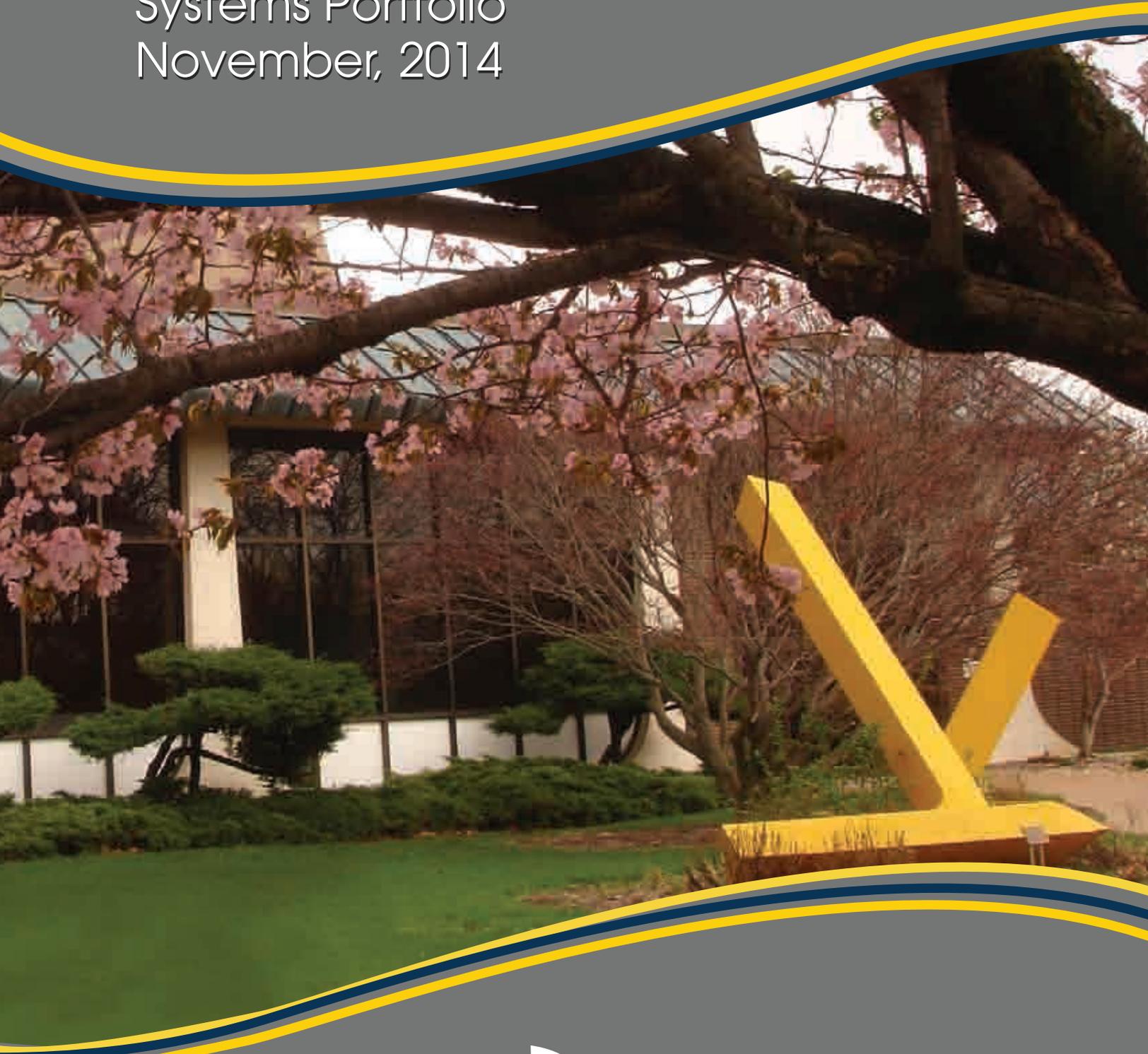


Highland Community College
Academic Quality Improvement Program
Systems Portfolio
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Institutional Overview

Highland Community College (HCC) is a two-year co-educational public community college maintained by the Board of Trustees of Illinois Community College District No. 519 under the coordination of the Illinois Community College Board and the Illinois Board of Higher Education. The College was brought into existence by the people of northwestern Illinois by a public referendum on October 1, 1966.

HCC's predecessor, Freeport Community College, which was assimilated by the new district in June of 1967, was established by public referendum in November 1961, and opened its doors in September 1962. The Highland Community College district, which encompasses 1,738 square miles, includes the high school districts of Aquin, Dakota, East Dubuque, Eastland, Forrestville Valley, Freeport, Galena, Lena-Winslow, Orangeville, Oregon (Mt. Morris), Pearl City, River Ridge, Scales Mound, Stockton, Warren, and West Carroll. HCC serves a district population of approximately 90,000 residents from the northwest Illinois counties of Stephenson, Ogle, Jo Daviess, and Carroll.

Mission – Highland Community College is committed to shaping the future of our communities by providing quality education and learning opportunities through programs and services that encourage the personal and professional growth of the people of northwestern Illinois. This mission is carried out through six focus areas.

Vision – Highland Community College partners with learners in successfully shaping their futures.

Core Values – Highland Community College is actively committed to the core values of integrity, compassion and respect.

The numbers and types of students, faculty and staff – HCC served approximately 4,500 students in Fiscal Year 2014. Of these, 2,713 were enrolled in transfer-related programs, 806 were enrolled in career/technical programs and vocational courses, 709 were enrolled in personal development courses, and 258 were enrolled in GED and/or ESL courses.

The College's census headcount for fall 2014 was 1,730. Of these students 965 were full-time students and 765 were part-time students. Approximately 50% are traditional aged students. Roughly 15% of our students are of an ethnic minority and the proportion of minority students has increased approximately 3% in the last five years.

Highland has a total of 278 employees. Of these, 164 are female, 114 are male, 91.4% are White, 4.7% are African-American, 2.2% are Hispanic, 1.8% are Asian. Highland employs 46 full-time faculty, 86 part-time faculty, 96 full-time staff, and 50 part-time staff.

The Level and Scope of Academic Offerings – HCC participates in the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) and offers programs leading to the Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of General Studies, Associate of Applied Science, and a variety of workforce-related certificate programs. The College has entered into many transfer and articulation agreements.

Campus and Additional Instructional Sites – HCC is located in Freeport, Illinois, and until the summer of 2014, the College maintained an extension center in Elizabeth, Illinois. The campus is the main location for Adult Education offerings. Dual credit courses are offered in many of the district high schools.

Distance Delivery Programs – The College offers a wide variety of both online and hybrid courses and a small number of courses over a closed television network shared with neighboring Sauk Valley Community College.

Other Key Campus Programs and Resources – Highland's key programs and resources include Enrollment and Records, Advising and Counseling, Financial Aid, Student Activities, Veterans' Affairs, Success Center, Testing Center, Athletics, Project Succeed, ADA Services, Career Center, Bookstore, Institutional Research, Foundation, Marketing and Public Relations, Campus Security/Sheriff, Information Technology, Arts Café, Sports Center/YMCA, Library, Employee Assistance Program, and YMCA Early Childhood Education Center.

Highland's Quality Improvement Journey – The 2010 Systems Appraisal Team identified the following strategic issues to assist Highland Community College in prioritizing and taking action on the important broad challenges and opportunities it faces:

- The College must develop criteria and techniques used to select and measure data for performance assessment.
- There is not enough evidence provided in the portfolio to verify that the College is consistently collecting data and evidence on operations or is utilizing the information that it does collect to affect improvement.
- Information provided in the portfolio does not conclusively indicate that HCC has built a strong culture of evidence.
- Evidence indicates that progress has been made by HCC in broadening institutional participation in making decisions. However, evidence here portrays the college as one in which decision-making is predominantly administratively driven.

In the last few years, the College has worked to be much more systematic in collecting data and evidence to direct and support improvement efforts. Highlights include an Institutional Survey and Metrics plan containing large-scale surveys allowing us to benchmark ourselves to other institutions. Many of these surveys have been or will be administered for a second time. Additional benchmarking data is now provided through participation in the National College Benchmarking Project. The College also develops a number of internal annual monitoring reports which contain data on the recruitment and retention of students and the extent to which the College is meeting the expected outcomes for the College's transfer, occupational preparation, workforce development, and Adult Education programs. Monthly financial reports and externally provided data published by the Illinois Community College Board also provide data and evidence on operations. These and other data presented throughout the portfolio are used in strategic planning and goal development.

Though much progress has been made, Highland believes improvement remains; the College believes that it is currently at the higher end of the *systematic* maturity level but not yet in the *aligned* category, as the culture of evidence has not been fully internalized.

With regard to broadening institutional participation in making decisions, the National Initiative for Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness (NILIE) Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) survey results (referenced throughout the portfolio) suggest that employees support the notion that communication efforts have greatly improved this area and that HCC is in the *aligned* mode of decision-making as a result of much effort to be more inclusive. These results are primarily presented and discussed in Category 5.

CATEGORY 1: HELPING STUDENTS LEARN

Among the most critical processes necessary for the College to fulfill its mission of “providing quality education and learning opportunities through programs and services that encourage the personal and professional growth of the people of northwestern Illinois” are those described in Category 1, *Helping Students Learn*.

We consider 1P2, 1P3, and 1P5 to be at the *aligned* level of maturity. A variety of College units participate in determining specific program objectives, and these processes are well established. Additionally, the College’s strong partnership with industry leaders has aided in the creation and improvement of programs to better meet regional needs. Finally, HCC’s College-wide devotion to helping students prepare for learning opportunities marks this category as aligned with the institution’s goals.

Processes 1P9, 1P12 and 1P13 are *systematic* but moving toward *aligned*. Faculty and Student Services staff work closely together to address learning style differences and promote student success, and multiple College units provide support for students via the course delivery system. Multiple units, including faculty and administration, work to keep programs current to best meet student and stakeholder needs, as well. These processes have been steadily improving and will continue to move towards being *aligned*.

The College considers processes 1P6, 1P7, 1P8, 1P10, and 1P14 at the *systematic* level. Since the 2010 Systems Portfolio, the College’s focus has been on refining many of these processes in order to improve students’ learning environment. In particular, advising services, transportation options, and Math Lab practices have been the focus of recent efforts.

We consider 1P1, 1P4, 1P11, and 1P15-1P18 to be at the *reacting* level of maturity. These processes are areas to continue building upon. Past and current AQIP Action Projects have supported assessment, design, and implementation of learning objectives for HCC’s students. As indicated in 1P1 and 1P18, the revision of our General Education assessment has promoted more faculty involvement and streamlined the assessment process. Further, the relatively new Hybrid Nursing Program, which has helped address the need for programs that balance learning goals, career needs and employment market trends, and the College’s early alert program, demonstrate positive reactions to student learning processes that needed attention.

1P1. This response was rated an S in the College’s 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. After completing the assessment of general learning objectives in 2009, which was explained in the 2010 Systems Portfolio, the College continued to update the process of determining shared objectives for students via a General Education assessment. The General Education Assessment Committee, made up primarily of faculty and academic administrators, determines the objectives for learning and development. Since 2010, the committee has been tasked with assessing various General Education requirements via five key outcomes:

- Written Communication
- Oral Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Quantitative Literacy
- Information Literacy

The process began with assessing written communication. A pilot group assessed position papers collected from our Rhetoric and Composition II courses in the Spring 2012 Semester, and the process continued with papers in the Spring 2013 Semester, and the Spring 2014 Semester.

A summary of the results of that assessment were shared with faculty during Opening Days activities for the Fall 2012 Semester. Assessment of written communication continues via papers from Rhetoric and Composition II with data collected each spring and a report provided each fall. For additional information on assessment of written communication, see 1P18.

Additionally, a preliminary rubric has been developed to assess oral communication, and plans are in place to begin collecting data and completing assessment in 2015.

3.B. The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

- General Education assessment occurs across all academic programs, and the institution is working to implement a broader model of assessment methodology to confirm that all students achieve a level of learning comparable to other two-year institutions around the country.
- Our General Education requirements focus on the skills that are most important to graduates, including written and oral communication, critical thinking, quantitative literacy, and information literacy. We arrived at this list based upon feedback from representatives from the Higher Learning Commission, as well as benchmarking other institutions. Rubrics for measuring success in General Education were developed internally and based upon assessment rubrics created by the Association of American Colleges and Universities.
- Outcomes for each course and program offered at Highland are clearly identified. The guidelines provided by these outcomes assure that each program is providing an education that helps students to master their selected major and helps them to achieve other information handling skills.
- Courses and programs embrace the diversity of the student population. Multiple delivery methods include traditional lecture, hybrid, and online courses, and the diverse population of students on campus allows all students to be able to learn about different perspectives held by their peers.
- While coursework in most programs is grounded in the classroom, many programs expand their offerings to provide additional opportunities for students to apply what they are learning. Examples include our honors program, in which students take on additional projects outside the classroom and our student worker program that offers students an opportunity to get involved with the day-to-day operations of the campus.

1P2. This response was rated an S in the 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Depending on the type of program (transfer or occupational) a wide variety of stakeholders are involved in determining the outcomes for the College's programs. The Academic Deans, program faculty, and external agencies are normally involved in determining transfer and some occupational program outcomes. For example, the Illinois Articulation Initiative program panels have input into certain courses and course content in numerous programs, and the College's Nursing and Allied Health programs have program outcomes mandated by state oversight agencies. In addition, occupational programs often have industry advisory committees that recommend some of the program outcomes. The process for determining program outcomes is as follows:

1. The Dean of the division assembles program faculty and requests input on the need to change or develop new program outcomes.
2. The Dean and faculty research external sources (other colleges' programs, state/national standards, professional societies, NCLEX pass rates/licensure or certifications exams, advisory committees, employer and graduate surveys, etc.) for program outcome ideas.
3. Faculty brainstorm ideas for program outcomes.
4. Faculty discuss all ideas for program outcomes, as well as indicators and measures for potential outcomes.
5. Discussion continues until consensus is reached.
6. Tentative outcomes are shared with stakeholders (advisory committees, Transfer Coordinator, program Academic Dean).

7. Faculty and Dean incorporate stakeholder input as appropriate and finalize program outcomes.
8. Any changes or the development of new outcomes (syllabi contains the learning objectives) are reviewed by the HCC Curriculum and Instruction (C and I) Committee. Minor changes may be approved by this committee with no additional action required after they review and approve.
9. Approved changes (from C and I) go to the HCC Board of Trustees. An example would be the development of a new program/certificate (1 year or less) with no degree.
10. Approved changes by the HCC Board of Trustees go to the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) for final approval.
11. Program outcomes are later reviewed by the Dean, faculty and advisory committees when the program undergoes its periodic program review (see 1P13)

When a new program is being developed, input is requested from stakeholders from within the institution and outside the institution. For example, when HCC's Web Design program was being created, numerous professionals from the industry aided the process.

In addition, when possible, benchmarking of other institutions is completed. Again, in the case of the Web Design program, we looked at what was being offered at other institutions, such as Northern Illinois University, Sauk Valley Community College, and Kishwaukee Community College to help us confirm we were in accordance with what was going to be offered at HCC.

The processes for reviewing Highland's Health Sciences programs are also notable:

Program	Parties Involved in Determining Objectives
Registered Nurse (RN) and License Practical Nursing (LPN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dean and faculty members ○ Industry Advisory Board members (staff from area hospitals, clinics and nursing homes) from facilities where student nurses complete clinical rotations ○ Institute of Medicine (IOM) ○ National League for Nursing (NLN) ○ Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN)
Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Program objectives mandated by the State of Illinois
Certified Medical Assistant (CMA) Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Program objectives mandated by the Commission On Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) and Medical Assisting Education Review Board (MAERB)
Paramedic and Emergency Medical Technician-Basic (EMT-B) Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SwedishAmerican EMS Program ○ Illinois Department of Public Health ○ Local emergency services agencies

In addition to determining objectives for new programs, Highland recognizes that, over time, a program needs to evolve, and processes are in place to update programs to keep them current and relevant to students' needs. For example, each year, the Information Technology (IT) department meets with an advisory board consisting of professionals in the IT field, representatives from local high schools, and HCC personnel to review the curriculum being offered in the Information Technology department at Highland Community College. The use of an advisory committee helps us to determine industry standards and assures us that changes being made in our program are on track

with expectations for graduates entering the workforce. An example could include decisions about upgrading curriculum for Microsoft Office courses. We would do the following:

1. Identify the need for an upgrade (new version of software available).
2. Speak with advisory committee representatives to see what is presently being used in education and industry.
3. Based upon feedback, work with IT to determine how an upgrade will be rolled out. (Will we just switch to the new version, or will we continue to offer both the old and new versions of the software being upgraded?)
4. Work with IT to develop a deployment schedule for software upgrade.
5. Work with publishers to find proper textbook to help facilitate the software upgrade.
6. Work with instructors/lab staff to prepare everyone for the upgrade.

3.B. The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

See response in 1P1.

4.B. The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

- Outcomes for each course and/or program are clearly stated and help to guide students' progression through their academic career. In addition, General Education assessment is performed to make sure that all students attain the necessary skill levels in core components of education. The College's General Education outcomes are listed in 1P1.
- Student success in a course and/or program is determined by a student's successful completion of the documented outcomes. General Education outcomes are periodically assessed using a standardized toolset.
- The General Education assessment process includes representatives from faculty, as well as our Institutional Research department. Information is gathered via sampling, and after the assessment is complete, participants evaluate the effectiveness of the assessment and determine if any changes are necessary. Data are used to determine improvements, as needed. Results from written communication assessment are documented in 1R2.
- The assessment methods for General Education outcomes have been developed with input from both faculty and staff of the College. Representatives from faculty, staff and administration are involved in the collection, review, analysis and follow-up components of the assessment process. New ideas for assessment are encouraged at any time.

1P3. This response was rated an S in the 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. All new program development at HCC follows the [ICCB Program Approval Manual](#). In addition, new programs are created and designed with significant industry partner participation. These partners often provide technical assistance on curriculum and equipment needs.

When the College began developing the Wind Turbine Technician and Industrial Training programs, industry partners approached the College to encourage us to build a program that met their specific needs. Further, HCC's pending Hospitality program was built in partnership with the local business Swift Hospitality Group. This business collaborated with the HCC Foundation, and the use of donated funds led to the development of a new program.

In all the programs listed above, each partner provided significant time in the creation/development of the program.

Category 1: Helping Students Learn

Instead of partnering directly with industry leaders, the Equine program was developed through the use of market research, surveys of regional equine businesses, and visits to equine facilities. This process provided the College with a better understanding of the needs of regional stakeholders and led to the development of a program which responds to those needs. Additionally, Highland has implemented an independent Hybrid Nursing Program to facilitate student learning and remain competitive with other organizations. Previously, Northern Illinois Online Initiative for Nursing (NIOIN) was the hybrid nursing program that Highland participated in with three other schools. The NIOIN program dissolved; however, through the new Hybrid Nursing Program, Highland remains able to offer a hybrid delivered nursing degree.

1P4. This response was rated an OO in the 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. In order to design and evaluate academic programming in responsive manners that balance learning goals with student needs and employment market trends, the College relies on information gleaned from a wide variety of populations and groups consisting of students, educators, and relevant professionals. As potential academic programming is considered and existing programs are evaluated to identify areas for change, we also closely monitor job market data and trends.

To remain abreast of student needs, College personnel work closely with district high school administrators, counselors, and faculty to review and align academic programming and admission processes. Our faculty and staff members routinely visit high schools and other institutions of higher education to exchange information and gather input for programmatic planning purposes. We also engage in partnerships with professional groups and high schools in order to sponsor career fairs and academic program showcases, which provide opportunities for our faculty and staff to meet with current and potential students and allow students the opportunity to investigate career interests.

The College also works closely with professional groups such as the Northwest Illinois Development Alliance (NIDA), Tri-County Economic Development Alliance (TCEDA), and regional Workforce Investment Boards (WIB) for the purposes of gaining insight into professional job market needs and trends. College faculty, staff, current students, and professional advisory boards periodically meet to exchange ideas and gather input for programmatic planning. During the 2013-2014 academic year, meetings were held with our Health Care Advisory Board, where it was determined that LPN programs were no longer meeting job market needs for this region. This led to the decision that College resources and staffing for our LPN program would be better utilized for the development of an online ADN program and a Hybrid Nursing Program. It was also determined that emerging needs for BSN degrees could best be addressed by collaborating with Olivet Nazarene University to create an articulated transfer program, which now allows students to complete a BSN degree without leaving our district.

The acknowledgement of agribusiness and advanced manufacturing as prime areas for job growth in northwest Illinois is another example of being responsive to needs identified by professional groups such as NIDA and TCEDA. The College then targeted these existing program areas for expansion and began to seek input from related professionals for planning purposes. In spring 2014, agribusiness professionals, high school and College agriculture faculty, and counselors were invited to participate in an open forum to discuss opportunities and strategies for expanding the agriculture program at the College. Forty-eight people attended this forum, and outcomes included more than 50 suggestions for program enhancement and the genesis of a new Agriculture Advisory Board. A similar forum for advanced manufacturing is being planned.

1.C. The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

- Students with varying backgrounds are all given an equal opportunity at a quality education at Highland Community College. The College works with many organizations with diverse missions and memberships around the district to ensure that educational expectations are being fulfilled. The Diversity Committee is an operational committee that was tasked with managing a previous Action Project involving the success of African-American male students and has since evolved into a First-Year Experience Seminar learning community.
- The College has focused many efforts on diversity and works to identify the wants and needs of a diverse student base. This is reflected in the many student organizations that have seen recent implementation around campus. Students have access to a wide array of groups and organizations and are encouraged to participate in these campus activities throughout their academic experience. Examples include the Diversity at its Best club (See 8R2) and the PRIDE club, which is dedicated to creating a supportive, accepting, and positive environment for Highland's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students. The goal of both organizations includes providing educational activities to foster a greater appreciation of diversity at the College.

