applications and uses as well (*SPE #4*).

**Table 5.2: Data Lifecycle For PowerCampus**



A [“master audit change” data map](#) documents all of the main data alterations that were needed.

Currently, the College is finalizing its PC Reimplementation phase one changes in PowerCampus and is already beginning to experience the positive impact of improved processes and reporting data.

- An online student application that will automatically transfer application data directly into PowerCampus to be managed and utilized without hand data keying.
  - Improved recurring, functional business processes by housing the correct data in the correct fields within PowerCampus and then reporting correct data. Staff are empowered to digitize their procedures and then deal with a smaller margin of error. For example, the registrar’s office was able to move a roster process from paper to digital.
  - College-wide enrollment and full-time equivalency reporting has improved as more accurate student data has been flowing into our core SIS.
- *Making data, information, and performance results readily and reliably available to the units and departments that depend upon this information for operational*

*effectiveness, planning, and improvements*

In addition to needing to transform our data and our usage of that data, the College had to plan and respond to the second discovery: the recognition that massive technology infrastructure updates were needed. The state of our technology infrastructure stood in the way of consistent access, reliability, data safety, and the overall operational effectiveness of the College. So we launched the R3 Campaign. The IT department put together a [College-wide keynote presentation](#) to communicate the R3 Campaign plan (SPE #2). Five key categories of need were highlighted during the keynote: server infrastructure, network infrastructure, core applications, security infrastructure, and the need to embrace a more process-driven architecture (SPE #4, #5, #6).

HCC is currently near the end of year two of the R3 Campaign. With budgets tight, the IT department was forced to focus existing funds in order to accomplish more with approximately the same budget dollars. Despite the challenges, the IT department has [completed multiple projects](#) that have enhanced the operational effectiveness of the technology infrastructure (SPE #1). Some examples are introduced in Table 5.3.

**Table: 5.3: IT Improvement Projects**

| Improvement Project  | Year Completed | Keynote Category  |
|--|----------------|---|
| Microsoft System Center Configuration Manager (SCCM) and Endpoint Protection           | 2015           | <b>Server Infrastructure and Security Infrastructure</b>  |
|  |                | From November 2014 to January 2015, the IT department installed a Microsoft SCCM environment that <u>both</u> enabled the automatic, remote delivery of new applications (such as Microsoft Office 2013) for operational efficiency <u>and</u> automatically deployed the most recent Microsoft Endpoint Protection antivirus solution to protect and monitor all of the Highland computers across the HCC network.   |
| Windows Server Update Server (WSUS) and Windows Deployment Server (WDS)                | 2015           | <b>Server Infrastructure and Security Infrastructure</b>  |
|  |                | Frequent maintenance of computers (such as labs and teacher stations) is very time consuming. In order to increase our bottom-line operational efficiency, the IT department installed a new WSUS server (that automatically keeps our windows computers updated with the latest application and security patches) and a new WDS server (that enables IT technicians to quickly wipe and reinstall, or completely “reimage”, computers on-site with minimal downtime).  |
| Core Server Upgrades: Microsoft Exchange Server 2013 and Domain Controller Replacement | 2015           | <b>Server Infrastructure</b>  |
|  |                | Our Microsoft Exchange email server was 7 years old and two version of Exchange behind in 2015. The old server was replaced with a brand new server, Exchange 2013 was installed and configured, and all of our email was migrated to the new environment. Our two core domain controllers that housed our Domain Naming Scheme (DNS) for the Highland domain were old, outdated, and failing. The first server was replaced with new hardware and upgraded to the latest version of windows server and the second domain controller was virtualized and upgraded to the latest version windows server. |

- Ensuring the timeliness, accuracy, reliability, and security of the institution’s knowledge management system(s) and related processes

The College’s main information hub and datacenter is housed in Highland, KS on the main campus. In order to guarantee timely access to the Regional Centers, the IT department has upgraded the bandwidth capacity of the main external internet connections at regional locations and added network management tools where appropriate to ensure the viability of critical applications. The College’s technology infrastructure was fortified by taking measures to ensure

ongoing reliability through enhanced security and backup redundancy. Network security was tightened and revised. Credentialing accounts and permissions security was improved. Finally, the College formally wrote centralized security officer duties into the IT team's duties.

To be constantly aware of and quickly serve the various technology needs of various teams, locations, and departments, IT uses two practical and accessible communication tools (*SPE #6*): an IT Help Desk technician can be reached directly by phone during business hours; and IT uses a Help Desk ticketing software system called *Track-IT!* All the above [IT support information](#) is available online.

The extensive improvements taking place through both the PC Reimplementation project and the R3 Campaign have positively affected the timeliness, accuracy, and reliability of various other departments and processes across the College. Some examples include:

- By having 24/7 access to more reliable, transformed data via custom-written reports, multiple teams are able to make more focused, data-driven decisions. Examples: improved accuracy and reliability of Institutional Research (IR) department reporting; the SSRS automated report system which regularly emails specific reports to College personnel, enabling HCC leaders to make clearly supported decisions (*SPE #4, #5, #6*).
- Microsoft Dynamics GP provides integration between student financial aid transactions and student billing transactions. The Dynamics GP implementation included integrating financial components of other systems, making Dynamics GP the sole source of all HCC financial information.

**5R1.** *What are the results for determining how data, information, and performance results are used in decision-making processes at all levels and in all parts of the institution?*

- *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized (including software platforms and/or contracted services)*

By utilizing MyHCC (the web component of PowerCampus), Highland instructors are able to track attendance, activity grades, mid-term/final grades, and enrollment rosters. The Academic Affairs office uses enrollment information in PowerCampus to determine course schedule questions. The Business Office uses PowerCampus to track student billing information and to see if students are paying their bills through the MyHCC portal. In 2016, the College began offering payment plans to students using Nelnet, allowing students who cannot pay their full student bill up front to enroll by using a payment plan.

The College's chart of accounts was rebuilt during the implementation of Dynamics GP to provide financial data by fund, function, object, and location. The result of this new structure has been significantly improved financial data, allowing administration to make far better decisions about purchasing. Also, due directly to the PowerFunds integration with PowerCampus, the Financial Aid office is now able to track and audit student information with much more efficiency. Now that data is integrated and freely passing back and forth between the two applications, the information is more verifiably accurate and also available much faster. This has produced a

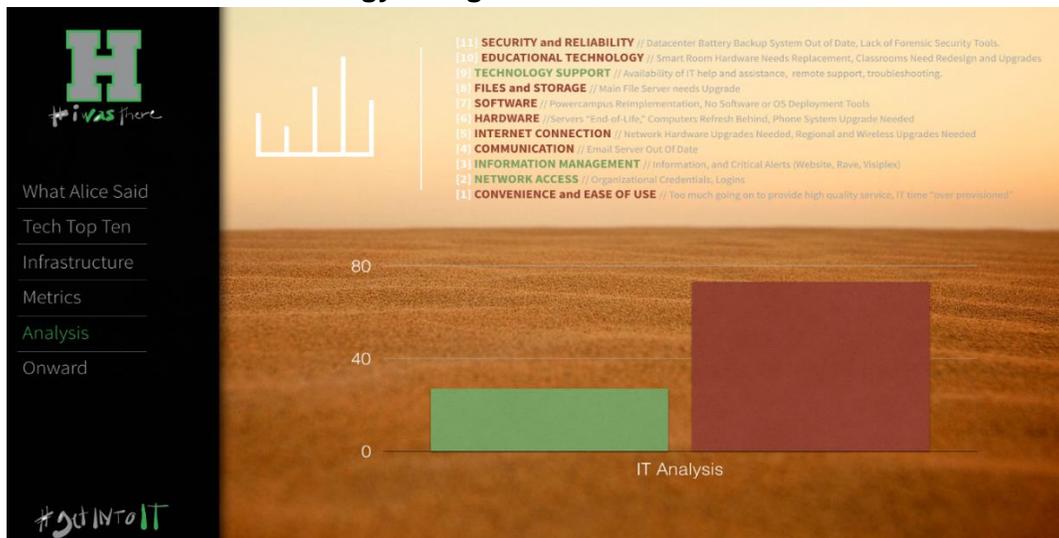
substantial process improvement change in the student disbursement procedure.

➤ *Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)*

In April 2016, the College’s first Data Governance Team (or DGT) was chartered (SPE #6) and given the task of making sure that all critical and necessary data was not being stored somewhere outside of our core databases, and of being the group that kept our critical campus data clean, reliable, and usable (SPE #4).

Amidst the various analytics and metrics of the R3 Campaign, there was one simple, straightforward, and recurring summary target used to measure the overall success of the plan. Table 5.4 below illustrates 11 core technology categories that were most relevant to the College and on which we gave ourselves a grade. We made use of the following analysis outlined by a [2011 IDC Research](#) white paper: “just keeping the lights on (system planning, deploying, maintaining),” said IDC, “takes up 77% of IT’s budget, while only 23% goes to supporting business innovation.” We set forth a simple goal of getting to a place where at least 23% to 25% of all our technology resources is geared toward innovation. Then, by breaking the remaining 75% of measurable technology resources into thirds and utilizing the 11 category grades in combination with the analytics from the four main keynote categories, we gave ourselves a simple target rating: red, yellow, or green. We asked ourselves if we were in the “red” danger zone, in the “yellow” warning/caution zone, or in the “green” success zone. The goal was to get to the green zone. Green then became the color that represented technology innovation and agility. At the start of the R3 Campaign, we found ourselves in the red danger zone, the bottom 25<sup>th</sup> percentile. At this point, as we near the end of 2016, we already have moved up into the yellow warning/caution zone and are quickly moving into our green 75<sup>th</sup> percentile target zone.

**Table 5.4: Eleven Core Technology Categories**



➤ *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

Although external benchmarks for such expansive and impacting internal projects are difficult to

find and produce for parallel comparison, there are a few milestone benchmarks the College can point to that also act as internal targets. Ellucian personnel visited the College to take part in an internal audit of our PowerCampus application data and usage and gave the College general follow-up recommendations. As a result of the audit, Ellucian recommended massive changes to our data, as well as training and education in order to get our institution's data practices aligned with best practices. The College put together a plan to reorganize its data for better usage. This became an internal target that was a major opportunity for improvement. The Ellucian recommendations became the framework and outline for our four-phase PC Reimplementation plan. As a milestone and internal target measure of our phase zero completion process, the College had Ellucian return to the HCC campus and offer a revised on-site PowerCampus audit. During that audit, Ellucian was able to verify the progress we had made. Finally, [HCC hosted an Ellucian-sponsored annual event](#) that brought together 86 individuals from 14 different colleges who utilize PowerCampus as their core SIS. Following the event, HCC received feedback in two specific areas: (1) PowerCampus users from the 14 peer institutions were impressed by and thankful for the helpfulness of the HCC presentations and information offered by the conference, and (2) they felt that our PC Reimplementation roadmap was effective, somewhat exciting, and impressive (*SPE #2, #4*). Some colleges requested more follow-up details and one college requested a follow-up visit from Highland IT personnel to talk specifically about our Ellucian audit and PC Reimplementation plans. This feedback from peer institutions, in addition to the follow up on-site audit information that Ellucian provided, amounted to a sufficient external benchmark for the College that satisfied our initial (phase zero) internal targets and served to further verify our remaining PC Reimplementation roadmap milestones and goals (*SPE #5*).