4.A. The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

- Program reviews are regularly scheduled and are adhered to across all academic areas.
- Multiple departments/individuals are involved in course/credit review prior to a student completing their degree (See 1P17), but most work is completed by the Enrollment and Records department. When necessary, additional consideration is given to either courses being transferred in from another institution or hours being considered for experiential learning. Special circumstances may involve additional assistance from advisors, deans, faculty and other staff members.
- Highland participates in the Illinois Articulation Initiative (See 9P2) to assist in confirming the quality of courses that are accepted in transfer. If a student is transferring in credits from an institution in which articulation is not known, attempts are made to evaluate these courses/credits/degrees on a case-by-case basis.
- Course quality is evaluated on a regular basis. The College also maintains a rigorous hiring process to be sure that each faculty member has the proper qualifications for the courses they teach (4P1, 4P2). When courses are offered in high schools for dual credit, the curriculum being used is subject to a thorough review to confirm that it is in accordance with what is being taught at the College (4P2).
- The College maintains specialized accreditation, as required. Recently, the College pursued accreditation for our Certified Medical Assistant program documented in 1R3.
- The College administers both a graduate survey and transfer student survey and analyzes National Student Clearinghouse StudentTracker data. In addition, the HCC Foundation works to develop a list of graduates and works with the Alumni Association to maintain regular contact with graduates. The Alumni Association meets regularly and is represented well during on-campus events throughout the year.

3.A. The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

- The program review process helps to determine whether courses are up-to-date and relevant for students. Many programs also utilize advisory committees comprised of members of the corresponding industry to confirm that courses and programs are aligned with the expectations of employers and society.
- Learning goals are clearly stated for each course ([syllabus](#)) and program ([academic catalog](#)) regardless of whether a student is pursuing certificate or degree.
- Course and program review is consistent for all courses at Highland Community College regardless of delivery method or location. Courses all utilize similar measures for success, and if a course is considered unsuccessful in any way, it is evaluated and modified (if necessary). Online courses use the Quality Online Course Initiative (QOCI) rubric as outlined in 1P12, and benchmarking is used to ensure that courses using an alternate delivery format are consistent with the contemporary version of the course.

1P5. This response was not addressed in the 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Placement testing is used to help ensure students are properly prepared for their academic area of interest. HCC tests traditional students in three areas of COMPASS if they do not have valid ACT scores that meet our requirements. Non-traditional students are also tested in the COMPASS English (e-Write), Math and Reading tests. All students are encouraged to prepare for COMPASS by attending one of our B4U Test workshops. HCC's results mirror nationally benchmarked results in terms of writing, reading and mathematics. Learning outcomes are also considered when determining the level of preparation required by a student. Examples of learning outcomes can be found in 1P1 and 1P2.

The College's Nursing and Allied Health department has established admissions requirements that include a review of student preparation levels as part of the application process. A systematic approach is used to assign points for previous coursework, work history and standardized nursing entrance test results (which includes testing on reading comprehension, math and science). Science courses have been identified as most predictive of success in nursing programs.

ICCB guidelines, as well as collaborative activity between our Curriculum and Instruction committee, faculty and administration, help us to determine course and program needs in addition to those required by licensure and degree requirements set forth by articulation requirements.

1P6. This response was not addressed in the 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Student inquiries often begin with Admissions and Registration. Students may stop by the campus or call to set an appointment with an advisor. These conversations allow students to ask many questions about programs and even specific courses. During the first advisor meeting, which is required for all first-time, full-time degree-seeking students, much of the conversation involves types of courses the student can expect, course prerequisites, application or testing requirements for their specific program, and graduation requirements.

HCC maintains an open line of communication with staff from the high schools in and around our district. A monthly e-newsletter, which includes information about program requirements, is sent to high school guidance counselors and administrators. Students coming to HCC directly from high school also have a variety of opportunities to interact with the campus, faculty, and advisors. During the fall semester, school districts in and around our district are invited to bring students to an Experience Highland event where students are informed about the preparation for college and how college will differ from high school. During the spring semester of each year, school districts are invited to bring their graduating senior students to an event called QuickStart, which allows students to test, register and becoming familiar with HCC.

In addition to communicating with prospective students, as students start at HCC, faculty members share learning and development objectives for their courses in the form of syllabi. Continuing students

are highly encouraged to meet with advisors every semester to stay on track for graduation. The online registration system prohibits students from registering for a course if they have not fulfilled the required prerequisites. Students also have access to both a printed and web-based version of the [College catalog](#). Numerous other activities also allow us to communicate with students including, but not limited to, orientation, career exploration events, program information sessions, college fairs and our *CollegeFocus* magazine that is sent to all in-district households.

2.B. The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

Highland Community College and its mission, values, and resources are accessible to individuals outside the organization via the College [website](#) and the [academic catalog](#). The College's website allows us to communicate very clearly all details of our institution, including information about our faculty and staff, accreditation, course and program details and other salient information. In addition to communicating electronically and in print, the College also maintains open communication with the College District through regular written and oral communication opportunities, including forums, community organizations and advisory boards.

1P7. This response was rated an S in the 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Highland Community College offers many ways for students to explore and select programs of study that best match their needs, interests, and abilities. First, before students come to HCC, we coordinate the use of Career Cruising in many of our district high schools. Career Cruising is a website that allows students to take interest assessments, research different majors and careers and look at different colleges and universities. This website is also used by our academic advisors in discussing career options with students, especially those who are still deciding on a major and by the instructors for our First-Year Experience Seminar course for incoming students.

Along with Career Cruising, we view our advisors as a resource for our students. All first-time, full-time students are required to meet with an advisor who works with the student to make sure that they are staying on track for graduation. The first interaction for most students with an advisor happens after the student completes our placement test. Often, the test results can open up conversations about how the student performed in high school, which courses they enjoyed or did not enjoy, as well as what careers the student may have considered or decided against. Students who consider themselves undecided usually still have a few ideas of what they do not want to do in the future. This is a starting place as they build a relationship with their advisor.

Meeting with advisor over the course of a student's time at Highland can help him or her to move from being undecided about a major or future career to being a student with an achievable goal. Each semester, we systematically survey students to update admissions staff about their major and contact information. This is done during a variety of courses the first week of each semester. The information about a student's chosen major allows everyone who works with the student to know exactly what major the student has declared or if he or she is still deciding.

Career Services is a resource for students who continue to struggle to declare a major or choose a program that fits their needs, interests, and abilities. Our Coordinator of Career Services can offer the students different assessments, such as the Strong Interest Inventory or Myers-Briggs indicator to assist them in making a decision about their major.

During each school year, a variety of events are held on campus for the benefit of our undecided students. The advisors host Major Madness and Major Pursuit events where students can learn more about the majors offered on campus.

3.D. The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

- Student support services are an instrumental part of the educational process at Highland. From initial inquiry through graduation, students are provided access to the services and support they need to be successful in their education. This includes academic advising, tutoring, computer assistance, financial scholarships and many other opportunities. See the college [website](#).
- Students begin their journey at Highland by confirming their academic readiness. For example, students take placement tests to confirm their levels of understanding in reading, writing and mathematics. If a deficiency is identified, developmental courses are recommended. This path through developmental learning helps a student gain the necessary skills to be successful in all the courses they plan to take.
- Academic advisors work with the majority of students on campus to help guide them through their education at Highland. The value of academic advisors and the work they do can be clearly seen in students who are able to enroll in the proper classes to match their skill level and are able to achieve timely completion of the degree program of their choosing. Academic advisors have expanded their availability to better assist students attempting to attain a degree. All full-time, degree-seeking students are required to participate in the advising process. (See 1P6).
- Highland strives to create a campus environment that facilitates academic success. This can be seen in the regular technological maintenance/upgrades, and numerous initiatives around campus to help programs stay on the cutting edge of their corresponding job markets. Larger scale examples include our Ray and Betty Stamm Health Science Nursing Wing and the Wind Turbine Technician Training Center. In some instances when it is not realistic for the College to maintain its own infrastructure for certain programs, external partnerships are created to assist in the educational process. 6P3 highlights key support processes to ensure the physical safety and security of a student while on campus.
- Students are strongly encouraged to complete a First-Year Experience Seminar (FYES) course to help them identify how to be successful college students. In addition to the basic framework provided in the FYES course, students acclimate themselves to additional resources in the classrooms, labs and other learning spaces on campus (1P9). Students can also contact the [library](#) or Academic Technology Resources (ATR) for specialized assistance. The college also has an Institutional Review Board to review post-studies with human participants (See 4P7).

1P8. This response was not addressed in the 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Our first step in determining if students are prepared for their chosen academic programs is the use of our COMPASS Placement Test or ACT scores. Cut-off scores were recently researched, reviewed and revised by a committee whose members then voted and ultimately implemented this outcome. The results of the placement test are used to determine the appropriate reading, writing and/or math course for the student.

The College is serving a steadily increasing number of developmental/transitional students. Because these students are underprepared for college-level courses, we have strengthened efforts to provide programs to increase their completion rates. A complementary resource for students who find they need transitional courses is our Fast Forward program. Offered for five weeks during the summer, this program allows students to study reading, writing, and/or math, depending on their placement test scores, to receive small group or individual instruction before retaking the placement test at the end of the session. Over the past three summers, this program has helped more than 80% of participating students place into higher levels of transitional or college-level courses. The fee for this program is \$10, making it affordable and accessible to the majority of our students, and we have waived the fee for students with financial need. See 8P3 for more details on a current Action Project regarding developmental/transitional education.

Our Success Center is also a resource for students who are underprepared to pursue their college and academic goals. We offer free tutoring for students in any academic area, including math, chemistry, Spanish and writing. In addition, students may request a tutor for additional courses. Our Learning Services Coordinator works with the instructor to find a student who may be a good tutor for

that specific course. Math is an area that many of our students assistance during any given academic year. Students who take transitional math courses may take these classes through our math lab, which allows students to move at their own pace. This lab also provides tutoring for students. Tutors are now located close proximity to the math lab, which has increased the number of tutoring hours utilized each semester and allows more students to access this free service at HCC.

A specific program that helps students, some underprepared, is Project Succeed a TRiO funded program that requires students to apply to be accepted. Eligible students are first-generation college students, low income students, or students with a disability. Students accepted into the program have a variety of services available to them, including borrowing laptop computers, free classes, advisors who can assist them with academic and personal concerns.

Project Succeed also offers a mentoring program for students who may need assistance in and out of the classroom. This program matches a student with a mentor, and the two may work together one-on-one or in small groups. Helping underprepared students improve as students helps our transitional courses to be more effective. Additionally, the College's First-Year Experience Seminar (FYES) allows students to share their transition to college with other first-year students. Although this course is not required, it does help students to learn the expectations of college, be aware of their learning styles, and truly determine their own goals for future education and career pathways. Each summer, an FYES course is offered specifically for students who are undecided about their majors or careers.

1P9. This response was rated an S in the 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. All HCC faculty are strongly encouraged to use a variety of teaching methods to ensure students are offered multiple ways to learn material. Classroom teachers typically use three or more of the following teaching methods: learning groups, teacher-led discussion, student presentations, debates, skits, in-class writing or other exercises, in-class films, PowerPoint presentations, laboratory experiments (simulation), group projects, hands-on training, physical exercise, in-class lectures, and distance online learning.

Instructors are supported in these teaching styles with computer and science laboratories and extensive computer and projector technology in every classroom. These technologies allow instructors to project a variety of different media types. In addition, each classroom is equipped with a document camera, which allows instructors to project paper documents or three-dimensional objects.

HCC utilizes the Moodle course management system, which is a web-based application used to manage online/hybrid courses, in addition to providing internet access to materials for each class, a discussion board, and a grade reporting mechanism, and several other applications. Instructors are supported by an Academic Technology Resources Team, who are responsible for the Moodle system/and campus website. This team has been instrumental in supporting and encouraging Universal Design for learning. Universal Design is an approach to developing course instruction, materials, and content that will benefit each and every student and instructor of all learning styles. The team has established a link on the HCC computer system called OASIS, which evaluates student online learning and learning styles. The College also uses Turnitin, which offers originality feedback on written assignments (essays, research papers, etc.) and provides another platform for online feedback for student work.

Highland's Success Center is committed to providing quality programs, services, and curriculum that promote the academic success of all Highland students. The Success Center offers First-Year Experience Seminar, developmental communication skills courses, tutoring, and guidance and support through implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

FYES, discussed in 1P8, includes a number of learning style inventories, such as the Visual, Aural, Reading, and Kinesthetic (VARK) Learning Style Assessment, and an introduction to current research on learning styles.

1P10. This response was rated an S in the 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. In terms of addressing special needs of student subgroups, the College is committed to continuing a strong tradition of serving these students and enhancing accessibility opportunities. Special populations include persons with disabilities and nontraditional adult learners.

Students with disabilities self-identify to receive services at Highland. Occasionally, the self-identification comes before students matriculate to the College by working with area special education high school teachers and guidance counselors. The College's ADA Coordinator attends transition meetings in local high schools upon request and networks with local agencies that serve individuals with disabilities. The College also publishes a guide for students with disabilities and other resources on the College website. Recently developed committees, including a community advisory committee and an internal ADA committee, support efforts to network with area providers and follow through with continuous improvement in our support of students with disabilities.

For qualifying students, ADA Services staff present the Moving Forward Workshop each summer; this workshop is an initiative that reaches out to juniors, seniors, and recent high school graduates who have disabilities in order to help them successfully transition to college life. The program is free of charge and is an opportunity for students (and potential students) to become familiar with the campus, its resources, and future peers. During the workshop, students have the opportunity to talk to staff, faculty, community representatives, and current students. A number of topics are addressed during the workshop, including registering with ADA Services, receiving classroom and testing accommodations, and discovering learning styles. The workshop also addresses why learning styles are important, what assistive technology may be available, and how to use the available technology.

To further aid student transition to the College, students attend a Welcome Session where they are introduced to the staff, oriented to departmental processes and aided in establishing documentation of a disability. A return session establishes appropriate accommodations and provides faculty notice, which the students are encouraged to share with their instructors. In addition to ensuring access for students with disabilities, the department aims to help students develop self-advocacy skills and confidence in their own ability to navigate college. As a part of their return appointment, students may be referred to other agencies or receive training on adaptive equipment, testing procedures, and other aspects of their accommodations. More information on ADA Services can be found on the HCC ADA Services website.

Instructors are strongly encouraged to ensure that the course content found in Moodle meets Universal Design standards. These standards allow students with special needs to be able to view and manipulate the content to meet their individual needs. Faculty members have had the opportunity to attend at least one training session with the topic of creating content according to Universal Design. Workshops pertaining to a single topic, such as presentations, include information on how to make a presentation meet the Universal Design standards. In projects the Academic Technology Resources Department creates for instructors, all efforts are made to meet the Universal Design standards.

Another notable new initiative has been improving transportation options for students. From student feedback, the College identified that the lack of reliable public transportation was a concern for all students. Working with the City of Freeport, the College advocated for the students by raising concerns about reliability. Once a new system was designed, the College also worked with Freeport to design a student rider card, which gives students the ability to purchase public transportation cards with their financial aid in our campus bookstore. In 2014, the city-wide transportation system was expanded to serve all of Stephenson County. The College also recently added an electronic student bulletin board to the Student Portal, which presents students with opportunities to ride share.

Specifically for serving adult learners/nontraditional students, the College offers Community Education courses (currently being expanded and rebranded as Lifelong Learning) and a Business Institute

program, which offers customized training for businesses and other professional organizations.

The College's community education offerings have decreased over the years, and input resulting from dialogue with community focus groups and other educational institutions suggests that opportunities for growth in this area exist. A task force was organized during the 2013 – 2014 school year that has begun work to explore strategies for expanding our Community Education program. Specific areas for expansion include continuing education and certification programs for professionals and more courses and programs designed exclusively for seniors. A new Action Project has been launched to encourage the development of this initiative.

The Business Institute program has served our business and industry partners well during recent decades, and it is our intent to deliver a wider variety of customized training to existing and future clients.

1.C. The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society. See response in 1P4.

1P11. This response was not addressed in the 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. There are three primary ways Highland determines, documents, and communicates expectations for teaching and learning across the institution: the hiring process, the tenure process, and faculty evaluations. Highland's hiring process focuses on ensuring quality candidates are selected for faculty and staff positions through a rigorous application and interview process. Faculty candidates are required to present a teaching demonstration on a topic of the hiring committee's choice and are asked several methods-based questions. Both parts of the interview are weighed equally to ensure candidates are selected based on their effectiveness in teaching and learning. Additionally, the three-year tenure process provides a mentorship-based program to assess and improve the effectiveness of teaching by the new faculty. New faculty are assigned a committee of their peers who observe classes, assess new faculty goals, and provide feedback and encouragement to help new instructors improve. Further, all faculty are evaluated through a formal evaluation process. Instructors are periodically evaluated by students, the data is compiled, and the faculty member meets with his or her Dean to review. The three methods examined here are defined in detail in Highland's Policy Manual.

In addition, Highland opens each semester with a two-day professional development workshop called Opening Days. During this workshop, faculty and staff are encouraged to gather information on best practices from their colleagues, engage with guest speakers about improving Highland for students, and attend the Academic Assembly, a meeting where faculty and administration discuss campus news, upcoming programs, and ways to improve. See 1P1.

Highland also offers faculty-run professional development opportunities in a variety of ways. Two notable programs are the Teaching Squares program, currently in its second academic year, and Faculty Café seminars. Teaching Squares, which was first developed at St. Louis Community College by Anne Wesley, is a best-practice sharing program. Four instructors form a square, each observes a class period taught by all other square members, and participants meet to reflect on best-practices they saw in action. Faculty Café seminars are faculty-lead discussions where pressing issues, student needs, and other important matters are presented. Faculty Café has included topics such as attendance policies, reviewing Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) survey results, dual credit enrollment, faculty and advisor collaboration. These two faculty-driven professional development opportunities provide insight into ever-evolving expectations of teaching and learning.

2.D. The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

Students are given the opportunity to express themselves through their participation in coursework, as well as activities outside the classroom. Faculty has academic freedom, which is documented in the faculty contract. Student's educational rights and responsibilities are described in the [academic catalog](#). There are a number of campus organizations outlined in the portfolio that allow a student to interact with other students as well as challenge themselves to try something new.

2.E. The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

- Highland has regular evaluation processes in place for courses and faculty. Students are also provided the opportunity to evaluate courses and faculty on a regular basis. While the anonymous feedback at the end of an academic term is beneficial, faculty and students strive for open communication throughout the academic term to make sure that any suggested modifications to a course are made on a timely basis. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviews proposals for all planned research involving human participants prior to the initiation of the research by any College faculty, staff, or student conducting or sponsoring research. The IRB approves, denies, or requires modification of the proposal to ensure that the research meets established criteria, as outlined in the College's Institutional Review Board Policy and Procedure Handbook, for the protection of human participants.
- Students are regularly encouraged to use information resources correctly. Tools such as Turnitin (See 1P9) are now being used to help guide students through proper resource utilization by helping them identify misuse.
- Faculty are responsible for identifying issues regarding academic honesty/integrity in the classroom. If a judgment is made by an individual instructor, a student can challenge that judgment using a process documented in the college catalog. Instances are documented using our [Academic and Conduct Concerns Reporting Tool](#).

1P12. This response was rated an S in the 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Building an effective and efficient course delivery system addressing both students' needs and our institution's requirements is an ongoing process requiring a multi-prong approach because course delivery systems are constantly improving, technology is constantly changing, and our institution desires to keep pace with similar institutions. In the summer of 2014, to help meet student needs, our institution upgraded from Moodle 1.9 to Moodle 2.6. We also moved from a site-hosting service to self-hosting. The upgrade to 2.6 provides updated and additional features that our staff are now able to implement such as conditional release, extra credit scoring, and user overrides set per user or per group. Self-hosting provides the advantage of additional plug-ins that hosted services prefer not to implement or the cost is prohibitive.

To further address students' needs, a course review system was implemented summer 2013. The review is based on the QOCI rubric, developed by Illinois Online Network, and attributes that address our students' needs. Based on research of factors that lead to successful hybrid and online students, we would like to see every hybrid and online course include a welcome message, a syllabus meeting all the requirements of CurricuNet, rubrics for the course, and a course calendar. Examples of a student-centered syllabus and several course calendars are available in the "Using Moodle 2.6" course for instructors.

The IT Director, Moodle Administrator, and Academic Technology Resources Coordinator, meet several times a year to discuss emerging technologies and new or improved features of all course delivery systems. Additional research is done for technologies we feel will improve the students' experience in online or hybrid courses.

3.A. The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

See response in 1P4.

1P13. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The ICCB requires review of occupational and transfer programs every four to five years, following a staggered schedule. The purpose is to keep programs current and viable and to confirm that they meet the needs of those students in the programs. Also, the College can choose to review a program as it wishes. A program having low enrollment is the primary reason that the College chooses to conduct a program review. A program review can result in courses and/or programs being discontinued. Once the Fiscal Year 2014 Program Review Report Submission has been received, staff may be asked to provide additional information while the Statewide Summary Report is being compiled.

As for ensuring program effectiveness, data is collected on the pass rates on licensing exams (see 1R4). Collecting and analyzing data from these exams allows the College to assess the effectiveness of the programs that require licensing.

4.A. The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

See response in 1P4.

1P14. This response was rated an S and an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The process to review and propose a change in a course is as follows:

- An individual that requests to change a course must complete a "Proposal to Change a Course" form.
- The proposed changes are selected, with a brief explanation of items checked. These may include course number, credit hours, lab hours, repeatability, variability, prerequisite(s), classification, title, description, and other.
- Reasons for proposed changes are selected as applicable, with a brief explanation of items checked. These may include program, career, and transfer requirements, licensing requirements and/or recommendations, other outside source requirements and/or recommendations, career requirements, transfer requirements, curriculum/major requirements, training requests, faculty/staff recommendations, content changes, and other.
- The implications of the proposed changes are selected, with a brief explanation of items checked. These may include degree/program issues, articulation issues, enrollment issues, full-time/part-time faculty, equipment, budget impact, scheduling issues, other.
- The proposed implementation date is indicated, a revised course syllabus is attached to the form, and the request is submitted to the Dean for review. If approved by the Dean, the request is submitted to the C and I Committee for review.

This portion of this section was rated an opportunity. The process to review and propose a deletion in a course is as follows:

- An instructor or administrator who requests to delete a course must complete a "Proposal to Delete a Course" form; all applicable reasons to propose a deletion in a course are selected, with a brief explanation of items checked. These may include program/curriculum changes, state/licensing changes, lack of student demand, other outside source recommendation/requirement, career/training changes, transfer changes, budget, impact, other.
- The implications of deleting the course are selected, with a brief explanation of items checked. These may include degree/program issues, enrollment issues, full-time/part-time faculty, budget impact, scheduling issues, other.

- The semester the course was last offered is indicated, and the requested deactivation date is indicated.