We are constantly looking for better external benchmarks to improve and enhance our internal technology targets. Two helpful external benchmarks are the IDC and industry data and measures presented as part of the 2015 IT Keynote, and the standard expectation from the technology industry that all core applications and infrastructure should be available 99.9% of the time. This "high availability" uptime expectation is met by the new datacenter battery backup system. Two additional external technology benchmarks are worth noting here. At the recent VMWorld 2016 Conference, the IT staff was able to talk with VMWare engineers in person and verify that HCC's virtual datacenter plan was both aligned with the industry standard and the best approach for an institution of our size. Second, at the Channel Company's recent Midsize Enterprise Summit conference, the IT staff was able to speak with a number of industry leaders and vendors and confirm through multiple channels that the R3 Campaign steps taken were the best approach for an institution of our size in our current situation.

➤ *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

In addition to the numerous insights captured from analyzing the College's needs by viewing measurable results of our existing projects, there are a few additional significant insights gained from interpreting the results of our institutional changes. The implementation of Dynamics GP, the interrelated change to the institutional chart of accounts, and the integrations with the student financial aid and student billing systems have provided deep visibility into HCC's financial structure. The College now has the ability to "slice and dice" its budget and spending

data to see budget changes and make adjustments at a very granular level. This critical piece allows the Institution to tie its funding model to its strategic plan.

Finally, the College's process-architecture changes, data usage transformations, and technology improvements have moved us forward into a world of new insights that are making more things possible by opening the door to current enhancements and future innovative solutions. For instance, due to the process clarity and improved communication from the PC Reimplementation steps, Student Services was able to identify the specific need for a new software platform that unified student incident report- tracking and case information into one place. Student Services and the CARE Team partnered with IT to implement Maxient, a student conduct case-tracking application (*SPE #2, #6*). Having Maxient for unified student case-tracking has already produced a safer campus atmosphere by making student conduct issues and incidents data more centralized and transparent to staff. This technology-specific innovative solution has produced a more effective classroom/teaching environment and student housing culture.

**5I1.** *Based on 5R1, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?*

In addition to improvements already described, we can break down the future enhancements into two types: planned improvements and freshly-possible, future innovative solutions. As we move from phase one into phases two and three of the PC Reimplementation project, we will implement a number of planned improvements. These projects are already in planning and discovery stages. (1) MyHCC's course home pages will be migrated into a new campus-wide, integrated Moodle LMS platform. (2) The DGT will move forward from the initial major data transformations into more detailed data alterations and process rebuilds. (3) HCC's brand new Full Measure Student Portal will be fully implemented and mobile-friendly. (4) The current student application will become an integrated online application that funnels data directly into PowerCampus. Some planned improvements for next year are upgrading our phone system; an offsite DR solution; and a top-down website redesign project that will bring Highland's website fully up-to-date while introducing stakeholders to some of the latest website tools, capabilities, and innovations currently available. The website redesign project will allow the College's main website to align with the current mobile-first culture and introduce a fresh, new website design.

Looking further ahead at freshly-possible, future innovative solutions: our technology infrastructure improvements, as well as the process and continuous-improvement-cycle mindset that we have been working to create, will pave the way for additional and much-needed change. We know we will be forced to address the quickly-rising curve presented by growing modern security concerns. We plan to find new, scalable, innovative solutions that will further guard and protect the College's data from any unnecessary liability.

### **Resource Management**

**5P2:** *Resource Management focuses on how the resource base of an institution supports and improves its educational programs and operations. Describe the processes for managing resources and who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is*

*not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Maintaining fiscal, physical, and technological infrastructures sufficient to support operations (5.A.1)*

As stated earlier, the College’s ERP is supplemented by the MAPP payroll package for the College’s fiscal infrastructure. The two are not integrated, and this leads to excessive processes to create reports for internal and external purposes. Presently, third party payroll vendors are being interviewed.

Under the auspices of the Vice President for Finance and Operations, the Business Office, unless otherwise inhibited by the payroll system, follows budgeting processes in accordance with the State of Kansas, NACUBO and the Kansas Business Officers’ publication, *Uniform System for Accounting and Reporting*, to ensure fiscal integrity and to augment reporting to outside agencies. The College’s physical infrastructure is maintained by a Facilities department that is assisted by a Facilities Management Track-It system for maintenance projects throughout the institution. College staff can handle most maintenance issues that arise and are fortunate to have needed professionals within 30 to 60 minutes.

The technological infrastructure is maintained by the IT staff as described in 5P1.

- *Setting goals aligned with the institutional mission, resources, opportunities, and emerging needs (5.A.3)*

Highland uses its Strategic Planning process to set goals aligned with our mission, the allocation of resources to address that mission, opportunities that have been identified, and emerging needs that need attention. The development and implementation of the College’s Strategic Plan is discussed in Categories 4 and 6; institutional goals are developed by the Strategic Planning Council, vetted by the Board of Trustees annually, aligned with the SPE’s, and shared throughout the institution for inclusion in individual performance expectation plans.

In addition to institutional operating funds, we are the recipient of federal and state grants.

**Table 5.5: State and Federal Grants**

| More Flexible        | Amount     | More Restricted          | Amount     |
|----------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|
| State Capital Outlay | \$ 135,653 | Student Support Services | \$ 247,791 |
| KBOR Technology      | 17,853     | ABE/AOK                  | 145,699    |
| Perkins              | 124,661    | USDA                     | 99,770     |
| Title III            | 449,957    | JIIIST                   | 53,830     |
|                      |            | Vesta                    | 54,239     |

Due to reduced revenue from the State, the College relies on funding from outside sources such as grants. Often grants require administrative support which far exceeds the indirect cost allowances that return to the College. However, the more flexible grants can directly supplement the general fund, and costs will not be charged to unrestricted funds. Perkins, the State of

Kansas Capital Outlay, and the State of Kansas Technology grants are prime examples of flexible grants. Furthermore, the federal Title III grant was used to help with the goal of developing the Western Center and is still beneficial in supporting programs there. The nature of this grant is that the costs are to be fully absorbed by the institution at the end of five years. Nonetheless, it provided the seed money to establish programs that have been successful and deemed necessary to the region. The Student Support Services grant is used to assist and support students who are first generation in college and/or are in need of other support. The program is key to student retention and sustainability. Adult Basic Education helps students complete the equivalent of a high school diploma and creates a pathway for students to enter into our programs. The remaining grants are also dedicated for specific programs.