If individual courses are no longer offered, they can be removed from the College schedule. The C and I Committee does not need to approve this type of removal of courses. A course is removed from the schedule by the Vice President of Academic Services/Chief Academic Officer, after consultation with the appropriate academic Dean, when it hasn't been offered in several years

1P15. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. HCC has a number of means of determining the learning support needs of students. We work with the Coordinator of ADA Services, who regularly shares the students' progress and support needs. Tutoring, study coaching, and technological accommodations are generally provided through the office of ADA Services.

In addition to working with the Coordinator of ADA Services, Success Center staff work with faculty via an early alert program, facilitated by Maxient software, whereby faculty can refer students for additional support through tutoring, study skills training, or helping to establish a study group for a particular course. The Success Center helps to coordinate these services and encourages students to use the additional available support.

Our Success Center also provides walk-in tutoring for a number of courses that have traditionally been in high demand at the College. These courses include math courses, in general, and we provide tutors who can work with students enrolled in any number of courses, from MATH 055 to MATH 268. We also provide English or composition tutors who are available to provide feedback concerning any writing project or essay, but are also available to assist students enrolled in transitional reading courses. In addition, chemistry tutors are often in great demand, so we not only provide peer tutors to assist students enrolled in CHEM 120, 123, or 124 and a paraprofessional chemistry tutor who can provide additional strategies and act as a liaison between students and chemistry faculty. Finally, we provide paraprofessional nursing tutors, most whom have completed the College's own nursing program, to support nursing students as they complete courses and prepare for nursing exams.

3.D. The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

See response in 1P7.

1P16. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Highland provides a diverse offering of co-curricular opportunities for students, including over 20 clubs and organizations. Most co-curricular activities are advised by faculty members who specialize in the field of study. Therefore, advisors closely monitor the club or organization's development goals to help those goals parallel curricular learning objectives. For example, Highland's Psychology Club sponsors a Wellness Day at the end of every semester. Preparation includes research to choose health and wellness activities that will best appeal to students and help relieve end-of-semester stress. Further, clubs and organizations like Highland's Forensics team, Adult Student Network, Student Senate, and many others promote soft skills like communication, leadership, critical thinking, cultural awareness, and civic responsibility that neatly align with curricular learning objectives to help students prepare for the professional arena and life outside of Highland. The following table provides more information.

Student Organizations						
Student Organizations	Corresponding Credit Course	Informally Support Program/Course	Comm.	Lead.	Critical Cultural	Civik
Acting Company		THEA Program	x		x	
Adult Student Network			x	x		
Agriculture Club		Transfer, AAS & Cert Agriculture Programs			x	x
Alpha Delta Nu (Nursing Honor Society)		ADN Program	x		x	
Anatomy and Physiology Club		BIOL 120, 213, and 214			x	
Current Issues Club		Courses throughout College curriculum	x		x	x
Diversity Club					x	x
Environmental Awareness Represented Through Highland (E.A.R.T.H.)		Biology Program; BIOL 116, 209	x		x	x
Equine Club		AAS & Cert Equine Programs			x	
Fellowship					x	x
Forensics	SPCH 199	SPCH classes	x		x	
Highland Chronicle (Student Newspaper)	Jour 131, 231, 232	ENGL Program; FA program	x		x	x
History Club		HIST/POL Programs			x	x
Honor's Program			x		x	
International Club		HIST/POL Programs GERM/SPAN programs			x	x
Intramurals	PHYD 114				x	
Phi Theta Kappa				x		
Physical Science Club		Geology Program; GEOL 126, 236; NSCI 131, 132, 133, 23 2			x	x
Prairie Wind		ENGL Program; FA Program	x		x	x
Pride Club			x		x	x
Psychology Club		Psychology Program	x		x	x
Student Senate			x	x		
Wind Power Club		AAS & Cert Wind Technician Programs			x	x
Student Activities			x	x		

3.E. The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

- Highland offers many co-curricular opportunities to students. These opportunities are guided by faculty/staff on campus who are knowledgeable in their respective area. This helps to assure high quality opportunities, and allows the institution to regularly assess the relevance of the opportunity. Honors societies are active and include Phi Theta Kappa and Alpha Delta Nu. In addition, the Honors Program provides eligible students with enhanced educational experiences in select courses chosen in cooperation with College faculty (3P4).
- The students at Highland Community College are regularly provided opportunities to share their life experiences. Many of these experiences provide opportunities for growth individually and in groups. Highland provides opportunities through many [student clubs and organizations, including student government](#). The activities incorporate the goals of the students and the institution and supplement the curricular learning that a student engages in during their academic experience at Highland.

1P17. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. When students apply for graduation, Highland does an official degree audit and communicates the results to students. The degree audit compares required classes for the degree or certificate to the classes the student has completed, and the Director of Enrollment and Records communicates the results of the audit back to the student. In some cases, experiential learning credit is based on a student's prior experience with the Dean's written approval. Students may also receive an unofficial degree audit through the College's web-based registration system.

1P18. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Much of our most recent work on assessment processes resulted from an Action Project to "Revise the College's General Education Assessment Program." Within the last several semesters, Highland Community College has focused attention on and assessed student progress in written Category 1: Helping Students Learn

communication. The following information presents a summary of a second-year review of student learning in written communication based on the success of a pilot study launched in spring 2012.

A random sample of final student papers from each of the College's English 122 courses in spring 2013 was collected from the instructors of those courses. These papers were distributed to a set of faculty volunteers who used the College's written communication rubric to assess students' writing proficiency. Each paper was reviewed by two instructors. The pairing of instructors was counterbalanced so that no two instructors were paired together more than any other pairing of instructors.

Before the fall semester began, the assessors met to review assessment results. The additional scoring options (adding half-points between the full-points already in the scale) enhanced the assessment process by providing more scoring options. For the second year, we collected samples from multiple sections of English 122, and the assessors agreed that samples from this course worked well for our purposes. It was indicated that additional assessment categories for citations/formatting and theme/thesis would be valuable to help assess written communication skills. We plan to use this feedback to evaluate the scoring rubric and identify how to incorporate any modifications prior to the next assessment cycle.

In addition to rubric modifications, all assessors agreed that a small amount of prior training for the assessment (commonly referred to as a calibration session) would be beneficial to accurately identify the level of quality required for each category to achieve a certain score, for example, to determine what justifies a score of 2 versus a score of 1 for the various rubric elements. There was an acceptable level of agreement between the instructor assessors on five out of the 11 elements which comprise the written communication rubric. In order to achieve an acceptable level of agreement on a greater number of elements, a calibration session before instructors assess papers was recommended so that a shared understanding of the meaning of each element may be revealed as well as gaining a better awareness of the kinds of things that should be taken into consideration.

The next data collection will occur near the end of the Spring 2015 Semester, with a calibration session scheduled at the same time, and the next assessment will be completed as of the beginning of the Fall 2015 Semester.

4.B. The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning. See 1P2.

1R1. This response was rated both an S and an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. HCC measures students' learning and development in a variety of ways. Table 1.1 addresses student learning and development measures. Tables 6.2 and 6.3 identify measures used for learning support processes.

Table 1.1

Measure	Targeted Students	Purpose
Performance after transfer	Transfer graduates	Monitor GPAs and retention of students who transfer to four-year institutions (See 9R3).
Completion of program objectives	Students in select occupational programs	Ensure those who have taken the course have obtained the necessary skills.
Licensure and certification tests	Students in select occupational programs	Ensure those who have completed the program have obtained the necessary skills and knowledge to be successful in their field of study.

Measure	Targeted Students	Purpose
Adult education progression through state-defined objectives	Adult Education students	Tracking the outcomes of students enrolled in Adult Education.
Transitional student retention and success in first college-level courses	Transitional students	Utilizing data from the National Community College Benchmarking Project to benchmark transitional students' learning and development.
General Education outcomes assessment	All degree/certificate seeking students	Assess students' mastery of each General Education objective.

1R2. This response was rated both an S and an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. In the 2010 portfolio, HCC provided a comprehensive table with results for all General Education competencies. Since that time, the College's primary focus has been on an in-depth assessment of written communication (see 1P1, 1P18). For the writing communication assessment in spring 2014, there was an acceptable level of agreement among instructors in their assessment of the student papers utilized for the assessment. Figure 1.1 includes a sample of rubric elements and their means. Figure 1.2 includes mean data on the overall rubric score.

Figure 1.1

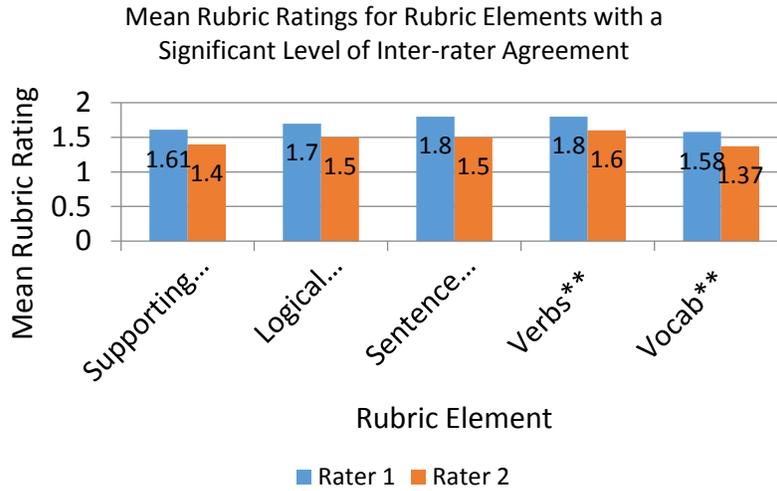
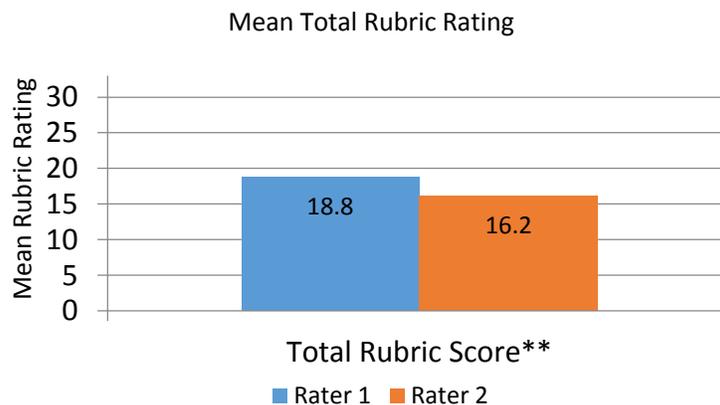


Figure 1.2



1R3. This response was rated both an S and an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The Nursing and Allied Health department utilizes standardized examinations to determine the extent to which the nursing students meet learning objectives of the Nursing program. These examinations are based on the NCLEX-RN and are nationally normed. These examinations are given in different courses throughout the program and at the end of the Nursing program; the exit examination covers all of the areas included in the nursing program. The reports provide data on specific topic areas as and an overall score indicating likely success on NCLEX. Data is reported for individual students and the cohort as a whole. Below are the recent cohort results for the exit examination.

HESI Examination Scores: Prediction of Student NCLEX Success

	2014	2013	2012
Recommended Performance	25%	40%	21%
Acceptable Performance	6%	9%	19%
Below Acceptable Performance	31%	26%	24%
Needs Further Preparation	38%	25%	36%

Overall results from the exit examination are used to develop recommendations on NCLEX preparation for individual students; results are not used as a determination of successful program completion. Beginning in 2015, nursing graduates will have to score in the acceptable range, with remediation if necessary, on the exit examination in order to successfully complete the ADN program.

Students in the Medical Assistant Program follow the standards and guidelines set forth by the Medical Assistant Education Review Board, which recommends programs for accreditation to the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP). Students are evaluated in Cognitive, Psychomotor, and Affective domains throughout the program. There are 128 entry-level competencies required by the *2008 CAAHEP Standards*. These competencies are evaluated using a variety of tools, such as exams, skill check-offs, role-playing, presentations, etc. In 2010, 13 of the 14 students who enrolled in the MA program successfully completed the requirements of the Medical Assistant Program. In 2011, seven of the 10 students who enrolled in the MA program successfully completed the requirements of the Medical Assistant Program. In 2012, five of the six students who enrolled in the MA program successfully completed the requirements of the Medical Assistant Program.

1R4. This response was rated both an S and an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. State Licensure/Certification examinations are administered to seven groups of graduates at this time.

Highland Community College uses the results of licensing exams, the transfer data provided by the state universities, employer feedback, and alumni surveys to provide evidence that students have acquired the knowledge and skills required by the College and its stakeholders.

State licensing examinations are administered to groups of graduates in the program areas shown below. Students in the nursing program are assessed for LPN or RN licensure prior to employment in

the field. Students in Cosmetology are scheduled for the State Board of Regulation examinations upon completion of the HCC program, cosmetologists must pass the examination prior to full employment in the field. The values shown below in Table 1.2 reflect pass rates of HCC graduates tested in calendar years 2010- 2013.

Table 1.2 Licensure Exams for Nursing, Allied Health and Cosmetology Programs

Pass Rates By Program:	2010	2011	2012	2013
Cosmetology	100%	100%	100%	100%
Nursing LPN (NCLEX PN)	100%	86%	100%	100%
Nursing RN (NCLEX RN)	88%	89%	93%	81%
Certified Medical Assistant (CMA)	Program Initiated	100%	100%	100%
Emergency Medical Technician-Paramedic (EMT-P)	83%	100%	77%	100%

The Wind Turbine Technician program has no state board/certification process requirement; however, the Wind Turbine Technician program has graduation rates that have remained steady at 90% since the program's launch at Highland in 2006.

Performance data on students who transfer from Highland to four-year institutions (preparation, GPA, retention and completion) benchmarking data is presented in 3R2 and 9R3. Graduate survey results for the nursing program are collected yearly. See 3R2 for more details.

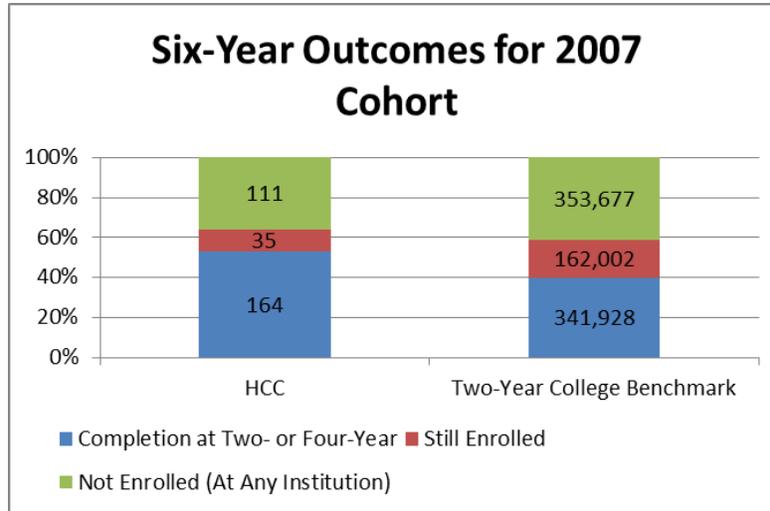
1R5. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Over academic year 2013-2014, the Success Center provided 1,163 total hours of tutoring, online or in person, for various courses. History shows the benefits that tutoring affords students. When students sought regular assistance in a course, 90% to 94% earned a C or better in the course of study. Table 1.3 lists the number of total tutoring clients for the past four academic years and the percentage of those students who successfully completed the course. See 6R2 for additional performance results related to advising, orientation, and other student support processes.

Table 1.3 Success Center Tutoring Clients

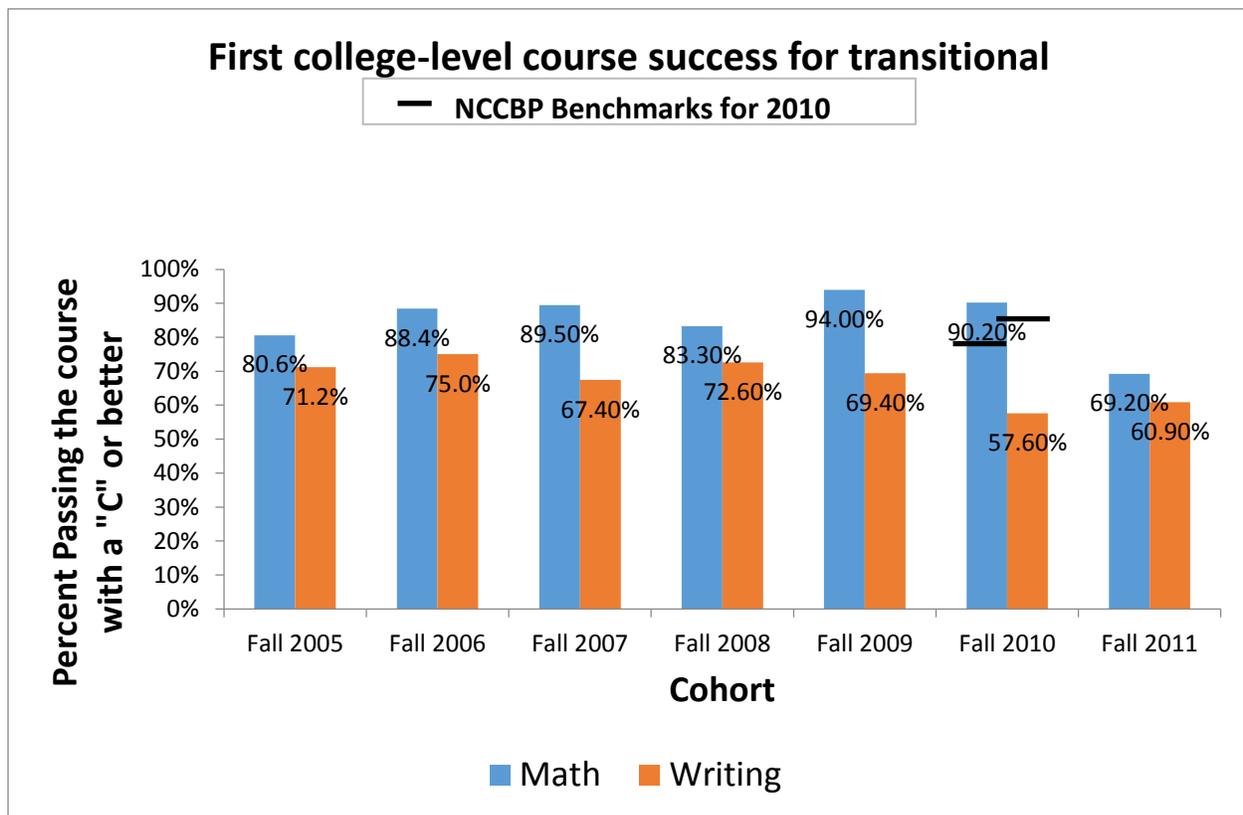
Year	# Tutoring Clients	Students Appearing on the DUFI List	Percent of Tutoring Clients Who Earn a C or Better
2010	644	1464	94%
2011	671	1208	92%
2012	523	968	92%
2013	426	939	90%

1R6. This response was not addressed in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Compared with other two-year college institutions, 53% completed a degree or certificate at either two- or four-year institutions sometime in the six years following their initial enrollment at Highland. The two-year college benchmark is roughly 40%.

National Student Clearinghouse Benchmarking Report 2007



The table below shows data collected from the National Community College Benchmarking Project and indicates how our institution fares in comparison to others in regards to successful completion of first college-level math and writing courses by transitional students.



111. This response was rated an O in the College’s 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Upon recognizing the importance of helping students progress through and complete the transitional course sequence at Highland Community College, we added a Transitional Studies department. The department is positioned to better coordinate the provision of transitional services in a more holistic manner by coordinating transitional classes, tutoring, learning communities, study groups, early intervention systems, and advising. Redesigned course sequences for transitional reading and math allow students to progress more rapidly if their skills allow them to do so. The department also

Category 1: Helping Students Learn

developed a workshop called B4U Test students may take prior to placement testing and added procedures that allow students to re-take the placement exam after completing a transitional course. See 3P2.

Our second most significant change in the learning programs happened in our Nursing and Allied Health department. In past years, Highland Community College partnered with three other area community colleges to offer an online nursing program, which was titled NIOIN. Two years ago that partnership was dissolved as schools were unable to afford to support the program. In answer to the void that this dissolution created, Highland Community College has created our own online nursing program. Through this program, students earn an Associate of Applied Science in the Associate Degree Nursing Program (ADN) which allows students to take the NCLEX-RN exam.

In order to continue to offer the flexibility of an online nursing program, Highland Community College aligned the curriculum with our in-class program. Approximately 20 students are admitted to the online program, which is more than were allowed while we participated in the NIOIN partnership. Students are still required to take tests in our Testing Center, so exams are proctored, and they may have to visit campus on occasion for labs or clinical updates. However, the majority of the program is offered online so that our students can achieve a better school-life balance.

112. This response was not addressed in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. HCC's commitment to building a student-centered culture is exhibited by the exemplary scores in the Student Focus category of the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) Survey. Results from the October 2011 PACE survey indicate that HCC achieved a mean score of 4.04/5.0 in the Student Focus category, which was the institution's highest mean score. According to the National Initiative for Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness (NILIE) Report, this mean score "indicates a healthy campus climate."

Our student-centered focus, core values and Servant-Leadership Philosophy (see 6I2) all lead the College toward a culture and infrastructure that is inclusive. An example of how this culture influences our selection of processes for improvement is illustrated by the development of a Student Services Strategic Plan. During a staff retreat in March 2013, all staff were invited to participate in roundtable planning discussions that addressed the following questions: What are we good at? How will we be different in five years? and how will we be intentionally different? On the second day of the retreat, staff were asked to develop a chart of processes or intentional changes that would require a high cost, low time commitment; low cost, low time commitment; high cost, high time commitment; and low cost, high time commitment. The information gathered was then used to inform a list of priorities and goals for the student services plan, which was also critiqued by the staff. This resulted in a student services plan for the division that is intended to guide process improvements.

CATEGORY 2: OTHER DISTINCT OBJECTIVES

Since its inception in 1962, HCC has been aware of its large, primarily rural district and has developed relationships, partnerships, and community service and outreach programs that strive to provide meaningful educational and lifelong learning experiences for all students.

Activities range from adult education classes to seminars and workshops, from relationships with the University of Illinois Extension office to the HCC Alumni Association, from programs for senior volunteers to the Friends of the Fine Arts. These activities provide an opportunity for district citizens to experience HCC as they develop a relationship with the institution.

Our decision to focus on the four Other Distinctive Objectives chosen was based on assessing our activities, projects and relationships that are the most institutionally supported and, in some cases,

objectives that are distinctive in relation to the Other Distinctive Objectives of other community colleges.

Within the Other Distinctive Objectives category, we are reviewing:

- Relationships with Secondary and Post-Secondary Educational Institutions
 - Servant-Leadership - Provides high school students an opportunity to experience personal development, team development and hands-on project development. Training events identify and examine key elements that are a part of the Servant-Leadership philosophy.
 - University of Illinois Extension
 - Columbia College of Missouri – Freeport
- Community Services and Lifelong Learning
 - Leadership Institute and Jo Daviess Leadership Forum – Provides leadership opportunities and activities for community members in Jo Daviess and Stephenson counties.
 - Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) - This Corporation for National and Community Service program is designed to place volunteers who are age 55 and over with educational and social service organizations in the role of providing volunteer service to the community.
 - Friends of the Fine Arts – Provides a focal point and directed communication for supporters of the Fine Arts.
- HCC Foundation
 - Scholarships
 - Alumni Association
- Collaborative Relationship between HCC and YMCA
 - Shared Facilities
 - Summer Sports Camps - Coaches in our athletic department share their expertise with young basketball, volleyball, baseball and softball players.

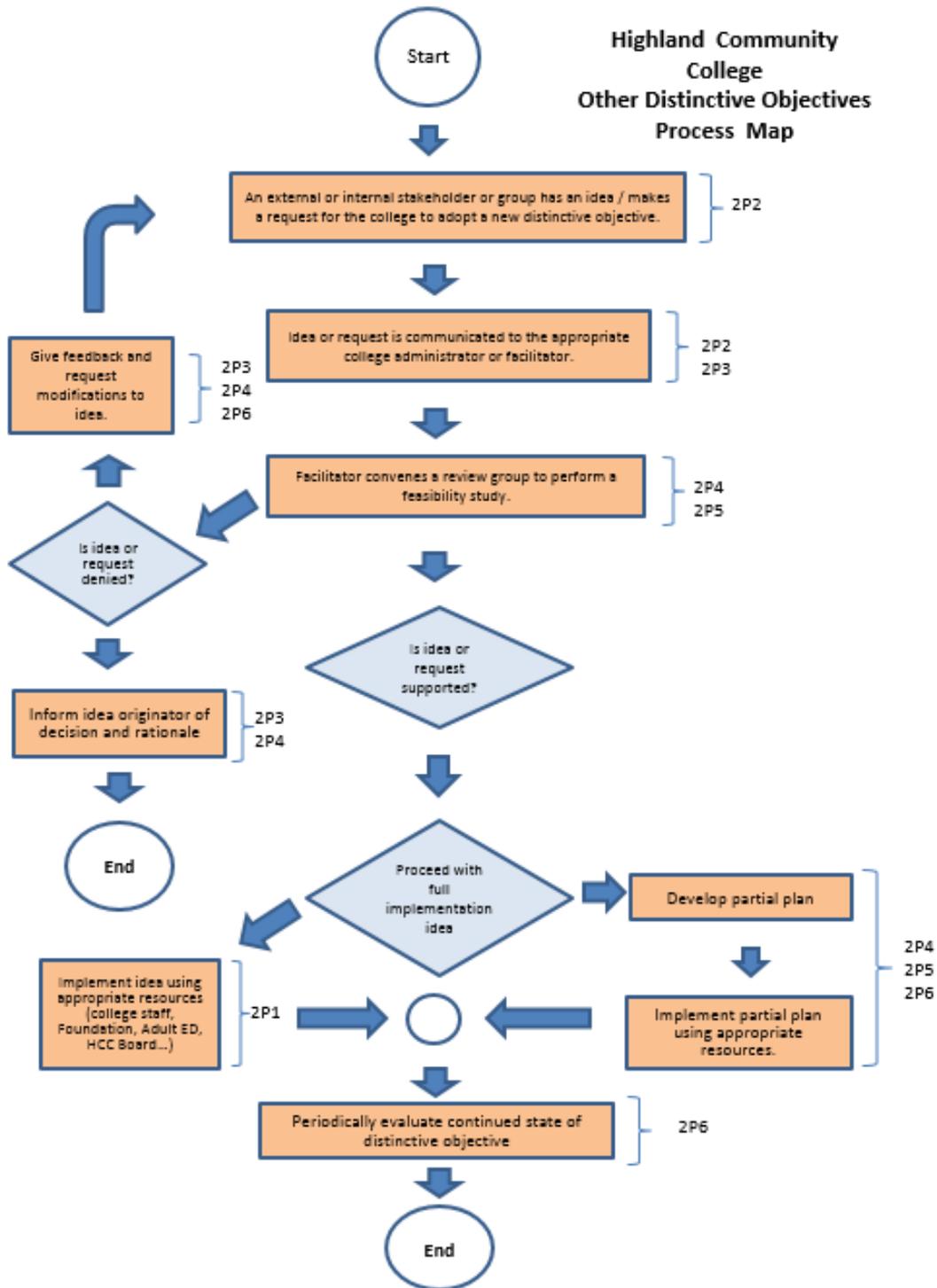
Activities, projects, and relationships we have decided not to cover in depth include, but are not limited to:

- Donald Opel Regional Arboretum – HCC’s campus serves as an arboretum. The campus provides over 200 acres of habitat to more than 200 varieties of trees and shrubs and more than 150 varieties of perennial plantings.
- Community Use of Facilities – The Conference Center at HCC specializes in providing a professional environment with technological amenities to meet the professional and educational conferencing needs of the community.
- Speakers Bureau – A community service of HCC consisting of faculty and staff volunteers who donate their time to promote education by making presentations on their areas of expertise to a variety of community groups.
- Radio Highland – An internet-based radio station operated, staffed, and produced by HCC students.
- Boyer Colloquium – A colloquium series intended to increase awareness amongst citizens to the interaction and importance of ethics and economics in environmental concerns.
- Reuben Baumgartner Issues Forum – A forum bringing programs about national and international issues to the community.
- Childcare/Training Center – A joint cooperative venture between HCC and the YMCA. The purpose was to provide a daycare center and training center for the early childhood education program, offering a new infant/toddler program. An on-site classroom with observation rooms permit HCC students to watch classroom interaction without disruption.

We have included a Process Map that indicates HCC’s process for starting and running our Other Distinctive Objectives. Any portion of the Process Map that directly relates to 1 of the 6 process related questions from the AQIP guidebook is clearly marked as such in Figure 2.1.

Category 2: Other Distinct Objectives

Figure 2.1 HCC Other Distinctive Objectives Process Map



2P1. This response was rated an S in the College’s 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report specific to RSVP, yet an O in respect to other non-instructional processes. Design and operation of the four key non-instructional processes previously identified occurs after the appropriate team or staff approves the direction of the process. With a process plan of implementation complete, the approving team or staff and the responsible staff carry out the directives of the plan. Table 2.1 outlines the Approving Team/Staff, Responsible Staff, and Relationships and Initiatives for the key non-

instructional process Relationships with Secondary and Post-Secondary Educational Institutions. Similar figures outline the reporting structure of Community Services and Lifelong Learning (Table 2.2), the HCC Foundation (Table 2.3), and the Collaborative Relationship between HCC and the YMCA (Table 2.4).

Table 2.1**Objective:** Relationships with Secondary and Post-Secondary Educational Institutions

	Responsible Staff	Approving Team/Staff
Servant-Leadership	Coordinator of High School Servant-Leadership Program	President
University of Illinois Extension	County Director of the University of Illinois Extension	Board of Trustees
Columbia College of Missouri – Freeport	President	Board of Trustees
Olivet Nazarene University	Dean of Health, Natural Science and Mathematics	Board of Trustees

Table 2.2**Objective:** Community Services and Lifelong Learning

	Responsible Staff	Approving Team/Staff
Leadership Institute/Forum	Director of Leadership Programs	President
Retired and Senior Volunteer Program	Director of Retired Senior Volunteer Program	Associate Vice President of Human Resources
Friends of the Fine Arts	Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences	Vice President of Academic Services/Chief Academic Officer

Table 2.3**Objective:** HCC Foundation

	Responsible Staff	Approving Team/Staff
Academic and Need-Based Scholarships	Foundation Director of Operations	Scholarship Committee
Top Scholars Program	Associate Vice President of Student Services	Foundation Director of Operations
Athletic Scholarships	Athletic Director	President
Alumni Association	Alumni Steering Committee	Foundation Director of Operations and Executive Director

Table 2.4**Objective:** Collaborative Relationship between HCC and the YMCA

	Responsible Staff	Approving Team/Staff
YMCA	Athletic Director and Director of Physical Plant and Maintenance	President, Vice Presidents of Administrative Services and Academic Services, and Associate Vice Presidents of Student Services and Human Resources
Athletics	Athletic Director	President
Sports Camps	Athletic Director	President
Student Life	Associate Vice President of Student Services	President
Employee Wellness	Coordinator, Staff Development and HRIS	Associate Vice President of Human Resources

2P2. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. As is laid out in the HCC Other Distinctive Objectives Process Map (Figure 2.1), an external or internal stakeholder or group has an idea or makes a request for the College to adopt a new distinctive Category 2: Other Distinct Objectives

objective. The idea or request is then communicated to the appropriate College administrator or facilitator. Specifics about our four major non-instructional objectives are as follows:

Relationships with Secondary and Post-Secondary Educational Institutions

Servant-Leadership: In 1996, the Chair of the Board of Trustees and the HCC President attended the first Leadership Institute for higher education developed by the Greenleaf Center. When they returned, they developed a servant-leadership action plan including training the Board of Trustees on concepts and discussing concepts with HCC student leaders and the College Cabinet. Each high school is asked to select eight students (four juniors and four seniors) and a minimum of one adult mentor to represent them in the program.

University of Illinois Extension: The decision was made that the location of the Extension would be best suited on a college campus as its purpose is to educate the community. The Board of Trustees communicated with University of Illinois Extension Leadership in building a plan. A location was agreed upon, and the University of Illinois currently rents space from HCC.

Columbia College of Missouri - Freeport: A community identified need of access to baccalaureate degrees in our district was indicated in HCC's Strategic Plan. The President of HCC sought out partnerships with four-year colleges that could offer degrees on campus, and Columbia College of Missouri was deemed the best choice. The President of HCC then communicated with the Board of Trustees and the President of Columbia College of Missouri to establish the program.

Community Services and Lifelong Learning

Stephenson County Leadership Institute/Jo Daviess County Leadership Forum: The Leadership Institute formed as a result of a community financial institution-led initiative in Stephenson County. Community members worked with the HCC President and the HCC Board of Trustees to establish the Stephenson County Leadership Institute. Later, a similar community-led initiative occurred in Jo Daviess County. Currently, the Stephenson County Leadership Institute and the Jo Daviess County Leadership Forum have steering committees comprised of program alumni that review program objectives and provide guidance and direction.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP): RSVP is a federally funded program through the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). HCC received the first RSVP grant in July of 1973. RSVP's objective is to engage individuals 55 years of age and older in their communities through volunteerism. RSVP acts as a coordinating service for civic engagement while matching the talents and interests of the senior volunteers with expressed community needs. This connection builds stronger communities and provides an economic boost to the local economy.

Volunteers may serve one hour per month or many hours per week and are required to report hours monthly, which can be done in a hard copy provided to the office or online through a link on the HCC website. Successful volunteer management requires staff to recruit, place, monitor, train when appropriate, and collect volunteer hours to report to the funding sources.

The RSVP staff communicates with all volunteer sites on a regular basis. Every third year, the program re-establishes the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with each volunteer station. The MOU is a formal agreement that outlines the responsibilities of HCC as sponsor and the local agency as community partner. The face-to-face and written agreements provide the basis for RSVP to determine if volunteers are still being helpful and productive and are meeting the needs of the agency. It also allows the staff to communicate the importance of collecting data required for reporting to the funding sources.

Friends of the Fine Arts: The Vice President of Academic Services/Chief Academic Officer, Dean of Humanities/Fine Arts and Director of Fine Arts meet regularly to determine the objectives of the program. These objectives are used to expand and organize support for the program. Opportunities

are created for the members to support fine arts at HCC. Classes at HCC are designed to educate the student, and Friends of the Fine Arts is designed to educate the community.

HCC Foundation

The HCC Foundation was the first community college foundation established in the State of Illinois and among the first in the nation. The HCC Foundation has provided support to HCC since 1962.

Collaborative Relationship between HCC and the YMCA

The creation of this collaboration was determined by HCC administrators to be beneficial to meeting our non-instructional objectives. The administrators of the YMCA and HCC determined the union could accomplish the objectives of both organizations in a cost-effective manner. Currently, the objective setting process for the five initiatives listed previously in Figure 2P1.4 occurs via the responsible staff and approving team/staff therein identified. Additionally, the YMCA includes an HCC staff or faculty member on the YMCA Board of Directors.

2P3. This response was rated both an S and an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Feedback was specific to RSVP. As is laid out in the HCC Other Distinctive Objectives Process Map (Figure 2.1), an idea or request is communicated to the appropriate College administrator or facilitator. If an idea or request is supported, implementation of the plan will include all appropriate College resources. If an idea or request is not supported, even after incorporating suggestions for modification of idea or request, the originator of the idea or request is informed of the decision and the rationale behind the decision. Specifics about our four major non-instructional objectives are as follows:

Relationships with Secondary and Post-Secondary Educational Institutions

Servant-Leadership: Student Leaders already in the program select from student applicants for acceptance into the program. High school adult mentors are involved in training the Student Leaders and organizing program events. The Coordinator of Servant-Leadership at HCC coordinates monthly meeting on campus and supervises and trains mentors while communicating HCC expectations.

Regional training sessions are held once a month for an eight-month period. These training sessions prepare the students to be empowered to plan and implement their own service ideas and see their project ideas come to fruition. The sessions expose students to a variety of skilled professional trainers and training methods. Students are taught how to identify and articulate their goals, roles, procedures, and responsibilities for each given topic session.

University of Illinois Extension: The county director for the University of Illinois Extension or other staff members from the University of Illinois communicate directly with members of HCC's administration and staff.

Columbia College of Missouri - Freeport: The President of HCC gives a Board report annually to the Board of Trustees. The President creates this report after meeting with the Director of Columbia College of Missouri – Freeport and the President of Columbia College of Missouri.

Community Services and Lifelong Learning

Stephenson County Leadership Institute/Jo Daviess County Leadership Forum: The Director of Leadership Programs and the program's co-facilitator coordinate and lead monthly sessions for both the Leadership Forum and the Leadership Institute. Communication occurs during these meetings and through monthly mailings to participants. The HCC President is chief budget manager for the Leadership Programs, and the co-facilitator to the Leadership programs works directly with the HCC President.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program: Community input and oversight is delivered by the RSVP Advisory Council. The Council includes RSVP volunteers, volunteer station staff, and numerous

community leaders. It is their expressed purpose to support and advise the staff in the proper course of what is best for the volunteers and the volunteer stations and how to best serve our local area.

In 2012, RSVP funds for our service area were opened for re-competition. This is the first time since 1973 that funding was available for others to write an RSVP grant. HCC was awarded the RSVP grant based on its financial stability and capacity for over 35 years in maintaining a quality program.

Friends of the Fine Arts: Various meetings throughout the year give members the opportunity to learn about upcoming events and activities. In addition, members receive information by mail, and inserts are placed into every fine arts event program at HCC.

HCC Foundation

Academic and Need-Based Scholarships: Expectations on how to apply for scholarships are communicated to the students through an online scholarship search engine and printed materials. Additionally, HCC Foundation staff present to high school students and current college students.

Top Scholars Program: The Director of Enrollment and Records communicates with high school principals indicating Top Scholar scholarships that will be available for the coming year. A Top Scholar scholarship for one year (up to 32 hours) that will be awarded to the top ten percent of the high school graduating class in the district. Each of the high schools in the district provide HCC with a list of eligible students.

Athletic Scholarships: The Kahl Scholarship and the Norman Scholarship are available through the HCC Foundation. These scholarships are communicated to prospective and current students through the basketball, baseball, softball, bowling, volleyball, and golf coaches.

Alumni Association: The Steering Committee meets once a month and determines the goals of the Alumni Association. They serve as ambassadors of HCC and communicate during public activities to alumni and the community.

Collaborative Relationship between HCC and the YMCA

The expectations are communicated within a written agreement between the YMCA and HCC. The agreement includes facility usage, personnel, custodial maintenance, utilities, and general cost-sharing. Verbal and written communication also occur daily regarding operations.

2P4. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Feedback was specific to RSVP. As is laid out in the HCC Other Distinctive Objectives Process Map (Figure 2.1), a facilitator convenes a review group to perform a feasibility study and to assess if the idea or request aligns with HCC's mission. If the idea or request is supported and HCC proceeds with implementation, we internally involve the appropriate review group and representatives from the outside organization, as appropriate. Specifics about our four major non-instructional objectives are as follows:

Relationships with Secondary and Post-Secondary Educational Institutions

Servant-Leadership: Monthly written evaluations are given to all students and mentors at the end of each training session to assess and evaluate the trainers and the training topic. Monthly assessment meetings are also held with the adult mentors to assure that the core objectives of the program are being met. Scholarship recipients are also asked to give a statement on the impact the program had on their educational experience. Mentors and students are encouraged to write a final evaluation/assessment of the program and give suggestions on improvements that can be made for the following year. All students and mentors are also given a course syllabus that outlines various goals and objectives of the program.

University of Illinois Extension: The University of Illinois Extension works with stakeholders, volunteers, and partnering organizations to determine programming priorities. Assessing and reviewing of programs is conducted mostly through feedback of program participants.

Columbia College of Missouri - Freeport: The College administration reviews the relationship with Columbia College of Missouri - Freeport through annual meetings with the Director, or as issues arise. The HCC Board of Trustees is updated, as needed.

Community Services and Lifelong Learning

Stephenson County Leadership Institute/Jo Daviess County Leadership Forum: Monthly evaluations occur after each session and are based on participant questionnaires. At the end of the year, there is a comprehensive program evaluation that measures program objectives, again based on participant questionnaires. The comprehensive program evaluations are reviewed by the Leadership Steering Committees and are used for program recommendations.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program: With the re-competition process, CNCS required RSVP to focus on specific service areas. RSVP will be addressing Healthy Futures through the service category Food Security. Hunger is a serious and ongoing problem in Northwest Illinois. According to the Stephenson County Poverty Work Group, the median family income dropped 13% between 1999 and 2008. This figure represents the largest decrease in the state for that period of time, according to a newly released report from Voices for Illinois Children. Food banks and clothing shelters are vital to meeting the needs of these clients. Volunteers can help with collection, packing and distribution of food items, as well as with sorting and providing clothing to those in need. RSVP volunteers serve at multiple food distribution sites to aid low income individuals at risk of hunger.

Friends of the Fine Arts: Because the program is in its infancy, a review has not been formally completed. An informal assessment has shown that the Friends of the Fine Arts has completed several objectives, including granting scholarships to fine arts students two years in a row, collecting dues from members, and participating in activities such as concerts and trips to plays off campus.

HCC Foundation

The HCC Foundation Board of Directors is comprised of 26 individuals. The Executive Committee is comprised of seven of those Directors plus the HCC President and the HCC Chairman of the Board of Trustees. The Executive Director of the HCC Foundation works annually with the Executive Committee to review progress toward meeting annual goals and objectives. Through the HCC President, the HCC Foundation is made aware of College and scholarship needs.

Collaborative Relationship between HCC and the YMCA

HCC Administration continually assesses the appropriateness of its collaboration with the YMCA and its value to the College and the Athletic Department. An Annual stakeholders meeting between the HCC and YMCA administrations allows both organizations to review the relationship, the agreement, the effectiveness of the collaboration and any changes or areas of improvement that need to be addressed at that time.

2P5. This category was rated an OO in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. As is laid out in the HCC Other Distinctive Objectives Process Map (Figure 2.1), a facilitator convenes a review group to perform a feasibility study and to assess if the idea or request aligns with HCC's mission and with the needs of faculty and staff. Specifics about our four major non-instructional objectives are as follows:

Relationships with Secondary and Post-Secondary Educational Institutions

Servant-Leadership: HCC, our local high schools (16 high schools serving four counties), and their respected communities highly value this Regional High School Servant-Leadership program. Faculty and staff at HCC are called upon as volunteers, when needed, for events and projects involving the local high school servant leaders.

University of Illinois Extension: HCC provides maintenance and upkeep for the rented space. The Director of Physical Plant and Maintenance incorporates requests from faculty and staff regarding their needs. The University of Illinois Extension works with the HCC Coordinator of the Conference Center and Business Institute routinely for reserving rooms and for the planning of large events. The University of Illinois Extension has worked with HCC Administration to offer some programs for college credit.

Columbia College of Missouri - Freeport: Columbia College of Missouri attempts to work closely with HCC staff to help students determine a schedule that incorporates HCC courses and instructors when available. The Director of Physical Plant and Maintenance determines staff needs in relation to maintenance and upkeep of the office as HCC provides this service.

Community Services and Lifelong Learning

Leadership Institute/Forum: Annual meetings are held with the Leadership Program staff and HCC President to determine any faculty and staff needs relative to the program.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program: Results of the outputs and impact will be required at the end of the three-year grant cycle. Faculty and staff needs relative to this program are assessed at that time.

Friends of the Fine Arts: Meetings are held between the Dean of Humanities/Fine Arts and the faculty in the Fine Arts department to determine any upcoming opportunities/events that faculty or Friends of the Fine Arts members can participate in.

HCC Foundation

Needs of faculty and staff are typically communicated to the Foundation Executive Director through communication from the HCC President and/or various Vice Presidents and/or Division Deans or Chairs. Before implementing any appropriate fundraising efforts, the HCC Foundation will secure the HCC President's concurrence and prioritization.

Collaborative Relationship between HCC and the YMCA

HCC Human Resources works in collaboration with the Athletic Department, Custodial and Maintenance Departments, and Student Services to determine the faculty and staff needs in relation to maintaining this collaborative relationship.

2P6. This response was not addressed in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. As is laid out in the HCC Other Distinctive Objectives Process Map (Figure 2.1), faculty and staff needs are assessed within the feasibility studies performed by review groups (such as Illinois Community College Board program reviews). The faculty and staff needs are then incorporated into any implementation plans. Specifics about our four major non-instructional objectives are as follows:

Relationships with Secondary and Post-Secondary Educational Institutions

Servant-Leadership: HCC's faculty and staff are made aware of upcoming events/projects through communication from the Coordinator of the Servant-Leadership program. As mentioned in 2P5, volunteerism is a large part of the Servant-Leadership program, and HCC faculty and staff respond when able.