- *Allocating and assigning resources to achieve organizational goals, while ensuring that educational purposes are not adversely affected (5.A.2)*

A detailed study was conducted by Student Services and a report prepared for the Board of Trustees showing costs and revenues for each academic program and the number of student FTE needed to make the program break even. Included in the report was information on institutional academic scholarships given to students in each program. The scholarship assistance is available to help faculty recruit students into their program. The report illustrates the College's efforts to meet enrollment goals and to ensure adequate support available to sustain important educational programs and a basis for determining if a program is viable.

The College reports revenues and expenditures in compliance with NACUBO. As of this writing, actual fiscal information for 2016 has not been finalized and is subject to audit. Tables 5.5 and 5.6 show what was budgeted for revenues and expenditures for 2016:

**Table 5.6: Revenue**

| Revenues     | Student     | Taxes       | State       | Other     |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| \$17,978,001 | \$9,450,000 | \$1,543,103 | \$6,659,898 | \$325,000 |

**Table 5.7: Expenditures**

| Expenditures | Instruction | Public Service | Academic Supply | Student Services | Instructional Supplies | Operation/Maintenance | Scholarship | Auxiliary   |
|--------------|-------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|
| \$17,864,124 | \$4,108,749 | \$357,282      | \$1,250,489     | \$2,143,695      | \$3,572,825            | \$3,304,863           | \$1,161,168 | \$1,965,054 |

**5R2: What are the results for resource management?**

- *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

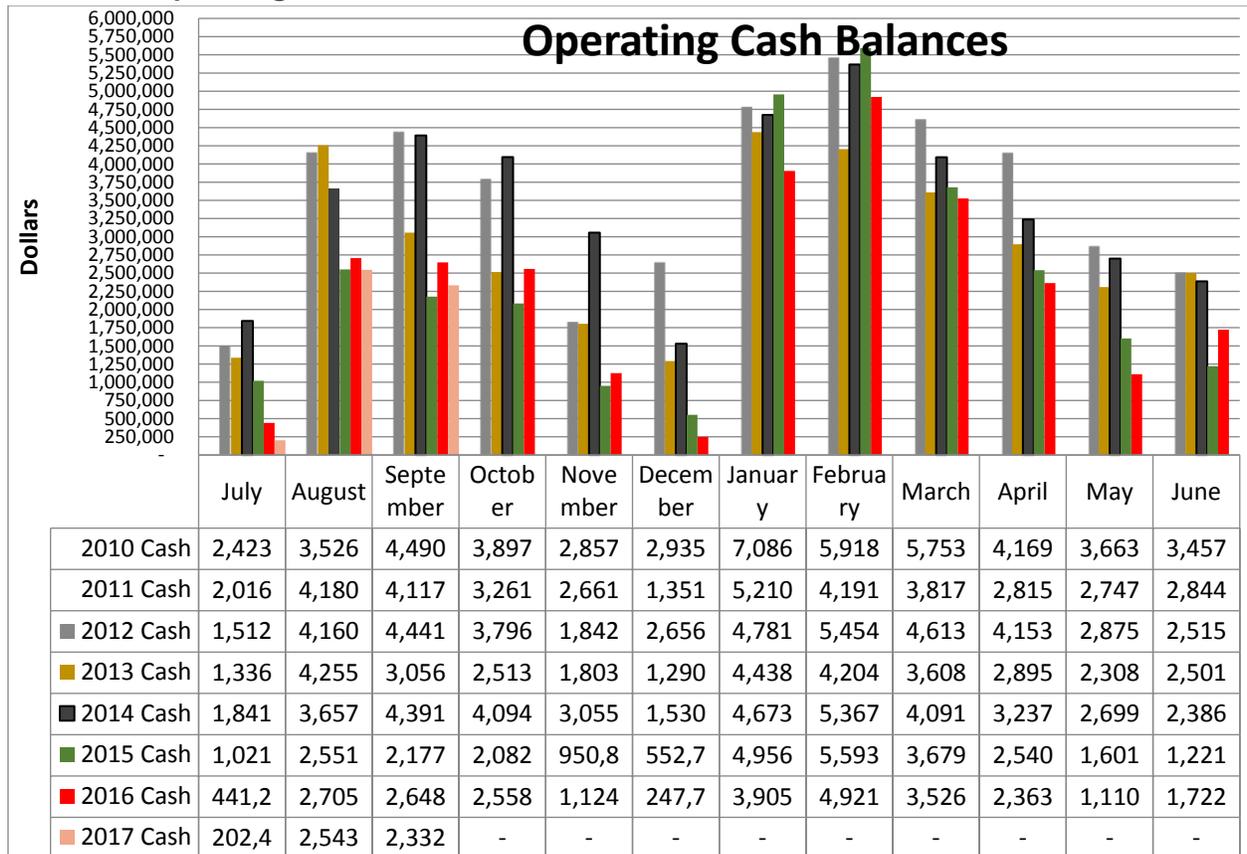
For fiscal resource management, the Business Office utilizes a series of reports and comparisons to track outcomes of its processes, sources of revenue, and expenditures. The College has three primary sources of revenue and other lesser sources: student tuition and fees, a state block grant, and local property tax. Those sources are tracked both monthly and annually and compared with previous years, with other Kansas community colleges, and with anticipated needs in the creation of the ensuing budget year. Fiscal processes provide a

monthly cash report that confirms revenue from sources of origination, compares actual to budgeted figures, and provides a review of the budget by users to report unexpected situations.

- *Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)*

A most useful instrument is the College’s monthly Operating Cash Balances report. This reflects the culmination of revenues and expenditures. It shows at least seven years of monthly cash balances. Given tight budgetary times, the report alerts the Board and administration of critical times when cash may be short and budgeted spending must be closely monitored.

**Table 5.8: Operating Cash Balance**



- *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

Internally, since the implementation of the current Great Plains ERP, the College has developed a uniform method, in accordance with NACUBO, for recording and tracking budget and expenditures. Since the College has only been using the present ERP for a couple of years, historical data is not mature. History is so important to gauging how things are progressing and what to expect in the future for both revenues and expenditures. As the system ages, more accurate projections are expected.

For external purposes, Kansas community colleges have had in place a data collection process for over 20 years to allow for comparisons. Governing bodies both locally and at the State level have come to accept information compiled through this process. Annually, Kansas business officers report data for their respective college. Data for fiscal, enrollment, salary, benefits, employee counts, tax rates, and indebtedness is collected for universal distribution among each of the 19 community colleges in Kansas.

In the 2016 Annual Institution Data Report to HLC, calculations leading to a Composite Financial Indicator Score (CFI) indicated a decline in favorable scores for the College. Two years ago, the Board decided to use unencumbered cash to pay off some debt. In so doing, this decreased institutional unrestricted net assets and lowered the CFI. In addition, even though it is a separate legal and financial entity, the assets of the HCC Foundation are included in the CFI. Its internal bookkeeping methods resulted in a negative balance for its unrestricted funds. This negative balance also affected the decline in the College's CFI. Recognizing now how the CFI is computed and how seemingly positive financial steps can affect the rating in a negative manner, efforts are underway to build up cash – both at the College and in the Foundation – and subsequently improve unrestricted net assets. Table 5.8 shows CFI scores for the past six years:

**Table 5.9 CFI Scores**

| Total Composite Score | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|                       | 4.10 | 3.50 | 0.00 | 0.90 | 1.14 | 0.29 |

➤ *Interpretation results and insights gained*

Due to personnel changes, completion of the past two fiscal audits has been quite challenging. One audit was over a year late and the next was finished almost six months later than desired. In addition to personnel changes, the Business Office was implementing a new computer system, our current ERP, which allows for far better tracking of data by site and program. The previous ERP was far less developed and budgets were handled off the system in spreadsheets and journals.

The College continues to grow and offer additional educational programs and services despite a comparatively low source of revenue from local property tax, a state block grant that does not reward growth and efficiency, and comparatively high student tuition and fees that offset the low property tax and decline in state support. Consequently, the College needs to enhance its efforts to meet the Strategic Planning goal of finding additional sources of revenue.

**5I2.** *Based on 5R2, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one or three years?*

As noted in 5R2, based on recommendations from its fiscal auditors, the College is seeking ways to integrate the platforms it is using to maintain its fiscal infrastructure. This integration will provide data integrity to the comfort of the auditors and ensure College personnel that data being used for the operation of the institution is valid and trustworthy. A transition in leadership

in Finance and Operations has led to personnel being moved into positions to maximize understanding, collection, and delivery of credible data. Reports to the Board are more detailed and representative of activities going on within the College.

Recognizing the need for additional sources of revenue, in cooperation with the Highland Community College Foundation, a full-time fundraising position was created with the goal of enhancing private and individual giving support for the College. That position is already paying dividends.

**Operational Effectiveness**

**5P3:** *Operational Effectiveness focuses on how an institution ensures effective management of its operations in the present and plans for continuity of operations into the future. Describe the processes for operational effectiveness and who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Building budgets to accomplish institutional goals*

The institutional and individual unit operating budgets are built as part of the Strategic Planning process and are typically incremental-based – an increment of the previous year’s budget. New leadership in Finance and Operations suggested an Action Project that further aligns building budgets with strategic planning and performance review and improvement. One aspect of the Action Projects asks budget managers to determine how much of their budget goes toward fulfilling each of the strategic goals. Table 5.9 shows that compilation.

**Table 5.10: Budget Percentages Dedicated to Fulfilling Strategic Goals**

| By Administrator Responsible        | Non-Salary Budget | Goal #1 | Goal #2 | Goal #3 | Goal #4 | Goal #5 |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Total for Academics                 | \$1,744,373       | 19%     | 7%      | 46%     | 17%     | 11%     |
| Total for President                 | 717,786           | 36%     | 34%     | 14%     | 1%      | 15%     |
| Total for Student Services          | 2,229,175         | 35%     | 16%     | 9%      | 8%      | 32%     |
| Total for Institutional Advancement | 200,790           | 31%     | 1%      | 0%      | 0%      | 68%     |
| Total for Finance and Operations    | 3,002,000         | 44%     | 21%     | 10%     | 1%      | 24%     |
| Total Non-Salary Budget             | 7,894,124         |         |         |         |         |         |
| Salary Budget                       | 9,970,000         |         |         |         |         |         |
| Total Expenditure Budget            | \$17,864,124      |         |         |         |         |         |

- *Monitoring financial position and adjusting budgets (5.A.5)*

The Strategic Planning process, which includes approval and ongoing review by the President’s Staff and SPC, ensures the validity of the College’s resource base in support of College operations. The College’s financial position is continually monitored by the Vice President for Finance and Operations and the President. Adjustments within individual unit budgets can be made by those responsible, but adjustments to budget totals are generally not made once the Board of Trustees advertises and approves the annual budget. However, shifting budget among departments may occur when a need arises and money can be pooled to fund a project.