University of Illinois Extension: Incorporating faculty and staff needs relative to the University of Illinois Extension can, in many instances, be initiated by any faculty or staff. Depending on the scale of the project, HCC Administration may need to approve HCC's role in the collaboration. Current examples of incorporating faculty and staff needs include the University of Illinois Extension working collaboratively with the agriculture instructor and some of the natural science faculty (especially in regards to greenhouse use), RSVP volunteers processing mailings, and working with the YMCA and the Childcare/Training Center on programming decisions as needed.

Columbia College of Missouri - Freeport: Since Columbia College of Missouri - Freeport office is run independently of HCC, the faculty and staff needs in relation to this objective are minor and have little bearing on readjusting the objective or support processes. If, in the future, major faculty or staff needs arise, the HCC President will work with the Board of Trustees on a plan of implementation.

Community Services and Lifelong Learning

Leadership Institute/Forum: The Leadership staff and HCC President work together to attempt to meet leadership training needs, and a similar process would occur for other potential faculty and staff needs relative to the Leadership Program.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program: The director and staff of RSVP communicate with volunteer sites on a regular basis and can use the community input delivered by the RSVP Advisory Council to assess needs and address them quickly and effectively.

Friends of the Fine Arts: Because a review has not been formally completed, we have not yet readjusted objectives and operations.

HCC Foundation

Faculty and staff who request specific funding are involved in the process of soliciting and securing gifts from prospective donors because faculty and staff are closest to the need and can most eloquently provide verbal or written support.

Collaborative Relationship between HCC and the YMCA

HCC Administration assesses recommendations received from department heads responsible for maintaining the collaborative relationship. Based on the recommendations of faculty and staff needs and the cost effectiveness of these recommended changes, adjustments are negotiated.

2R1. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report.

Relationships with Secondary and Post-Secondary Educational Institutions

Servant-Leadership: The monthly written evaluations that completed by students and mentors at the end of each training session assess and evaluate the trainers and the training topic, and monthly assessment meetings held with the adult mentors assure that the objectives of the program are met.

University of Illinois Extension: The Extension does evaluations at the end of programs and workshops; these evaluations ask participants how they will utilize what they have learned. Participants also give narratives about the usefulness of the programs or workshops and any feedback regarding improvement. The Extension works collaboratively with other University of Illinois Extension offices around the state and replicates programming where possible and appropriate. The Extension also keeps data regarding the number of participants who utilize the programs and workshops each year.

Columbia College of Missouri - Freeport: Columbia College keeps track of undergraduate and graduate enrollments, credit hours generated for both on-campus and online education courses, and number of students.

Community Services and Lifelong Learning

Leadership Institute/Forum: Monthly evaluations occur after each session and are based on participant questionnaires. At the end of the year, there is a comprehensive program evaluation that measures program objectives, which is again based on participant questionnaires.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program: RSVP must routinely reapply for grants, and during this process, directives are determined for specific service areas. The CNCS, in this way, aids in helping RSVP meet goals.

Friends of the Fine Arts: Membership and financial support is collected on a regular basis. Surveys and polls regarding the theater and community interest have also been conducted.

HCC Foundation

One measure of the HCC Foundation's activities is the amount of funds raised during the fiscal year for specific campaigns and other needs of HCC. The Foundation also evaluates its total data base of donors and prospects; increases in donations by donors; the history of individual donor's giving; and donations by constituencies, such as annual fund givers, scholarship donors, alumni, and attendees at the Shindig events, Leadership golf outings and other fundraising activities.

Collaborative Relationship between HCC and the YMCA

Data is collected to track the number of students and staff that receive a YMCA membership. HCC also tracks the number of Physical Education credit hours and the number of student athletes.

2R2. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report.

Relationships with Secondary and Post-Secondary Educational Institutions

Servant-Leadership: Over 1,000 high school students and mentors have participated in the program. During that period, students have personally generated over 816,000 documented hours of volunteer services to their communities. A Regional Service Project has also been implemented, whereby all students from all participating high schools take part in writing goals pertaining to the overall project. Each Regional Project selected is carried out over a minimum of a two-year time span if possible. Some examples of Regional Projects include a Red Cross Awareness Campaign that raised over \$5,000 for the American Red Cross and educated over 5,000 people, an AIDS Awareness Campaign which raised over \$5,000 and educated over 8,000 people, an Environmental Awareness – "Low Carbon Diet" that educated over 5,000 people, and a "Hearts and Hands for Hunger" Project that generated 295,745 meals for children in other countries and provided tons of food for local food banks.

University of Illinois Extension: For fiscal year 11, the University of Illinois Extension had 5,373 participants. In fiscal year 12, an addition to the number of staff lead to an increase in the number of participants, which then totaled 10,656. In fiscal year 13, there were 8,068 participants.

*Columbia College of Missouri - Freeport:***Table 2.5** Students Enrolled at Columbia College of Missouri – Freeport

	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
<i>Undergraduate</i>	158	162	177	168
<i>Graduate</i>	14	13	9	13

Table 2.6 Enrollments at Columbia College of Missouri – Freeport

	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
<i>Undergraduate</i>	648	786	750	746
<i>Graduate</i>	14	13	9	13

Table 2.7 Credit Hours at Columbia College of Missouri – Freeport

	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
<i>Undergraduate</i>	1,587	2,169	2,081	2,058
<i>Graduate</i>	150	123	87	112

Community Services and Lifelong Learning

Stephenson County Leadership Institute/Jo Daviess County Leadership Forum: Annually, participants are asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the Leadership Institute/Forum at meeting the forum goals via comments and a scoring rubric (options are Very Effective, Effective, and Ineffective).

Evaluations indicate participants believe most of the goals (ex.; Helping participants explore and understand community issues, and helping participants improve their leadership skills) are met at the level of Very Effective. Comments attached along with scores lower than Very Effective are reviewed and feedback is incorporated into the program as needed and as feasible.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program: Funding for RSVP from federal and state grants continues to remain stable.

Friends of the Fine Arts: Since its inception in fall 2011, membership has grown to 31 members and \$9,600 in financial support. Focus has been on awarding scholarships and sponsoring events. Since 2012, scholarships totaling \$500.00 each have been awarded to HCC freshman students in Arts programming who plan to return to the campus.

HCC Foundation

From Fiscal Year 2013 to Fiscal Year 2014, the HCC Foundation's total assets grew from \$17,000,000 to over \$22,000,000 due to increases in donor giving, receipt of unrestricted bequests, and capital appreciation. Academic and need-based scholarship disbursements have remained relatively stable since 2007, ranging between a low of \$322,000 to \$345,000 for 2014.

Support for the Top Scholars program, which is funded by the Foundation and the College, has increased from \$88,000 to \$121,000 from Fiscal Year 2009 through Fiscal Year 2014. Enrollment in the Top Scholars program is estimated to have been 17% of the target population in 2004 and 19% in 2005 prior to the implementation of the Top Scholars waiver. From the classes of 2006-2013, HCC enrolled between 15% (in 2009) and 30% (in 2008) of Top Scholars and the rate is generally around 22%.

Collaborative Relationship between HCC and the YMCA

The eligibility criteria for student YMCA memberships has changed from a required 6 to 12 credit hours of HCC enrollment. This has led to a decrease in the number of HCC students with a YMCA

membership from 686 in spring 2011 to 461 in spring 2014. The number of HCC students with a YMCA membership has also decreased due to a decline in overall campus enrollment.

The number of HCC faculty and staff with a YMCA membership has also decreased from 114 in 2011 to 69 in 2014 due to a change in the YMCA membership co-pay. Previously, faculty and staff were offered a basic YMCA membership at no cost. Currently, faculty must pay an additional \$110 to receive the same basic YMCA membership. The changes in membership eligibility and co-pay were made with HCC's financial well-being in mind.

The number of Physical Education credit hours has remained relatively stable from 1423 in 2010 to 1174 in 2014.

Table 2.8 Number of HCC Athletes per Sport

Teams	2011-2012		2012-2013		2013-2014	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Baseball	20		19		21	
Basketball	12	11	13	10	13	10
Bowling	N/A	N/A	7		6	6
Golf	5		4		8	
Softball		10		14		12
Volleyball		8		12		9
Total	37	29	43	36	48	37

2R3. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report.

Relationships with Secondary and Post-Secondary Educational Institutions

Servant-Leadership: The program was awarded The Stephenson County Quality of Life Award as well as receiving recognition from local mayors and state representatives for their contribution to communities. In addition, students and staff have been selected to present at the International Conference for Servant-Leadership by the Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership.

University of Illinois Extension: The University of Illinois Extension is overseen by the University of Illinois College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences. The National Institute of Food and Agriculture is a federal partner in the Cooperative Extension System and is housed within the United States Department of Agriculture. Land-grant colleges and universities in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the Pacific Basin have created similar extension programs.

Columbia College of Missouri - Freeport: Local access to four-year programs is important as illustrated by the positive effect other colleges and universities in Illinois have on their surrounding communities.

Community Services and Lifelong Learning

Leadership Institute/Forum: There are few institutions which operate a comparable program. We currently have no data but periodically look for the performance results of other similar programs.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program: HCC's RSVP is one of four such programs in Illinois that are sponsored by community colleges.

Friends of the Fine Arts: The concept originated with a model based on a similar organization at Kaskaskia College.

HCC Foundation

Dr. William R. Crowe conducted extensive national research specific to two-year colleges and their support foundations. Dr. Crowe reported that the HCC Foundation, in terms of total assets, is ranked in the top 100 (#42) for the 2012 filing period. Furthermore, analysis of funds raised and total assets in Category 2: Other Distinct Objectives

a particular year showed that the HCC Foundation, compared with 42 other community college districts in Illinois, ranked number 1 in assets (\$16,172,365) in 2011 but only number 21 (\$460,684) in funds raised.

A review of IRS 990 forms filed by not-for-profit 501C3 organizations (Illinois community colleges) indicate that the HCC Foundation is typically one of the top 10 funders of student scholarships and assets under management. The HCC Foundation received the Not-for-Profit Award from the Freeport Chamber of Commerce in 2013.

Collaborative Relationship between HCC and the YMCA

There are no other known institutions in which there is a collaboration between a college and the local YMCA; hence, we are unable to compare with another organization, higher education or other.

2R4. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report.

Relationships with Secondary and Post-Secondary Educational Institutions

Servant-Leadership: The objectives of this program are to provide high school juniors and seniors with Key Elements of the Servant-Leadership Philosophy through educational training events that prepare students in the areas of personal development, team development and implementation of community projects and service. Students are exposed to and have a better understanding of the importance and value in serving their communities as well as identifying the importance and need for their personal contribution. Servant-Leadership also enhances our relationship with the local high schools, as it is a clear indicator of HCC's presence. In some of the high schools farther from HCC's campus, Servant-Leadership serves as the most visible and well known face of HCC.

University of Illinois Extension: Because the Extension office is run independently of HCC, HCC does not directly and regularly analyze the specific accomplishments of the programs run by the Extension office. The University of Illinois Extension system is a well-respected and important part of numerous communities across Illinois. Providing space to house this community-centered program is an example of HCC's commitment to support local educational ventures.

Columbia College of Missouri - Freeport: Many students that work toward advanced degrees with Columbia College of Missouri begin their coursework at HCC. Without the transfer agreements in place between HCC and Columbia College of Missouri and the location convenience, many of the Columbia College of Missouri – Freeport students would not attend HCC. Affordable access to Bachelor's degrees or higher is important to the region's economic and social health.

Community Services and Lifelong Learning

Leadership Institute/Forum: The Leadership programs strengthen our institution by creating stronger ties to the communities of the district. The programs also generate HCC credit hours as the participants receive college credit for their involvement in each semester of the program. The intent of the program is to cultivate community-minded leaders.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program: Volunteers work in non-profits and public agencies in Stephenson, Carroll, Ogle and Jo Daviess counties. By volunteering, seniors are given a new/renewed sense of being a needed, useful and a contributing member of their community. Studies have indicated that seniors who volunteer live longer, healthier lives and report a higher satisfaction with the quality of their lives.

Friends of the Fine Arts: It is the belief of the Friends of Fine Arts that the community and the students at HCC benefit greatly from theater, music and art in general. Allowing opportunities for exploration is one way to enforce the idea that the Arts are important to the culture of the community and the College.

HCC Foundation

As the primary funding sources (tuition, taxes, and state reimbursements) for HCC's operations have remained stable or decreased in the last few years, the HCC Foundation has worked to provide financial relief. Grant funding and support for scholarships to HCC will need to continue to increase.

The HCC Foundation currently has raised \$3.8 million towards a goal of \$7.0 million as part of a capital campaign to reduce and retire the debt incurred by the College to build two new facilities on campus: the Ray and Betty Stamm Health Science Nursing Wing and the Wind Turbine Technician Training Center. Improvements to facilities improve the instructional and educational experience by allowing for more relevant techniques and greater accessibility.

Collaborative Relationship between HCC and the YMCA

Our Relationship with the YMCA strengthens HCC's mission. Many potential HCC students (both traditional and non-traditional) visit our campus daily for programs and activities offered by the YMCA. The YMCA sponsors a myriad of activities that bring community members to the YMCA, and therefore, to the campus.

211. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. While RSVP was described in detail, HCC needed to describe the systematic and comprehensive processes across campus as a whole.

Relationships with Secondary and Post-Secondary Educational Institutions

Servant-Leadership: Mentors and students have been encouraged to write a final evaluation/assessment of the program and give suggestions on improvements that can be made for the following year. Results have been used to make improvements to the program.

University of Illinois Extension: The Extension's staff has doubled from 5 to 10 members in the last 10 years. Participant numbers vary greatly year to year; however, they have dramatically increased as the number of staff employed has increased. The University of Illinois Extension has been working with HCC to determine the feasibility of expanding its office space.

Columbia College of Missouri - Freeport: Columbia College of Missouri – Freeport recently added a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree and also offers two Master's degrees programs.

Olivet Nazarene University: Our greatest improvement in allowing access to a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing was our recent agreement with Olivet Nazarene University in 2013. Because Olivet Nazarene University has already set up similar programs with other community colleges, the process is relatively systematic and comprehensive. Due to the Institute of Medicine's 2010 recommendation that 80% of RNs have their bachelor's degree, it has become vital to develop articulation agreements with baccalaureate institutions. Only 40% of Registered Nurses in Illinois currently have a bachelor's degree, so while data is limited now, we anticipate reporting comprehensive data in our next portfolio.

Community Services and Lifelong Learning

Leadership Institute/Forum: Since the previous Portfolio, the Leadership Program presented a Harvard Law School-based negotiations role-playing scenario, HARBORCO designed to help participants gain an understanding of interest-based negotiations.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program: Periodically applying for and receiving grants for over 40 years is evidence of the continued success of the program. In 2012, RSVP funds for our service area were opened for re-competition. This is the first time since 1973 that funding was available for other agencies to write an RSVP grant.

Friends of the Fine Arts: The Friends of the Fine Arts program began in 2011, and membership and donations continue to grow.

HCC Foundation

To better meet the increasing needs of the College, in 2012, the HCC Foundation increased HCC Foundation staffing by adding a full-time Director of Fundraising whose primary responsibility is to increase the donor base and solicit funds from existing and new donors. The Director of Operations (who is responsible for financial matters and scholarship coordination) was assigned the additional responsibility of coordination of increasing development of the Alumni Association. The HCC Foundation Board has agreed to provide an increase of approximately \$700,000 for unrestricted purposes during Fiscal Year 2015.

Collaborative Relationship between HCC and the YMCA

The YMCA applied for and received a grant to update the entire lighting system in the shared HCC/YMCA sports complex. The YMCA's relationship with HCC was instrumental in qualifying for this grant. Lights are now all LEDs, resulting in dramatic energy cost savings.

2I2. This response was not addressed in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. For HCC to effectively carry out its mission, the development of new and on-going relationships and partnerships is critical. Also, because of the large diversity of interest groups who may wish to partner with HCC, it is imperative that the HCC Other Distinctive Objectives Process Map (Figure 2.1) be employed in a consistent manner when dealing with the evaluation of potential relationships.

CATEGORY 3: UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS' AND STAKEHOLDER'S NEEDS

The College has taken significant steps with regard to understanding students' and other stakeholders' needs. In 2010, the College's processes for collecting and using satisfaction data were reactive in nature. Since that time, the institution has systematically selected, administered, and analyzed results of a number of surveys and other data in its planning process. Some processes are aligned with the College's mission and Strategic Plan and involve coordination among departments. Other processes, though, lack coordination, and results are not necessarily shared among institutional units. The College could improve formal processes for communicating and disseminating the data and determining a course of action.

3P1. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The College identifies the needs of student groups through a series of college-wide surveys; department specific surveys; course and faculty evaluations; feedback from student groups, clubs, and organizations; and work of established Student Services units. As reported in the 2010 Systems Portfolio, the College has a three-year institutional survey plan (see Table 3.1). New to the current survey plan are the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP) and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE).

Table 3.1 Institutional Survey and Metrics Plan – Fiscal Year 2013 to 2015

Year	Target Population	Survey/Service	Survey/Service Description
FY 2013	Adult Learners	Adult Learner Inventory	A satisfaction survey based on the Principles of Effectiveness for Serving Adult Learners as defined by CAEL (Council for Adult and Experiential Learning)
	(HCC to use for strategic improvement)	National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP)	A standardized, nation-wide reporting process for community colleges, allowing for benchmark comparisons on measures related to student outcomes, institutional effectiveness, and community and workforce development

Year	Target Population	Survey/Service	Survey/Service Description
	Completers	HCC Transfer Survey	Includes items eliciting information from transfer students about their course transfer experience, satisfaction with transfer resources, and satisfaction with educational preparation
	Selected sample of currently enrolled students	Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)	Includes items eliciting information from students about their college experiences – how they spend their time; what they feel they have gained from their classes; how they assess their relationships and interactions with faculty, staff, and other students; how the College supports their learning; etc.

Year	Target Population	Survey/Service	Survey/Service Description
FY 2014	Entering Students	Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE)	Includes items eliciting information from students about their first experiences with college intake processes, instructors, advisors, other students, and support services
	Completers	HCC Graduate survey	The purpose of this survey is to determine how the College is meeting its graduates' instructional, academic, and student support needs as well as gather information with regard to the overall value of education graduates feel they receive by coming to Highland.
	(HCC to use for strategic improvement)	National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP)	A standardized, nation-wide reporting process for community colleges allowing for benchmark comparisons on measures related to student outcomes, institutional effectiveness, and community and workforce development
	(Strategic Planning Council to use for strategic improvement)	Environmental Scan	The purpose of this environmental scan will be to help inform the College's next Strategic Plan. An environmental scan will help the College to identify and understand the potential impact of economic, demographic, technological, political/social, and educational trends.
	Business Leaders, City/ County officials, School Personnel	Community Leaders Survey	The purpose of this survey is to obtain feedback from community leaders on the extent to which the College is delivering on its mission and the kinds of environmental factors that are issues for their communities. The results of this survey will inform the College's Strategic Plan.

Year	Target Population	Survey/Service	Survey/Service Description
FY 2015	Current Students	Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory	Includes items eliciting the importance students place on various services, programs, and experiences and the relative degree of satisfaction

			that results from their transactions with them.
	Employees	Personnel Assessment of the College Environment (PACE)	Items on this instrument are divided into four domains: institutional structure, supervisory relationship, teamwork, and student focus
	(HCC to use for strategic improvement)	National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP)	A standardized, nation-wide reporting process for community colleges allowing for benchmark comparisons on measures related to student outcomes, institutional effectiveness, and community and workforce development

Data from the various surveys are analyzed by the Institutional Research Department. Summaries of the results are shared with the College Leadership Team, during College division meetings, at Opening Days events at the beginning of each semester, and electronically through the College's network. Smaller committees are formed to address specific areas, further analyze the data, investigate best practices and successful models, and develop appropriate courses of action. For example, survey results indicated that our students were not always satisfied with the scheduling of courses. An Alternative Scheduling task force was formed to investigate options and barriers for scheduling courses outside of the traditional 16-week course format in order to better meet the needs of HCC students.

In addition to the formal methods of identifying the changing needs of our student groups, HCC gathers information through informal channels, including suggestion boxes on campus, student senate, and numerous student clubs and organizations. Information gathered through informal means is addressed at the departmental level and may be brought to the college level as needed. For example, in 2012, a student advisory vote was made to add blue as one of the College's colors of orange, dark brown, and white, since most of the athletic uniforms and apparel sold in the College's bookstore included blue. The students took their request to Student Senate, who then made a formal request to the College's Policy Committee and ultimately to the Board of Trustees. The Board unanimously voted to approve adding blue to the College's colors.

4.C. The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

- The College participates in the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP) and develops a set of annual monitoring reports which focus on the recruitment and retention of students and the extent to which the College is meeting the expected outcomes for the College's transfer, occupational, workforce preparation, and adult education programs.
- NCCBP data and the data collected and analyzed for the monitoring reports are the primary sets of data and information utilized to determine retention, persistence, and completion rates and set targets. Data from the many surveys the College administers to a variety of targeted stakeholders provides much data for which strategies are determined to improve these rates.

3P2. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The College begins making connections with students before they enroll through a variety of ways. Prospective students who have not made decisions about college are invited to experience Highland's campus and culture via the Experience Highland program. Students are provided a tour and are given the opportunity to meet with staff, faculty and current students. Student survey results show that the tour experience provides an important point of contact with students that allows for the development or enhancement of relationships with students and families.

Highland completed its fifth year with QuickStart in the spring of 2014. QuickStart is a program designed to transition incoming, traditional students to their first semester of college. Each participating high school has an entire day dedicated to them. The students' high school transcripts are evaluated prior to their visit. If needed, they take our Highland placement test, meet with an Academic Advisor, register for their first semester of classes, meet with Financial Aid, and participate in presentations by campus faculty and staff. Presentations include "Becoming Involved at HCC," "Academic Support," "Student Employment," and "Online at Highland (Your Moodle and email Accounts)."

The B4U Test program is designed to help students build confidence when testing and brush up on their skills to prepare for the COMPASS placement test. This two and one-half hour workshop, offered once a month, touches upon test-taking tactics, essay writing, and reading reference and reasoning skills. Students reinforce math skills by reviewing core concepts and learn unique approaches to the study of math. Students, who have already taken the Highland Placement Test and would like to improve their scores or those who are about to take it for the first time, are encouraged to attend.

Fast Forward is a summer bridge program that provides an opportunity for participants to begin building a proper foundation for learning in the areas of English, math and reading. Students are introduced to campus resources, state of the art technology and specialized learning techniques to best meet their individual styles. Instructors help students in their respective fields to work toward mastering critical skills, including test-taking strategies, to prepare them to retake the Highland Placement Test for possible placement into a higher level class.

Highland builds and maintains relationships with its current students in both formal and informal ways. Formally, we provide critical data and information to our students through our website, institutional and program-specific Facebook pages, institutional Twitter account, direct mail, phone calls, and the *CollegeFocus* magazine. Informally, the internal stakeholders are all deeply committed to being as helpful as possible, making students comfortable, asking and answering questions in a timely fashion, having multiple contacts with students (even when face-to-face contact isn't an option), and making students aware of the array of services for which they are eligible.

An initiative currently being implemented on campus is offering major-specific First-Year Experience seminar (FYES) classes. Education and health care are the two areas that have dedicated sections of FYES. Other areas, such as science, are being investigated for future implementation. These classes are modeled off of the current semester-long orientation course we offer. The major-specific sections encourage students to not only build relationships with each other but also to build relationships with advisors and faculty members in their proposed areas of study.

In addition to those structured and consistent methods, we also provide a range of more unique opportunities for students to directly engage and foster relationships with faculty and staff. Some of those opportunities include a Fall Picnic, a Graduation Picnic, Pizza with the President, co-curricular clubs and organizations, and intramural sports events that include faculty and staff teams.

3P3. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The College's key stakeholder groups include students, alumni, employees, district taxpayers and other community residents, other educational institutions, local and regional employers, and government agencies.

For each of these stakeholders, one or more methods are used to identify their changing needs and requirements relating to the College. Because identifying and analyzing changes in student needs were addressed in 3P1, section 3P3 will focus on other internal and external stakeholders. There are several key processes and positions identified that are responsible for methods of data collection (see Table 3.2).

The taxpayers are represented by a seven-member elected Board of Trustees. The Trustees are imbedded in their communities and actively seek to identify taxpayer concerns pertaining to the College.

The Community Leaders Survey is a method utilized by the College to obtain feedback from external stakeholders. The survey provides information on the extent to which the College is delivering on its mission and the kinds of environmental factors that are important to our communities. Results of the survey are used in the development of the College's Strategic Plan. The College utilizes a variety of other methods, in addition to surveys, to identify the needs of external stakeholders. These include Lunch with the President, department and program advisory boards, community forums, and Business Institute program evaluations. Information gathered from these methods is analyzed by the responsible party to determine the next course of action.

For College employees, considered other internal stakeholders, the Personnel Assessment of the College Environment (PACE), as discussed in Category 4, is used to identify needs. Data collected from this survey is analyzed by the Institutional Research Department and Human Resources. In addition to the survey, internal stakeholders are given opportunities to provide input into College decisions by participation in numerous campus committees. For example, College Council, further described in Category 5, includes representatives from all areas of the College. In March 2014, as part of the College's funding bond cycle, all departments on campus were asked to analyze their needs and submit proposals for funding through the bond project. College Council then reviewed all proposals, and departments were given the opportunity to present their proposals to College Council prior to a vote in June 2014. The voting process enabled the College to develop a prioritization for the bond proposals.

Table 3.2 Identifying and Responding to Other Stakeholder Needs

Group	Method	Responsibility
District Taxpayers / Community Residents	Foundations events (i.e. Lunch with the President), HCC website, Community Leaders Survey	Foundation, Board of Trustees, HCC President, Marketing and Community Relations, Strategic Planning Committee
Educational Institutions	Annual meetings with high school guidance counselors and/or principals, Participation in Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI), Articulation agreements with other colleges and universities	Director of Enrollment and Records, Vice President of Academic Services/Chief Academic Officer, Transfer Coordinator, Academic Deans
Local and Regional Employers	Program/department advisory boards, community forums, Business Institute	Academic Deans and Directors
Government Agencies (ICCB)	National Community College Benchmark Project, ICCB outcome reports	Director of Institutional Research, Vice President of Academic Services/Chief Academic Officer
Employees	PACE, campus committees	Director of Institutional Research, Human Resources, Leadership Team

1.D.

- HCC is committed to shaping the future of our communities by providing quality education and learning opportunities through programs and services that encourage the personal and professional growth of the people of northwestern Illinois (mission statement)
- In addition to offering comprehensive academic programming with over 60 degrees and certificates, Highland is a beacon of cultural opportunity. Our theatre, arts, music, literature, and lecture series are popular throughout the area, and our Cougars have a strong record of athletic successes.
- Friends of the Fine Arts is a new organization developed to increase the opportunities of students and those in the local communities to explore and enjoy the arts.

3P4. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Being responsive to the changing needs of the College's stakeholders is critical for building relationships. In addition, the College must communicate regularly with our stakeholders to provide information on its educational programs and services. Accompanying the methods described in 3P1, 3P2, and 3P3, the College has many other initiatives to build and maintain relationships with its stakeholders, as outlined in Table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3 Examples of Building Relationships with Key Stakeholders

Stakeholders	Initiative	Description / Purpose
District Taxpayers/Residents	Friends of the Fine Arts	A service that consists of individuals interested in furthering the educational endeavors of HCC and expanding the College's effort to enhance the culture and art community.
District Taxpayers/Residents	Lunch with the President	An event to promote collaboration between HCC Office of the President and the HCC Foundation. The purpose of these luncheons is threefold: to allow guests a chance to interact with the President in a small-group setting, to provide opportunities for the President to provide College updates and hear feedback from district residents, and to allow Foundation staff and HCC staff to listen in and learn about constituents' concerns and interests, for possible future follow-up.
District Taxpayers/Residents	<i>CollegeFocus</i>	Magazine sent to approximately 50,000 addresses throughout the College District 3 times per year. The publication includes academic program highlights; career information; and student, faculty, and alumni profiles as well as the course schedule for the upcoming semester.
Students/Governmental Agencies	ADA Committee	A committee tasked with building sustainable relationships with community members to assist in better understanding barriers in education, educate faculty and staff members in current practices and changes in the disability services field, and advocate for students. Membership includes faculty and staff members as well as representatives from community agencies and programs (See 9P1).
Students	Adult Student Network	A club specifically for our non-traditional students because adult students often have different concerns than students who just graduated from high school. The Adult Student Network provides learning opportunities and promotes networking opportunities to its members.
Students	Honors Program	A program providing eligible students with enhanced educational experiences in select courses chosen in cooperation with College faculty. Participating students will benefit from advanced study and specialized research related to General Education courses and/or areas of concentration or specialization.

Stakeholders	Initiative	Description / Purpose
Students	Veterans Group	A group aiming to support and encourage student veterans and their families by providing resources and advocacy needed to succeed in higher education.
Local and Regional Employers	Tri-County Economic Development Alliance (TCEDA); Northwest Illinois Development Alliance (NIDA)	Economic development organizations that create an environment for business expansion and attraction to the College District and surrounding areas as well as workforce development activities in conjunction with employers.
Local and Regional Employers	Workforce Development Coalition	A coalition to assist area businesses in developing local human resources to meet their current demand for a skilled workforce. See 9P5 for more information.
Educational Institutions	CollegeNOW	A program allowing high-achieving juniors and seniors from local high schools attend Highland, simultaneously earning a high school diploma and an associate's degree. See 9P1 for more information.
District Taxpayers/Residents	Community Forums	Larger more inclusive members of related groups invited on campus to discuss program needs, direction, and partnerships. Assembled typically when the College is contemplating significant changes in a program or looking to add a program(s).
Educational Institutions/Local and Regional Employers/Governmental Agencies	Department/Program Advisory Boards	Boards made up of businesses, agencies, and organizations that employ or may employ future HCC graduates, as well as past and current students. The purpose of the advisory groups is to review and provide review recommendations of program outcomes and offerings, expectations of program graduates, and feedback of new challenges and concerns in the field. (See 9P2).

Though specific staff positions oversee relationship-building activities, it is the responsibility of each College faculty and staff member to build relationships with the College's stakeholders. College employees serve on committees and organizations within the district, including service clubs, not-for-profit boards, and economic development entities. Through affiliations with these organizations, College employees are able to match services provided by the College with needs of the community.

3P5. This response was not addressed in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The College's mission remains at the forefront when deciding to target new student or stakeholder groups with educational programs or services. The Strategic Plan provides a framework to guide the College in fulfilling its mission. Goal One, "proactively identify emerging programmatic opportunities", illustrates the emphasis the College has placed on developing programs to meet the needs of our stakeholders. In addition to the methods outlined in 3P1, 3P3, and 3P4, the College reviews enrollment trends, high school and community demographics, and information gathered during its program review process to identify potential changes or additions to its educational programs. Costs versus benefits are also considered to insure fiscal responsibility.

A Community Input option was recently added to the College's website to provide community members an opportunity to offer suggestions for new educational programs and services. Suggestions included specific degree programs, credit courses, community education courses, and different scheduling options. Ideas gathered from the website are routed to the appropriate College department for further investigation and possible implementation.

1.D.

- New programs and course offerings have been developed in response to needs of the communities served. Some examples include Equine courses, Wind Turbine Technician program, Hospitality program, and expanded online course offerings, including nursing.
- CollegeNOW program partners with area High Schools to expand offerings to high school students and improve access to college credit courses.
- Community and College course offerings are mailed to all households in the HCC district each semester via the *CollegeFocus* magazine.

3P6. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The College continues to follow a comprehensive process concerning student academic complaints and appeals which is delineated in the College catalog, beginning on page 27.

Students, faculty, staff, or the general public can submit an online incident report through the Maxient online reporting system. Reports may be related to early alert, academic, or behavior concerns. The referral is automatically routed to the appropriate responder for review and intervention. The College purchased the Maxient reporting system in the 2010-2011 academic year and has seen a steady increase in usage over the past three academic years:

Academic Year	Reported Cases
2010-2011	9*
2011-2012	112
2012-2013	164
2013-2014	398

*Not full year due to training and implementation procedures

3R1. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. As outlined in 3P1, the College has a three-year Institutional Survey and Metrics Plan. Many of the surveys in the plan are designed to provide both measures of satisfaction and stakeholder needs, while others are utilized purely to determine student satisfaction. The large-scale surveys have benchmarks and scales that the College utilizes to determine overall satisfaction. For example, the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory has nine scales, covering a wide range of services, including academic advising, instructional effectiveness, safety and security, and student centeredness. The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) has six benchmarks, covering areas such as student-faculty interactions, collaborative learning, and support for learners. The Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE) reports six benchmarks, including early connections, expectations and aspirations, and clear academic plan and pathway.

In addition to these large-scale surveys, the College has developed custom surveys to determine needs and satisfaction for stakeholder groups. For example, the Community Leader Survey focused on how well the College was meeting expectations related to its mission. This survey requested input on the College's strategic priorities. The Transfer Survey focused on the experiences of recent transfer students regarding the effectiveness of transferring courses and the extent to which Highland courses prepared them. The Nursing Employer Survey was developed to gather input from local and regional healthcare facilities on the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the College's nursing students and graduates.

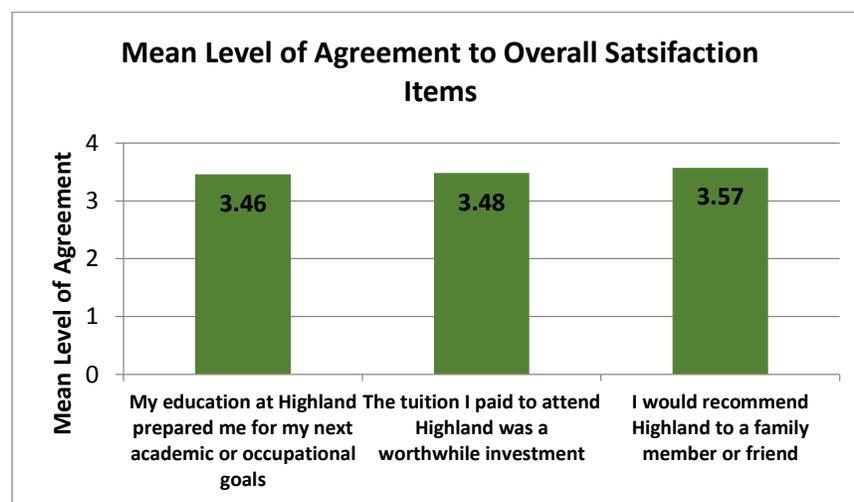
In addition to surveys, College divisions, departments, and programs utilize alternative methods and tools to determine student and stakeholder satisfaction, such as advisory boards, program participation evaluations, community forums, and College Foundation events. Course evaluations provide students with opportunities to express their level of satisfaction with the educational programs and instructors at the College.

Feedback is collected from the surveys, course evaluations, and other methods listed above by the appropriate academic department or the Institutional Research Department. As described in 3P1, Category 3: Understanding Students' and Stakeholder's Needs

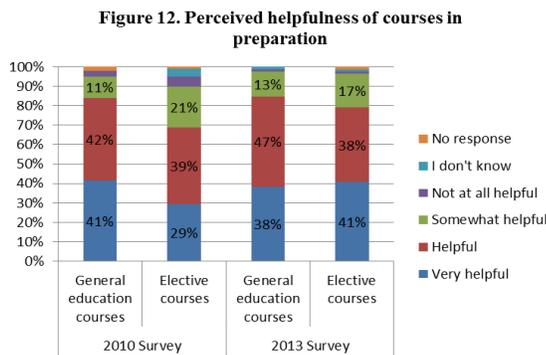
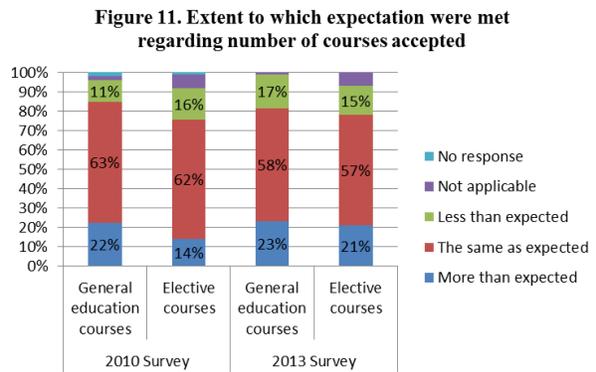
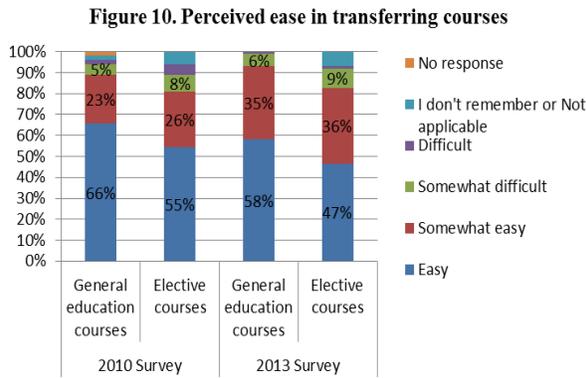
smaller committees are formed as needed to address specific areas, further analyze the data, investigate best practices and successful models, and develop appropriate courses of action.

3R2. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Though the College collects and analyzes data from a variety of surveys and other tools, performance results for student satisfaction presented here will focus on the most recent administration of the Graduate Survey (2011), Transfer Survey (2013), the Nursing Employer Survey (2014), and Business Institute program evaluations for non-credit courses.

Students who are to be awarded a degree or certificate in conjunction with the College's spring commencement are encouraged to complete a graduate survey. The purpose of this survey is to determine how the College has met its graduates' instructional, academic, and student support needs and gather information regarding the overall value of education graduates felt they received by coming to Highland. As shown in the figure below, graduates' mean level of agreement that tuition paid was a worthwhile investment, that their education at Highland prepared them for future academic or occupational goals, and that they would recommend Highland to a family member or friend all approached "strongly agree" using a likert scale from 1 to 4.

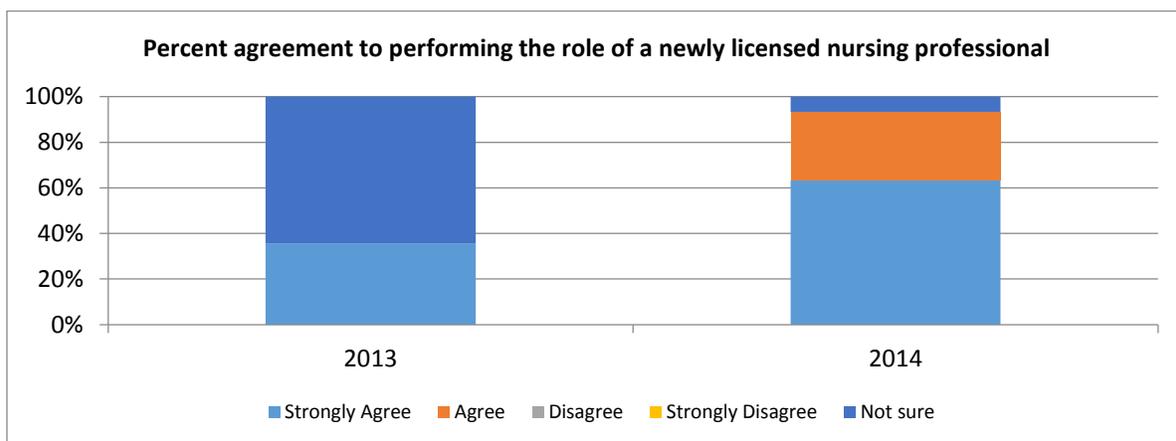


Many community college students are concerned that the four-year institution to which they transfer to complete their baccalaureate degree will not give them academic credit for the courses they take at the community college they attend. The Highland Transfer Survey contains items asking about students' course transfer experience, satisfaction with transfer resources, and satisfaction with educational preparation (see Figures 10, 11, and 12 below). The students targeted for the survey were those who graduated from the College with an Associate's degree sometime during the 2011 or 2012 academic year, who transferred to a four-year institution, and who were currently enrolled in the Spring 2013 Semester. There are comparisons made to results from the College's first administration of the survey in spring 2010.



Approximately 80% of students reported satisfaction in the areas of ease of transferring courses, the extent to which expectations were met regarding the number of courses accepted, and helpfulness of HCC courses in preparing them for coursework at their current institution. While some students reported that they encountered some challenges in transferring their courses, there was improvement in these percentage ratings as compared to results gleaned from the administration of the survey in 2010.

The Nursing and Allied Health department conducts an annual survey of recent graduates and employers to gather input on the knowledge, skills, and abilities that Highland Community College's nursing students and graduates exhibit. As a measure of student satisfaction, nursing graduates are asked to what extent they feel their educational program prepared them to perform the nursing role as expected of a newly licensed professional. As illustrated below, the percentage of students responding strongly agrees has increased from 2013 to 2014.



The Business Institute administers a program evaluation at the conclusion of every non-credit course. Participants are asked to rate the course in 11 areas using a scale of poor to excellent. The results of four of those areas most closely tied to student satisfaction are summarized in the Table 3.4 below. For most of the programs offered in fiscal year 2014, participant satisfaction was above average to excellent.

Table 3.4 Business Institute FY 14 Program Evaluation Results

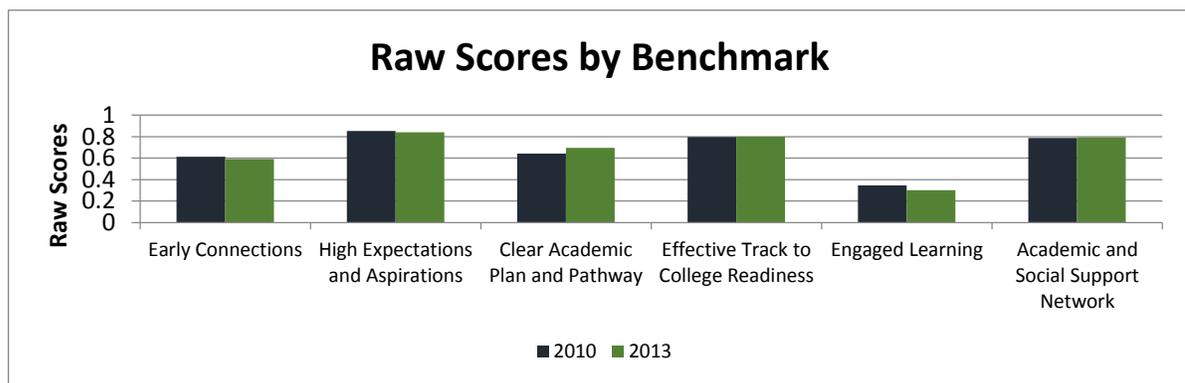
		Average Score			
		Excellent = 5, Above Average = 4, Average = 3, Below Average = 2, Poor 1, N/A = 0			
Program Title	Date of Class	Did the presentation meet expectations?	Did the content meet your needs?	Rate how well the skills you learned today will help you on the job.	Overall rating
Globally Harmonized System (N=63)	July 2013	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.1
Intermediate Excel (N=7)	Sept 2013	4.4	4.3	4.6	4.4
Solder Requalification (N=13)	Sept-Oct 2013	4.7	4.5	4.5	4.7
Customer Service (N=6)	Oct 2013	4	3.8	4.3	4.5
Blueprint Reading (N=8)	Oct-Nov 2013	4.6	4.5	4.8	4.8
OSHA General Industry Training (N=19)	Nov 2013	4.8	4.5	4.3	4.5
Storm Water and Spill Prevention (N=19)	Dec 2013	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.7
CNC Training (N=54)	June 2013 - Jan 2014	4.4	4.4	3.9	4.2
Industrial Electricity, Devices, and Circuits (N=9)	Jan 2014	3.9	3.6	3.2	3.9
Computer Basics (N=13)	Jan-Feb 2014	4.8	4.4	4.3	4.9
Handling and Transporting Hazardous Material (N=8)	Feb 2014	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.8
EPE Refrigerant Certification Class (N=4)	Feb 2014	4.8	4.8	3.6	4
Setting Goals (N=8)	Feb 2014	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8
Accident/Incident Investigation Training (N=17)	March 2014	4.3	3.6	3.9	4
Forklift Operator Safety Refresher (N=3)	March 2014	4.3	4.3	4.3	5
ARC Flash (N=20)	April 2014	4	4.2	4.1	4.5
Solder Qualification I)N=7)	May 2014	5	5	5	5
Blueprint Reading (N=10)	May 2014	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.7
Statistical Process Control Training (N=39)	May 2014	4.2	4.1	4	4.3
Lean Manufacturing (N=7)	May-June 2014	4	4	4.1	4.3
Programmable Logic Controller (N=10)	June 2014	4.8	4.7	4.2	4.9

3R3. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Students' reasons for persisting almost always include one common element: a strong, early Category 3: Understanding Students' and Stakeholder's Needs

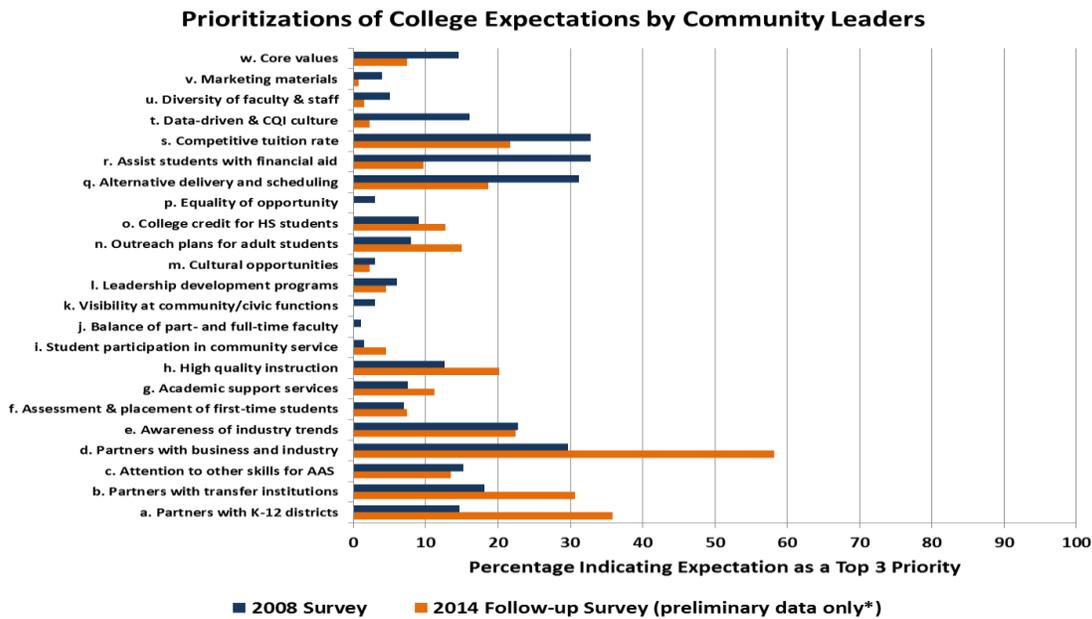
connection to someone at the College. The data presented here and in 3R2 indicate that Highland Community College is very successful in meeting student needs, making connections, and building relationships with students.