- *Maintaining a technological infrastructure that is reliable, secure, and user-friendly*

As described in 5P1, the College’s IT Department is in the second year of a three-year reimplementation plan designed to ensure a reliable, secure, and user-friendly technology system.

- *Maintaining a physical infrastructure that is reliable, secure, and user-friendly*

Maintenance personnel receive orders through a system named Track-It. The system allows for reporting on specific types of problems and locations as well as when problems occurred. This gives management an idea of what types of things are recurring or simply one-time matters. The Vice President of Finance and Operations supervises a multi-year maintenance plan as a base for budgeting and anticipating impending maintenance needs. The VPFO also supervises an annual summer maintenance plan that addresses immediate maintenance needs both on the Highland campus and in the region, such as cleaning housing units, painting, planting, and updating classroom space.

**Table 5.11: HCC Updates on a Regular Cycle**

| Plan or Review:                                      | Regular Cycle of Review:   |
|--|--|
| Campus Master Plan                                   | 2010, 2013, 2016 [Every three years] with the President’s Council, BOT, Foundation Board, SPC                        |
| College Strategic Plan                               | 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 [Every year] with the President’s Council, BOT, SPC                         |
| College Technical Education Instruction/Funding Plan | 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 [Every year] with the President, BOT, Director of Technical Education, VPFO |
| Annual Financial Reviews                             | Regular Audits / VPFO – [Annual]   |
|  | HCC Foundation Board updates [Annual]  |
| Review of Technological and Instructional Resources  | Ellucian including Great Plains and PowerCampus  |
|  | LearningHouse with Moodle  |
|  | NelNet for Fiscal Management   |

- *Managing risks to ensure operational stability, including emergency preparedness*

The College’s insurance provider requires a business continuity plan to ensure institutional operational stability. The Vice President for Student Services has led a cross-sectional team in the creation and implementation of a Crisis Management and Security plan that includes drills each semester to ensure student and employee understanding of the plan and to improve elements of the plan that the drills show do not work as well as planned. Results of that effort are reported in Category 2.

**5R3:** *What are the results for ensuring effective management of operations on an ongoing basis and for the future?*

- *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

The College has a business continuity plan, uses the Track-It system for recording maintenance requests, and plans for summer maintenance projects among some of the tools used to track and measure processes. The Climate Survey is an instrument that is a significant indicator of how management and operations are perceived among the staff. Also, the technical programs have advisory committees whose members give feedback from the public on how well programs are being run, job opportunities, and curriculum matters, and who act as overall ambassadors for the programs.

➤ *Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)*

Enrollment trends, comments from businesses, and input from current and prospective students indicate a need for more facilities for Diesel Technology. Presently, building drawings are being prepared and funding sources are being identified to develop new diesel instruction facilities for the Tech Center campus in Atchison and the Western Center in Baileyville.

Reports from the Track-It system show areas of concern that have required frequent maintenance. A data base of these issues is in place.

Plans are in the works to create redundancy within our computer systems to allow for operation at the Tech Center campus in Atchison should a catastrophic event occur on the Highland campus. This will strengthen the business continuity plan.

➤ *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

The reports from the Kansas Community College business officers are used for comparisons among our peers. We rely on these figures and our subsequent ranking among the other colleges in the state to ensure we are being competitive and are not excluding students.

Externally, we are identified with a group of peer institutions in and out of the state of Kansas, with whom we may compare via use of IPEDS and other benchmarking information addressed in previous sections.

➤ *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

Compared with other colleges in the state, we have one of the lowest tax burdens on the constituents in our taxing district. Our heavy reliance on state aid is a concern as the state reduces its contributions to community colleges. Potential revenue then falls on the student and the ability to pay increased tuition and fees. The College recognizes the need to hold down costs.

**5I3:** *Based on 5R3, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?*

Newly changed positions in the Business Office include Vice President, Director of Accounting, Student Accounts Receivable, and a reorganization of duties among the remaining staff. Payroll

is being integrated into the Great Plains ERP. This is probably the most critical internal change because salary and benefits are well over 50 % of the budget, and it will allow for more exact costing of programs and departmental operations. Other initiatives include tracking program costs and implementing changes in procedures for timely completion of audits. With the maturation of our ERP, history will be collected and trends will be easier to identify.

In the future, the Foundation's fundraising efforts are expected to supplement the College's resources to help with needed capital projects and asset acquisitions.

## AQIP CATEGORY SIX: QUALITY OVERVIEW

### Introduction

Since beginning our Continuous Improvement journey in 2003, the College has taken gradual, sometimes hesitant steps to embed CI principles and practices in our culture. A series of Action Projects, culminating in a Project which was faculty-led and involved all faculty using the PDCA cycle to improve classroom instruction, and a major, conscious shift in the construction of the College Strategic Planning process has helped facilitate recent progress to the systematic level of maturity as our silos are disappearing and our processes are generally understood and repeatable.

| <u>Reacting</u>                                       | <u>Systematic</u>   | <u>Aligned</u>                                  | <u>Integrated</u>   |
|---|---|---|---|
| Isolated tasks and activities address immediate needs | Repeatable, proactive processes with clear and explicit goals | Stable, consciously managed, regularly evaluate | Regularly improved through analysis, innovation and sharing |

Results continue to be more in the reacting level of development without adequate empirical data to bolster the narrative.

| <u>Reacting</u>                                       | <u>Systematic</u>   | <u>Aligned</u>                                  | <u>Integrated</u>   |
|---|---|---|---|
| Isolated tasks and activities address immediate needs | Repeatable, proactive processes with clear and explicit goals | Stable, consciously managed, regularly evaluate | Regularly improved through analysis, innovation and sharing |

False starts, leadership changes, external challenges, and lack of understanding have all contributed to the slow adoption institution-wide of how CQI can assist the institution in meeting its opportunities. Continued efforts with our SPEs and the enhancement of our Strategic Planning Process have enhanced common understanding of our institutional goals. The writing of this portfolio has provided the impetus for a greater understanding of the benefits of adopting CQI principles within the College culture.