As discussed in 3P2, The College begins make connections with prospective students in a variety of ways. In the 2013-2014 academic year, 308 students attended Experience Highland. As reported on student evaluations, the program positively influenced 258 students to attend Highland. QuickStart served 14 of our 16 district high schools in 2014, with 184 students participating. When surveyed, 78.9% of the students indicated that these student support services are useful to them. Of the students who participated in B4U Test between January 2013 and January 2014, 94% improved their score. Two-thirds of the students participating in Fast Forward in summer 2014 were able to move up at least one course level. Evaluations of the program indicated that 100% of the students would recommend the Fast Forward program to others.

As mentioned previously, the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE) is a large-scale survey that provides benchmarks for the College in six areas: early connections, high expectations and aspirations, clear academic plan and pathway, effective track to college readiness, engaged learning, and academic and social support network. SENSE illustrates student behaviors and the institutional practices the affect students during the first four or five weeks of their first semester. The figure below provides the raw scores for each of the SENSE benchmarks for the 2010 and 2013 administrations. The scores for Clear Academic Plan and Pathway increased from 2010 to 2013. Analysis of the results indicated that this increase was due to a significant rise in the number of students agreeing that they were able to meet with an academic advisor at times convenient to them and that a College staff member talked with them about their commitments outside of school to help determine the number of courses to take. See Category 6.



3R4. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. In 2008, the College distributed a survey to nearly 400 school personnel, business leaders, and city/county officials throughout the district as a way to measure the satisfaction with the College in meeting the expectations of local business and community leaders. The survey, which had a 60% response rate, measured the extent to which the College met or exceeded 23 specific expectations derived from the College's mission and vision statements. Over 80% of respondents indicated the College meets or exceeds their expectations in 20 of the 23 categories. An abbreviated version of the survey was distributed in 2014. Though satisfaction with the College in meeting expectations was not reported as part of this survey, community leaders heavily prioritized partnerships: partnerships with K-12 districts, transfer institutions and especially with business and industry were the top expectations.



As described in 3P3, the College administers the PACE survey to identify needs of its employees. Results from the 2011 survey indicate that faculty, staff, and administrators perceive they are able to contribute to goal development and achievement. In categories pertaining to valuing people, the College scored higher than other community colleges. The survey will be administered again in fall 2014. See Category 4.

3R5. This response was not addressed in the College’s 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. As outlined in 3P4, the College has many initiatives designed to build and maintain relationships with its stakeholders. Results from several of these initiatives are included here as examples of the College’s performance results.

Lunch with the President provides an opportunity for Foundation staff and HCC staff to listen in and learn about constituents’ concerns and interests. Between July 2013 and June 2014, ten different lunches were held. Six were held on campus and four were held in communities out in the College District. Each lunch had a special focus, such as a geographical region or business-related demographics (e.g., local manufacturing, agriculture, retired business leaders). The total number of guests who attended Lunch with the President in Fiscal Year 2014 was 57. Although each luncheon and discussion was unique due to the diversity of each guest list, there were some common topics and sentiments brought up by participants across multiple lunches. For instance, Highland Community College is seen as a valuable asset to the region, a “gem” that should sometimes be promoted more. HCC is essential to workforce development and quality of life in the district (and beyond), and should always remain “at the table” in important discussions, and “top of mind” when people assess their educational options. Lunch participants were curious about HCC’s enrollment and what percentage of high school grads from their towns attended HCC directly out of high school and/or how many students of any age were currently attending from their towns. Among luncheon attendees were several individuals who had participated in the Leadership Institute or Leadership Forum; those programs are perceived as extremely valuable to the development of the local business and civic community throughout the district. At several of the lunches, the participants encouraged HCC to do as much outreach as possible throughout the district and to get out and interact directly with prospective students and the business community served by the College.

In April of this year, the College hosted an Agriculture Forum (see Table 3.3 in 3P4). Forty-eight community members, including High School instructors, Chamber of Commerce representatives, NIDA representatives, representatives from several local businesses, and current students, attended the forum to discuss the College’s current Agriculture Program, the needs of the community, and Category 3: Understanding Students’ and Stakeholder’s Needs

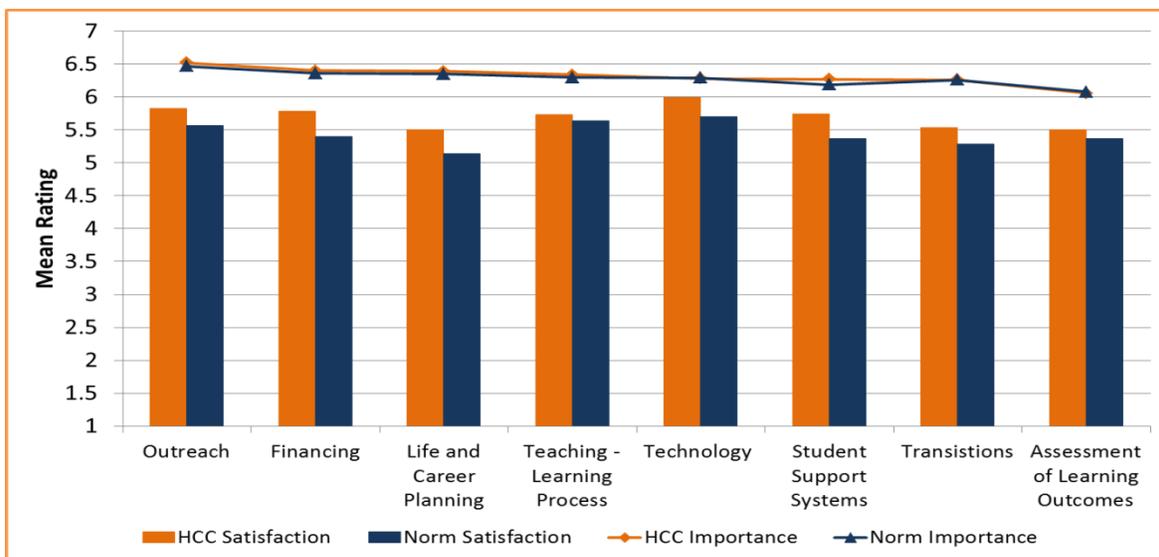
possible program changes and additions. An Industrial Manufacturing Forum is planned for the near future. Ideas generated from the forum included:

- College-level Future Farmers of America (FFA)
- Veterinary technician program
- Increased involvement with the University of Illinois Extension office
- Addition of test plots in the community

CollegeNOW began in fall 2012 with one high school. Seven students began the program and graduated from high school and HCC in May 2014. In fall 2013, four area high schools enrolled a total of 28 students in the program. The numbers of participating for fall 2014 increased to five schools, with a total of 27 students. The increase in participation over the first three years illustrates the value that the CollegeNOW program has to stakeholders. Focus groups were conducted by the advisors for students graduating from the CollegeNOW program and those continuing on for the second year. Feedback from the students included: 1) they enjoyed HCC more than high school; 2) they liked the challenge that HCC provided; 3) they liked the freedom that college offered; and 4) they didn't realize how much more work it would entail.

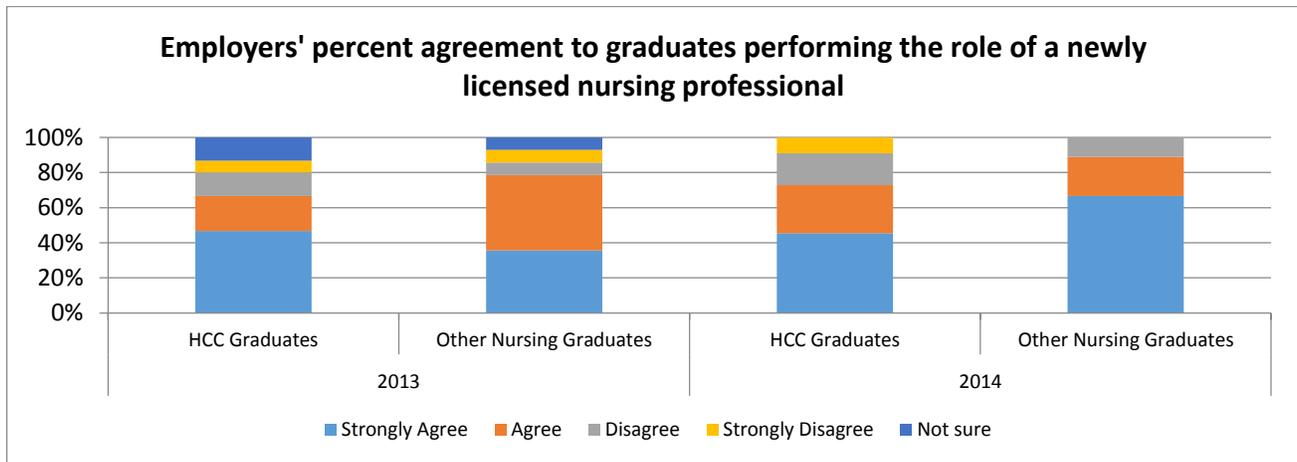
3R6. This response was not addressed in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The College administers several large-scale surveys that allow it to compare results to other higher education institutions.

The Noel-Levitz Adult Learner Inventory (ALI), a satisfaction survey for adult students 25 years of age or older, was last administered in fall 2012. The survey was developed by Noel-Levitz in collaboration with the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) and is based on the Principles for Effectiveness for Serving Adult Learners from CAEL. The ALI provides eight benchmarks in areas such as outreach, financing, teaching-learning process, and student support systems. As illustrated in the graph below, the College scored higher in satisfaction in all nine categories compared to national norms.



As part of its annual survey, the Nursing and Allied Health department gathers input on the knowledge, skills, and abilities that Highland Community College graduates exhibit. As a measure of employer satisfaction, health care facilities are asked to what extent they believe the College prepared graduates to perform the nursing role as expected of a newly licensed professional. They are also asked to compare HCC graduates with those from other local and regional educational programs. Limited numbers of surveys were returned in both years. Those employers who responded in 2013 and 2014 reported that HCC graduates are prepared to perform their role as newly licensed

professionals. Highland graduates received lower ratings than graduates of other educational programs, which provides Highland with a quality improvement opportunity. Information from these surveys, in conjunction with feedback from the advisory board and State Board of Nursing, are being reviewed in the department's program review process to determine necessary changes to the nursing curriculum.



311. This response was not addressed in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Data collected from the methods previously discussed in this category has spurred improvements in multiple areas. In an effort to obtain improved benchmarking data and more information on student satisfaction, the College chose to participate in two new surveys in Fiscal Year 2013: National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP) and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement.

The advising department has recently added online video conferencing and evening advising appointments to improve accessibility to Student Services. The College has increased its offerings of hybrid and online courses to better meet the scheduling needs of its diverse student population. This directly impacts Strategic Plan Goal Two, "meet program delivery needs of current and prospective students." Strategic Plan Goal Three, "increase college-level enrollment", was impacted by the implementation of B4U Test and Fast Forward. As previously discussed, both of these programs were designed to improve student placement scores, decrease the need the transitional courses, and make better use of students' financial resources.

The College also implemented changes to improve student satisfaction. New student clubs (i.e. Psychology Club, Art Club), were added to increase student engagement and participation in college activities. A student activity was added in 2010 to provide a funding stream for student clubs and organizations. The College has increased its social media presence to improve communication with students and other stakeholders. See 1P16.

In addition to improvements toward the student stakeholder group, the College has made recent changes to better serve the external stakeholder group. As discussed previously, Lunch with the President events, community forums, and additions to the website have provided external stakeholders more opportunities to provide feedback to the College.

Individual departments and programs have also implemented changes to better serve their stakeholder groups. For example, the Nursing and Allied Health department developed graduate and employer surveys, first administered in spring 2013. These surveys were designed to gather input on the knowledge, skills, and abilities that Highland Community College's nursing students and graduates exhibit. Employers were also given the opportunity to compare HCC graduate nurses with graduates from other local and regional educational programs. The Nursing and Allied Health department uses the data from these surveys to make improvements to the nursing curriculum.

3I2. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The College culture is one that promotes collaboration from all stakeholders of the College. All stakeholders are provided a variety of methods to participate in decision-making at the College. This provides the College with diverse perspectives to evaluate processes and results, develop creative solutions, and set strategic goals. Benchmarks are also used to determine areas of improvement and to identify new opportunities. Ideas are brought to the appropriate department or division to be investigated by key personnel, who determine validity and feasibility. When the faculty and staff are given the opportunity to share their expertise, professional commitment and accountability for the College's improvement efforts increases.

CATEGORY 4: VALUING PEOPLE

Highland's processes for valuing people vary in maturity. The College's processes for recruitment, orientation, and retention (4P1, 4P2, 4P3, 4P4, 4P11) are systematic and in some cases aligned. We have developed, integrated, and wide-ranging policies, processes, and, when appropriate, training to ensure that clearly defined objectives are met. The processes are effectively managed and evaluated through various avenues such as employee feedback and surveys. Feedback is regularly used to make improvements to the processes. Ensuring the College's ethical practices (4P7) are aligned with our values, employee characteristics and services are well-developed through policies and processes that are coordinated across departments and divisions.

Highland's process for planning for changes in personnel (4P5) has matured over time with the use of the Resource Allocation and Management Plan and the New Position Staffing Requisition Worksheet. A clearly defined process for evaluating the need for a position includes consideration of the position's alignment to the College's mission, annual goals, priorities, and Strategic Plan. The personnel evaluation system (4P10) is designed to be aligned closely to institutional goals and strategies through individual and department goals.

Training and professional development processes (4P8, 4P9) are systematic. While we offer many opportunities both internally and externally, we see opportunities to align the professional development more closely with our Strategic Plan. By determining training needs during the planning process and incorporating training objectives within the Strategic Plan rather than doing so after the plan has been established, we can develop a more comprehensive staff development program. Our processes for designing work processes and activities (4P6) are also systematic.

Our processes for determining key concerns for motivating employees and for evaluating employee satisfaction, health, safety and well-being (4P12, 4P13) continue to evolve. Through systematic processes, we have consciously developed tools to gather data and evaluate employee satisfaction and motivation and use that data for improvements. The use of the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) survey now allows us to benchmark against other community colleges.

4P1. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The College continues to use the same systematic processes for identifying credentials, skills and values required of our staff and faculty. Faculty credentials are identified in HCC Board policy 4.05 and in Instructor job descriptions. The Deans and Vice President of Academic Services/Chief Academic Officer identify specific licenses, certifications and professional experience required by the faculty for certain occupational fields.

For our administrative, professional, and support staff, continuous analyses of job functions are undertaken utilizing the Position Analysis Questionnaire (PAQ). The PAQ is utilized as the basis for development of new positions and revisions to existing positions to address the position's purpose. A job description is developed off of the PAQ. The PAQ itemizes the qualifications required to obtain the position, as well as responsibilities involved in its performance. The PAQ also describes the

Category 3: Understanding Students' and Stakeholder's Needs

position's impact on end results and gives a perceptive analysis of the environment and objectives surrounding the position.

Custodial/maintenance positions utilize a job description that is created or updated by the supervisor with input by incumbent(s) and HR to ensure the skills and credentials accurately reflect those needed for each position.

4P2. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Little has changed in the hiring processes outlined in the 2010 Systems Portfolio. Highland continues to develop job postings that reference credentials and skills identified in the PAQ or job description; advertise in appropriate venues such newspapers, websites, higher education media, and targeted professional journals when warranted; and request supporting documentation such as transcripts, letters of recommendation, and teaching philosophy. In addition, members of screening committees are trained on proper interview techniques using behavioral interview questions that draw out answers to specific knowledge, skills and abilities required and preferred for the position, and the values and ethical practices of the candidate. Testing and teaching demonstrations are also conducted as appropriate to ensure that the candidates possess the necessary skills. Prior to any offer of employment, credentials, references, and backgrounds are verified on top candidates.

In addition, an annual audit is conducted on part-time and full-time instructors to ensure that they have the appropriate degree, coursework, or professional experience to teach the courses they are instructing. Human Resources (HR) and the Vice President of Academic Services/Chief Academic Officer work together to conduct the audit by comparing course listings with educational transcripts and other necessary materials.

3C. The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

According to the 2013 National Community College Benchmarking Project Report, HCC's student/faculty ratio is 12.9, which ranks in the top 12% compared to other U.S. community colleges.

Highland administered the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory in 2011. Student responses to the statements listed below support that faculty are available to and engaged with the students they serve.

Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours.

- Highland students' mean satisfaction rating (5.94) was significantly greater than that of the national benchmark (5.62).

Faculty are interested in my academic problems.

- Highland students' mean satisfaction rating (5.62) was significantly greater than that of the national benchmark (5.19).

Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course.

- Highland students' mean satisfaction rating (5.60) was significantly greater than that of the national benchmark (5.29).

Faculty are active members in strategic and operational committees, including Assessment, Alternative Delivery, Curriculum and Instruction, Policy Review and Enrollment Management. Highland ensures that faculty, including dual credit instructors, meet at least the minimum requirements that are specified by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) and the Higher Learning Commission. Faculty members in transferrable General Education courses must possess an earned master's degree in the appropriate discipline, and conferred at any credited graduate school.

4P3. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. HCC's recruitment and hiring process for all regular part-time and full-time staff and faculty is disclosed in

4P2. Similar but modified processes are followed in the hiring of part-time academic positions, as hiring is done by the Division Deans.

HCC effectively orients its employees to the College through the following methods:

- The Human Resource Department meets with all regular part-time and full-time staff and faculty employees to complete new hire paperwork, enroll in benefits, and review important policies and procedures.
- New full-time administrative, professional and support staff are assigned a mentor to help ease new employees to their new job and reduce stress associated with the transition; support the ongoing orientation for new employees; accelerate employees' comprehension of College policies, processes, and culture; provide access to resources; and enable employees to feel welcome and have a sense of belonging.
- The Coordinator of Academic Technology Resources meets with new full-time and part-time faculty to review Moodle and academic technology resources available.
- A new orientation session for full-time faculty that reviews Admissions and Records, Library and Success Center services began in the Fall 2014 Semester.
- New full-time employees are introduced to individual departments and staff during a tour of the campus with their supervisor or mentor, if assigned.
- New full-time faculty and staff are introduced to the Trustees at a Board meeting.
- Supervisors of new hires are provided with a standard orientation checklist which they review with the new hire. The checklist was created to make sure new hires are aware of College and office practices and procedures.
- All new employees are introduced to the College staff during an all-College meeting at the start of the fall and spring semesters.
- New full-time faculty are assigned a tenure committee to assist them during their first three years. These committee members act as mentors and provide assistance with classroom and overall campus activity concerns.
- Special orientations are held for new and returning part-time instructors, which include representatives from various areas of the College presenting relevant information.
- Various training sessions are assigned to ensure compliance with legal requirements and campus systems. Employees receive training or informational pieces on ADP Self-Service, GroupWise, FERPA, Sexual and Other Harassment, Identify Theft, and Mandated Reporting.
- Additionally, dependent on position need, the following trainings may be assigned: Moodle, Roar, BANNER, Contribute, OSHA, custodial cleaning, driver safety, WebFOCUS, and department specific computer systems.

HCC effectively retains its employees by offering excellent full-time benefits and a number of employee supported activities. These are listed below in no particular order:

- Benefited employees receive a variety of benefits, including an expansive health insurance plan where employees' premium responsibility is 18% of the single and family premiums; wellness program and wellness activities; life insurance; discounted YMCA membership; and tuition-free courses for the employee and family members.
- Employees have access to training and professional development needed to successfully perform their job assignments.
- Employees have the opportunity for input through many committee membership opportunities.
- A survey is sent to new employees at the six month point to gather feedback on their experiences.
- An activities group offers various activities and events to bring staff together outside of the work setting.
- The performance evaluation system allows employees an opportunity to identify, address and resolve barriers to job satisfaction.
- Tuition waivers encourage professional and personal growth. Eligible employees may access educational assistance and apply for sabbatical opportunities.