### Quality Improvement Initiatives

**6P1.** *Quality Improvement Initiatives focus on the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) initiatives the institution is engaged in and how they work together within the institution. Describe the processes for determining, and integrating CQI initiatives, and who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Selecting, deploying, and evaluating quality improvement initiatives*

For the sake of brevity, we will focus on three Quality Improvement Initiatives: identifying our common values, using the PDCA cycle across the curriculum, and refocusing our strategic planning process. One example of a Quality Improvement Initiative that has served the College well resulted from a discussion on identifying core College values. That discussion led to a series of institution and community focus groups designed to determine what characteristics we

wanted Highland graduates to possess as they walked across the stage at commencement. Established in the spring of 2011, the work of the focus groups was distilled into six characteristics we called Common Learning Outcomes and are now our SPEs.

As the PDCA cycle was applied to these CLOs, it became clear that the Objectives were expected not only of graduates, but of all College personnel – these Objectives became what defines us as an institution. Consequently, in the spirit of continuous improvement and higher education’s love of acronyms, in the spring of 2015, the CLO’s were improved and became SPEs. These SPEs are now part of the Highland culture and are shown in 1P1.

Following the 2014 town hall tour HLC conducted to hear from member institutions regarding whether to embed the Criteria within the Categories or keep them separate, it became clear to College officials that the Criteria were going to play a much larger role in addressing the Categories. Consequently, the College began the task of clarifying the crosswalk connections between the Criteria and elements of the HCC Strategic Plan. As that work progressed, it became clear the connections were actually almost the same points. Based on that and the fact that the Criteria were becoming the AQIP bedrock instead of the Categories – that the Categories were becoming a way to address the Criteria – the decision was made to make the Criteria our Strategic Plan. That way, we would no longer need to ensure that the Criteria were being addressed in our strategic planning; that assurance would become inherent.

In the past, following the initial directive that AQIP allowed institutions to select projects that fit their needs as opposed to selecting projects to fulfill requirements, Highland’s Action Projects were directed at perceived needs and led primarily by administrators. As such, those Projects did not always fit nicely into the existing Strategic Plan. For example, a faculty member-developed PDCA Cycle project that greatly enhanced faculty involvement with that basic CI principle did not necessarily fit into an existing Strategic Plan goal. With the advent of Criteria as our Strategic Plan, that Project now fits nicely in Criterion Three. As the Action Project direction has evolved, so have our Action Projects; they are now selected, deployed, and evaluated within the strategic planning process. As Projects are selected, they are identified within a goal within the Plan. As Projects are deployed, their strategies are identified within the accomplishment of a Plan Goal, complete with how the strategy is to be metrically measured. Currently, our Action Projects are Enhancing Instructor’s Effectiveness Using a Web-based Observation/Evaluation Tool (Goal 3); Linking Budgeting, Strategic Planning, and Performance Evaluations (Goal 5); Measuring Common Learning Outcomes (Goal 4). Under discussion is Assessing Student Attainment of the SPEs.

- *Aligning the Systems Portfolio, Action Projects, Quality Check-Up, and Strategy Forums*

The College follows the AQIP structure that provides the framework for aligning our Systems Portfolio, Action Projects, CQR, and Strategy Forums. Writing this Systems Portfolio has clarified many of our processes and identified needs that can be, or have been, made into Action Projects. Our most recent Strategy Forum resulted in a computerized Early Alert Action

Project that we subsequently found did not fit with our IT Reimplementation plan (what looks good in Chicago cannot always be implemented back home), so we are looking to see if there are alternatives to the computerized method. We are looking forward to visiting with the CQR Team about the progress we are making in our CI journey.

**6RI.** *What are the results for continuous quality improvement initiatives?*

As noted in the Institutional Overview of this portfolio, results for the CLO/SPE initiative are included in other Categories. Specifically, those results can be found in 1R1, 2R1, and 3R3.

Results for the faculty coursework PDCA initiative are included in 1P3 and 1R3. One goal of this initiative was to have 100% participation by the faculty. That was achieved in the initial year; this past year, participation dropped to 95 percent. The results of each faculty member's PDCA project are compiled in narrative form; empirical reporting is the next step. In the interests of brevity and forsaking redundancy, some processes and [results of our Strategic Plan](#) are included in 4R1 and 4R2.

**6I1.** *Based on 6R1, what quality improvement initiatives have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?*

Discussions regarding the portfolio provided the structure for improvements to the way we use our strategic planning process and how that structure will enhance embedding CI initiatives in our culture. When discussing our strategic planning process, it became apparent that, to some (maybe most), the actual Plan failed to be a call to action; it did not resonate. The image of "initiatives," however, did resonate, it conveys action. Consequently, the focus of our strategic planning process will now be on its initiatives – the goals and strategies within the Plan – rather than the Plan as a document. Creating Action Projects as initiatives within the scope of the Plan will make them more real to those involved with each initiative. And the success of those initiatives will then serve to further embed CI principles within the College culture. Impending initiatives include:

- How to assess student attainment of the SPEs
- Empirical reporting of faculty PDCA Initiative results
- Specific methods for communicating the work/success of our Action Projects
- Enhanced understanding of the budgeting process through the use of aligning departmental goals with the strategic plan goals
- How the IT Reimplementation process has enhanced the use of data in decision making
- Ongoing development of the Western Center to meet the needs of that location
- Enhanced cultural/diversity programming
- Exploration of career placement opportunities

**Culture of Quality**

**6P2.** *Culture of Quality focuses on how the institution integrates continuous quality improvement into its culture. Describe how a culture of quality is ensured within the institution. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:*

- *Developing an infrastructure and providing resources to support a culture of quality*

CI principles are slowly being adopted as part of the College culture, most notably the faculty-led PDCA initiative. That initiative appears to have helped faculty see the value of formalizing continuous improvement in their teaching methods.

Infrastructure decisions are made as part of the Strategic Plan. As referenced in Category 4, the decision to create our Western Center to meet the needs of an underserved portion of our service area was made a part of our direction to continually improve the scope of the institution. And it was done through a Title III grant, which relieved the already stretched resources of the College. Another example is the IT Reimplementation process delineated in Category 5, which is being accomplished using redirected operating dollars within that department. A recently breaking example is the use of Compease to include a review of the institutional job descriptions and subsequent compensation. This review is being supported by allocations from existing departmental budgets due to consensus that this review is necessary to meet the new FLSA standards.

The institutional budget is built as a component of strategic planning and is aligned with the Criteria. With a new financial leader and new record-keeping software, 0-based is being considered as a method for personnel to re-evaluate their programs each year to accomplish quality goals with efficiency to offset declining state support.

- *Ensuring continuous quality improvement is making an evident and widely understood impact on institutional culture and operations (5.D.1)*

By focusing on three primary functions of a higher education institution – instruction, strategic planning, and budgeting – and involving personnel from across the institution in the processes and decision-making in those functions, the College culture (as evidenced by the results of the Climate Survey) and operations (Action Projects) have been enhanced through the use of CQI practices. These benefits then reinforce those practices with other personnel and processes. Sharing the results throughout the College makes them more readily understood and accepted within the culture.

- *Ensuring the institution learns from its experiences with CQI initiatives (5.D.2)*

Preparing for our initial Strategy Forum that asked for a review of Lessons Learned helped the College pinpoint the value of external assistance in its CI journey. Subsequently, following feedback in the appraisal of our first portfolio that enhanced strategic planning was needed, we sought assistance from a consultant who took us through a year-long process to establish a workable strategic plan. That assistance carried over when we revised the original plan into the Criteria-based plan we are using today. The College continues to refer to the Lessons Learned during the strategic planning process – note the assistance of Compease in the preceding section. As noted in 6P1, we can also learn from errors. What appeared to make sense in

Chicago at our last Strategy Forum proved not to be workable when we had the right people in the room as decisions were made on implementing the Strategy Forum concept.

- *Reviewing, reaffirming, and understanding the role and vitality of the AQIP Pathway within the institution*

The Strategic Planning Council is the key work team that promotes the review, reaffirmation, and understanding of the role AQIP plays in the operation of the College. Through the creation and implementation of Action Projects that have real meaning to the work processes of faculty and staff, College personnel increase their understanding of and commitment to CI principles.

**6R2.** *What are the results for continuous quality improvement to evidence a culture of quality?*

When viewed as a whole, the results for continuous quality improvement are actually documented in the Results section of each Category within this portfolio. The ongoing work of our Strategic Planning Council, implementation of Action Projects, and now a new budgeting process serve as a testament to the results of our growing culture of quality. That growth needs to continue with the identification, collection, and reporting of empirical data as further evidence of that culture.

**6I2.** *Based on 6R2, what improvements to the quality culture have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?*

The process of writing this portfolio has clarified how involvement across the institution enables College personnel to have a clearer understanding of how applying CI principles enables them to work in a more constructive manner. We anticipate that the momentum gained with this writing will continue as leadership continues to support this cross-institutional understanding. As one participant commented at our most recent Board meeting: “It feels like AQIP is now part of everything I do.” With that comment as part of our culture, current and future improvement initiatives will include:

- Use of Action Projects as learning tools to be replicated in other initiatives
- More transparent/aligned budgeting process: use of current Action Project
- Institution-wide knowledge of strategic planning goals and strategies/initiatives
- Move from thinking of CQI as another thing to do in addition to daily responsibilities to implementing CQI principles to accomplish those daily responsibilities to truly become a culture of quality

## **GLOSSARY**

AACRAO - American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers  
ABE/GED – Adult Basic Education/General Equivalency Diploma  
BOT – Board of Trustees  
CARE – Campus Assessment Recommendation and Evaluation team  
CCSSE – Community College Survey of Student Engagement  
CFI – Composite Financial Indicator  
CI – Continuous Improvement  
C&I – Curriculum and Instruction Committee  
CQI – Continuous Quality Improvement  
CLO's – Common Learning Outcomes  
CompTIA -- Computing Technology Industry Association  
CTE – Career Technical Education  
ERP – Enterprise Resource Planning  
FLSA – Fair Labor Standards Act  
FT – Full Time  
GE – General Education  
HR – Human Resources  
IT – Information Technology  
KBOR – Kansas Board of Regents  
KCOG – Kansas Core Outcomes Group  
KCCLI – Kansas Community College Leadership Institute  
KPERS – Kansas Public Employee Retirement System  
MACS – Management Advisory Computer System  
NACUBO – National Association of College and University Business Officers  
NASPA – National Association of Student Personnel Administrators  
NCCBP – National Community College Benchmarking Project  
PT – Part Time  
PDCA – Plan Do Check Act  
SIS – Student Information System  
SPC – Strategic Planning Council  
SPEs – Shared Performance Expectations  
SSI – Student Satisfaction Inventory  
STEM – Science Technology Engineering Mathematics  
TEA – Technical Education Authority  
VAWA – Violence Against Women Act  
VPAA – Vice President for Academic Affairs  
VPSS – Vice President for Student Services