- Monetary awards are given for attainment of an advanced degree.
- The College has an extended holiday break from just before Christmas through January 1 (paid break for continuing full-time administrative/professional and support staff).
- When employees leave the College, an exit interview is held to identify their experiences in their position, their department, and with Highland during their employment, which, in turn, provides HR with information to share as appropriate to improve retention with current staff.
- Employees have significant support staff to assist them with daily needs and concerns (i.e. faculty have Moodle and Alternative Delivery support).

4P4. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Most employees begin orientation to the College when they are applicants visiting the HCC website under the Employment Opportunities page. Here they are able to learn about HCC's employee characteristics and service standards. Further along in the application process, the College mission and values are highlighted during the interview and specific questions are posed related to mission, values and attitude.

New employees are given a laminated card with the employee characteristics and service standards and receiving a handout on the College's mission, vision, and core values. The myHCCStaff portal page contains information on Highland's history, mission, and values, and information on employee characteristics and service standards. The site is a valuable resource to assist new employees with orientation to Highland's culture.

In addition, a staff mentoring program was implemented in 2011. One of the goals of the mentoring program is to support the ongoing orientation process for new employees and strengthen their knowledge of the College's mission, values, strategic priorities, AQIP, and Servant-Leadership. To date, 16 employees have completed the mentoring program. It has been a valuable addition to the orientation process.

4P5. This response was rated an S and O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Highland's Strategic Plan and annual goals are used to plan for human resource needs. For example, development of a central testing center led to a staffing need of a full-time position.

The College completes an annual Resource Allocation and Management Plan (RAMP). As part of this plan, input is sought from all areas of the College regarding budgetary, staffing, and other needs. Additionally, an annual process requesting staffing needs for the next fiscal year helps plan for and prioritize changes. The process provides an avenue for managers to submit a New Position Staffing Requisition Worksheet early in the budget year. Staffing requests from the RAMP document are also included in this staffing request review. The worksheet includes an estimated cost for salary and benefits, justification for the position, College-wide impact, position's purpose, and the major duties/responsibilities of the position. A summary of the requests are shared with the College Council and the decision to move forward with a new position is determined by the College Leadership Team. Criteria for prioritizing the requests include the relationship of the requested position to the College's mission, annual goals, and priorities and/or Strategic Plan (Focus/Justification); the extent to which the requested position shows promise of contributing toward the College's mission, annual goals, and priorities and/or Strategic Plan (Impact); and the extent to which the requested position would be a prudent use of College resources (Budget).

In addition, all vacated positions and reorganizations require review and approval of Leadership Team before the process to replace a position can proceed. Before the Leadership Team's review, the supervisor of a vacated position decides if the position should be filled and provides input on changes to the job content.

Creative solutions are identified for possibilities to cover staffing needs when necessary. For example, when the part-time Associate Dean of Science and Health position became vacant, the

position was merged with the associate Dean of Nursing and Allied Health position to create a new Dean of Science, Health, and Math position. To assist with the responsibilities, a faculty member in the Nursing and Allied Health department, and a faculty member in the science and math division were given department chair responsibilities as a part of their course load.

Proposals for new academic programs include personnel needs and funding to support the program. Applications for new grants typically outline staffing considerations; examples of recent grant programs include the National Science Foundation Grant, which added one and a half staff members, and the Illinois Green Economy Network (IGEN) grant, which added two staff members.

4P6. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Input on processes and/or changes to processes is often investigated by the College Council, Cabinet, and Leadership Team when it has a College-wide impact. For instance, the technology needs for our most recent technology bond sale were determined by the process outlined in the flow chart. This ensured that technology purchases were based on institutional priorities rather than individual or departmental needs. See Figure 5.1

The College went through a similar process with the SURS Return to Work Act. Through various meetings with the hiring supervisors, Cabinet, Council, the Leadership Team, and the Board, the College decided to continue to consider SURS annuitants as potential employees. This collaboration and the forms, processes, policies, and flow charts help the supervisors to better understand the new processes that were developed or modified.

A process was created and documented for introducing new or revised policies to the Policy Review Committee (PRC) for consideration. This process assures new/revised policies originate with a group that has the best knowledge for introducing the information to the PRC. The process chart is included in the Policy Manual.

HCC uses various cross-functional committees (operational, strategic and ad hoc) that help the productivity of the organization. The committees are structured with appropriate positions and/or categories of employees to bring a diverse group together to manage the committee's purpose and charge, which brings expertise and broad-based input in the various segments of the organization's operations. By involving employees at different levels of the organization, we have seen increased employee accountability and buy-in.

4P7. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Employees are informed of the expectations related to the College's Core Values of integrity, compassion and respect, and the HCC Characteristics, which include sound judgment (honesty, sincerity, respecting confidentiality, and being ethical in relationships).

Ethical practices are also ensured through the activities stated below:

- All part-time and full-time employees are made aware of Highland's ethics policies and practices and receive training on Sexual and Other Harassment Prevention and Identity Theft, including reporting procedures.
- All new hires receive materials on Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and online training is being introduced to all employees during fall 2014.
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) training is conducted for any employee with access to private health information.
- Systems are in place to audit various payroll and benefits processes.
- IT processes are in place on federal and state data security processes.
- Grading and appeals processes are in place and can be found in the College catalog.
- Financial processes have been improved to include more documentation to justify expenditures.

- The Financial Aid department operates under the Financial Aid Code of Conduct and Statement of Ethical Principals.
- The Security Camera System Guidelines and processes are in place to monitor appropriate access and use of the surveillance system.
- The Acceptable Technology Use Guidelines are developed and updated annually.

The College attempts to maintain an environment where employees and students feel comfortable reporting issues. Complaints are taken seriously. Investigations of reported events, such as harassment, are investigated expediently, appropriate action is taken, and processes are reviewed following the event.

2.A. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows fair and ethical policies and processes for its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.

- Board members are expected to adhere to ethical practices in authority, conduct, decision-making, conflict of interest, ethics, confidentiality, and compliance with law as outlined in the Board Ethics Policy.
- In support of the best interests of the College and in support of the mission of the College, all employees are expected to adhere to reasonable ethical standards as stated in the Ethics Policy, including the following principles: conduct, decision-making, conflict of interest, and confidentiality.
- An outside audit of finances and payroll is conducted each year.
- The Board is involved in auditing monthly bills. The Board Audit Committee meets with the College auditors several times a year.
- ICCB conducts audits on administrative, financial, and academic functions every five years.

2.E. The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

- The Institutional Review Board oversees the approval of research projects involving human participants.
- The College has an Academic Integrity policy that includes penalties which are enforced. All class syllabi contain a General Statement on Academic Integrity.
- Turnitin, an originality checking and plagiarism prevention service, is provided for HCC students and faculty as a learning tool.
- The Library offers research workshops and one-on-one assistance to students in properly researching and citing resources.

Students are advised of the Student Code of Conduct in FYES classes including sanctions for misconduct.

4P8. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Training needs are determined by several factors including state/federal mandates, policy changes or additions, College committees, College initiatives (technology, priorities, College-wide goals, strategic planning, AQIP projects), training needs listed in evaluations, needs assessments, exit interviews, and individual and departmental goals. Most training is centralized between the Academic Services, Human Resources, and the Academic Technology Resources offices. Internal committees consisting of relevant positions are used for such events as support staff retreats, professional development days, and Opening Days to ensure that professional development opportunities address the priorities of the College and are relevant to employee needs. Employees also have the ability to attend external training for job specific or software specific skills. Highland has switched to a zero-based budget for training and travel. All departments must submit requests for training that involve an expense through the budget process, and all training and travel requests are reviewed by the Leadership Team prior to inclusion into the departmental budget, which allows the Leadership Team

to assess the training's impact and value to the College, department, and position. A similar system is used for the staff development budget.

Training initiatives offered internally are designed to strengthen instructional and non-instructional services. For example, at the most recent staff professional development day in 2014, the theme was service excellence. This theme aligned with our short-term and long-term strategies of increasing student retention. The key note presentation and breakout sessions focused on how employees could provide a better experience for both our internal and external customers. Highland's service standards and employee characteristics were also incorporated into the training. The service excellence theme was continued at the support staff retreat later on in the year as participants learned how to work together to create a fun, student-centered workplace. Emphasis was placed on creating a welcome environment for students and incorporating humor into the work day. These topics related to institutional priorities and practices, promoted excellent customer service, and encouraged camaraderie and teambuilding.

For faculty, a Brown Bag series that offers instructional technology and academic best practices sessions was recently created. External resources are also used to strengthen instructional programming, specifically in the online environment. The Making the Virtual Classroom a Reality (MVCR) faculty development series offered through the Illinois Online Network is utilized as primary resource for faculty teaching online courses. Instructors teaching online courses in our Business and Technology division are required to complete these courses; faculty in other divisions who are teaching online are strongly encouraged to take the series. Faculty may also participate in the Faculty Summer Institute (FSI) offered through the University of Illinois. FSI offers presentations, workshops, and hands-on training involving the latest technological advances in education. These initiatives all tie into Highland's strategic goal of meeting program delivery needs of current and prospective students and our short-term and long-range strategies of providing high quality online courses and degree programs.

As a means to better understand services offered by other areas of the College and how those services effect students, educational sessions are offered to staff and faculty to promote awareness. For instance, workshops regarding Maxient, our early alert, academic misconduct and incident reporting system, have been offered to all employee groups to promote a better understanding of the support systems in place for students who may have academic or conduct issues. Similarly, the Library staff works closely with faculty so they are aware of the ways the library can aid students in developing research skills.

All training workshops are evaluated to determine whether training objectives were met and to help plan for future training sessions.

4P9. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Highland Community College is committed to professional development. Staff and faculty are encouraged to develop their skills and leadership abilities at all levels of the organization through professional development funds that are used to purchase conference and association memberships and internal opportunities available, for example, all employee in-services held twice a year, a staff professional development day, monthly support staff meetings, a support staff retreat, various workshops that are held during the year, community education offerings, and the use of tuition waivers and educational assistance. Highland's Employee Characteristics indicate that "Highland employees are open to change, adaptable, display initiative, and pursue creative improvement." Professional development expands employees' knowledge and skill base, motivates them to improve their performance, and offers them an opportunity to share what they have learned with colleagues.

The Faculty Last Lecture Series was piloted in spring 2013, as a means for faculty members nearing retirement to present a lecture on what they consider to be among the most valuable instructional elements practiced during their years of teaching. Faculty members were asked to prepare material

as if it was for the last lecture that they would deliver and to give it emphasis accordingly. Peers, community members, and students are invited to attend.

In 2012, a professional development program was created with the intention of providing continuous growth and development opportunities for Highland Community College employees in an effort to retain them in the institution, help them prepare for future opportunities within the institution or the community college system, and, in some cases, to provide opportunities to apply knowledge already attained in the field of student development. The program uses the Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Practitioners as a guide. Each participant is assigned a sponsor who is a student development supervisor at Highland or a professional staff member in the Human Resources office. Together, the participant and sponsor discuss the self-assessment and determine their goal areas. Personal exploratory projects are developed by the participant with assistance from the sponsor.

4P10. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. We continue to use the same process that was outlined in 2010 for administrative, professional, and support staff. The staff feedback process is designed around individual goal-setting, which reflects department and College-wide goals. Goals are linked to AQIP principles, institutional goals/priorities, and the Kouzes and Posner's Leadership Challenge model. As a part of a continuous feedback process, supervisors are expected to provide feedback to staff daily and review goals periodically with employees. An additional component of the feedback process includes the use of a supervisor rating questionnaire that is administered to employees for completion via an online survey tool. Results are shared with the supervisor during the employee's feedback session for further development.

A new evaluation system was developed and implemented in 2013 for custodial/maintenance employees. The prior practice did not meet the needs of the staff member or the supervisor in reviewing job performance and expectations. A work group involving HR, Director of Physical Plant and Maintenance, Manager of Custodial Services, Manager of Maintenance Services, and representatives of custodial/maintenance staff worked collaboratively to develop an evaluation tool that better suited the performance measurement needs of all involved. We have received positive feedback from both supervisors and employees on the new system.

As in 2010, faculty appraisals are conducted as outlined in Board policy. Full-time teaching personnel are evaluated formally a minimum of every three years. New full-time faculty are on probationary tenure status for the first three academic years of employment and, as a result, are evaluated each year by the Dean and a faculty tenure committee, which consists of tenured faculty members from different disciplines and includes a committee chair. The committee chair ensures that the committee members visit the classroom at least once a year. At the end of each year, the chair provides an overview of these observations, highlighting strengths and/or areas of concern to the Dean and a copy is shared with the faculty member.

Part-time faculty are evaluated a minimum of once each semester of the first three years they teach. After three successive satisfactory evaluations, evaluations are conducted a minimum of once every three years. Among instruments used in such evaluations, regardless of whether they are full- or part-time, tenured or non-tenured, is a standard form designed to evaluate student satisfaction consistently. The same instrument provides faculty members the opportunity to add up to seven more discipline-specific questions.

A Dean's evaluation consists of a classroom visit, use of a student evaluation survey, an instructor self-evaluation, and an evaluation meeting between the instructor and Dean. Teaching methods are evaluated by the Dean and the faculty tenure committee. A Dean also, in many cases, reviews syllabi to determine alignment with course outcomes and competencies, reviews students' written work in the course and other accounts of progress made by the instructor in recent semesters. Improvement opportunities are discussed between the Dean and the instructor.

3C. The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

Employees are encouraged to participate in professional organizations on a local, regional, and/or national basis to provide support in their position. Money is budgeted for professional development opportunities specific to their field to allow employees to keep current on changes that may affect the College. Faculty that are required to maintain certification for their position are given time off to attend the appropriate training. Faculty are provided a staff development budget annually as outlined in the Faculty Union Agreement.

In 2007-2008, the College provided extensive training through an eight-week course for employees engaged in launching our common intake process. More recently, the Student Services division expanded this advisor training series to include all of the staff involved in delivering front-line enrollment and advising services, including Testing Center staff, Career Center, TRiO program, and the Success Center. The newly redesigned Common Intake Training includes guest presentations by faculty and academic administrators, process redesign discussions, inter-departmental communication, and case studies. Case studies enable the group to compare how student situations would be handled by individual staff within the system to continuously increase the quality, efficiency and consistency of the processes.

4P11. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. A wide variety of programs have been designed by the College to recognize and reward employees, such as faculty and staff Service and Excellence Awards, the Burt Tavener Award, Student Senate Appreciation Award, and the Opel Award, all of which are awarded annually to committee-chosen candidates, both full-time and part-time. The Excellence and Opel Awards reflect the College's employee characteristics and service standards, core values, mission to provide quality education and learning opportunities, and AQIP principles. Staff are also recognized for their successful attainment of a degree and rewarded with a Degree Achievement Award. An incentive is given to custodial employees for obtaining a new skill that is useful in their position and to maintenance employees for obtaining a new license, such as an electrician's certification.

The Board adopted a compensation philosophy in 2007 for all employees. It is the philosophy of the Highland Community College Board of Trustees that compensation shall include salary and a comprehensive benefit program. The compensation system should be fiscally responsible and support the hiring and retention of excellent employees while being externally competitive, internally equitable, non-discriminatory, and understood by employees. The College offers full-time staff a variety of regular benefits such as health insurance, life insurance, disability insurance, sabbatical, educational reimbursement, tuition waivers, a wellness program, and discounted YMCA memberships.

Compensation for full-time and part-time non-union staff is determined within the classification and compensation system. Faculty salary schedule placement is based on a faculty members years of experience and degree attainment and graduate hours above degree. Custodial and maintenance employee salaries are determined by union agreement. The compensation and benefit package for custodial and maintenance staff and full-time faculty are collectively bargained.

4P12. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. We continue to use a defined step-by-step process to determine issues related to employee motivation.

- 1) Determine how to gather data, including a review and assessment of any prior process, the results, and instrument used
- 2) Gather data
- 3) Process data and communicate with the appropriate group if necessary
- 4) Analyze data and communicate with the appropriate group if necessary

- 5) Is action necessary? If no, communicate with the appropriate group if necessary (back to start)
- 6) If yes, communicate with the appropriate group if necessary
- 7) Take action (back to start)

Table 4.1 shows instruments used to gather the data. The data is analyzed in comparison to historical data, data from other educational institutions, and/or other sources as determined. The Director of Institutional Research often assists the instrument owner in development or revision of the tool, conducting the survey, analyzing the data, and assisting in interpretation and communication of the results. To extract more specific information on a result, focus groups are often conducted.

4P13. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Highland provides for employee satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being through many initiatives and programs. These include the following:

- Extensive benefits (specifics provided in 4P3 and 4P11)
- A contract for a crisis counselor through a local medical clinic to come on campus to assist in student issues
- A Behavior Intervention Team, Crisis Intervention Team and Campus Emergency Action Plan
- The College partnership with the Stephenson County Sheriff's Department provides a deputy to be on campus six days a week 7:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.
- Security cameras, as well as intercoms and emergency boxes
- Training for various safety topics such as driver safety training, OSHA, ergonomics, sexual harassment and emergency response
- Communication meetings, town hall meetings, and roundtable discussions by leaders to promote open dialogue within the College about concerns

The College uses Maxient for its online incident reporting and management system. Training for all employees and students is conducted regularly to strengthen a culture of early reporting and intervention. Anyone, including employees, may report through the system if an incident occurs or another person on campus is causing the reporter concern. The Behavioral Intervention Team receives reports immediately. Meetings may be called immediately or discussed at the regularly scheduled monthly meeting, depending upon the criticality of the case and additional information gathered by team members. A threat assessment model, NaBITA (National Behavioral Intervention Team Association) Threat Assessment Tool, is typically used to determine the level of threat.

The satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being is evaluated through several tools, including the employee survey, six-month survey (administered to new hires six months after they start), the annual feedback process, faculty evaluations, annual OSHA log and workers compensation claims, executive review of wellness testing, and exit interviews. For example, the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) climate survey contains questions on improving job satisfaction and safety. According to the 2011 PACE Survey, in response to the statement, "The extent to which I feel safe within the campus environment," the College received a mean rating of 4.31 on a five-point scale with a low of "1" to a high of "5." These sources are reviewed regularly to determine ways to increase employee satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being.

4R1. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Table 4.1 illustrates the various surveys, questionnaires, and other data that Human Resources collects on a regular basis for analysis.

Table 4.1

Measure	Data Collected
Six-Month New Hire Survey	New employee's perception of the employment process, orientation to the College, department and job, training needs, work environment, and insurances and benefits
Exit Interviews	Factors influencing employee's decision to leave, opinion of salary and benefits, employee morale, communication, cooperation, workload, and environment
PACE Survey	Employee perceptions of institutional structure, supervisory relationships, teamwork, and student focus
Annual Employee Feedbacks	Completion of assigned goals, barriers to job satisfaction, training needed, performance issues
Staff Mentoring Surveys	Experiences with program, strengths, weaknesses, and barriers
Professional Development Surveys	Evaluation of presenter, content and format, application of skills learned to job and suggestions for future training
Position Hire Summaries	Length to fill a position, racial/ethnic/gender make up of candidate pool, locations of job posting, and cost to fill position
Turnover Rate	Resignations, retirements, and other terminations

4R2. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Recent data analysis from our Six-Month New Hire surveys provides the following results:

- In response to the question, "Do you feel that your supervisor encourages employee development opportunities?" 100% of employees responded Yes
- 96% of employees rate their work environment, supervisor, and co-workers as Excellent or Good
- 92% rated the paid leave policies as Excellent or Good
- 95% rated the medical plan as Excellent or Good
- 92% rated the employee feedback/evaluation process as Excellent or Good
- 89% of employees rated the interview process Excellent or Good
- 85% of employees rated their orientation to the College as Excellent or Good
- 81% of employees rated the application process Excellent or Good

Though the rating information is helpful, we have found that the open ended comments we receive on the Six-Month New Hire survey is even more helpful. For instance, in response to the question, "What could Highland do to improve its employment process?" there were many comments relating to the length of time in the application process. In response to the lower satisfaction rating with our application process and the comments made, we have made changes to our application process including automating the process through an online applicant tracking database. In addition, HR has taken a more proactive approach to guiding the application process to minimize gaps between the steps in the application process. We acknowledge that even with these changes, the time between an applicant submitting a resume and being hired for a position can average more than 60 days. We have made a conscious decision not to compromise the hiring process by cutting out steps that may result in a questionable hire in exchange for a shorter application period. To compensate for the sometimes lengthy application process, we send an interim communication to applicants to update them if a search is delayed. In addition, we now offer a way for applicants to stay apprised of the status of searches with communications on our website. Furthermore, we are developing a phone search status line for applicants.

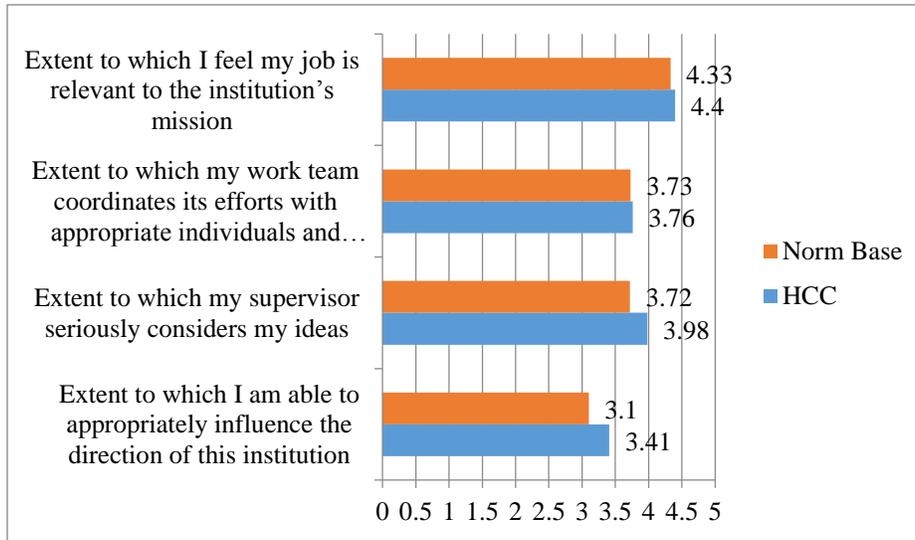
The Staff Mentoring Program was developed in response to a lower satisfaction rating and corresponding comments that were received on the Six-Month New Hire Survey relating to their orientation to the College (4P4).

4R3. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Achievement of strategic College-wide, departmental, and individual goals provides evidence of the

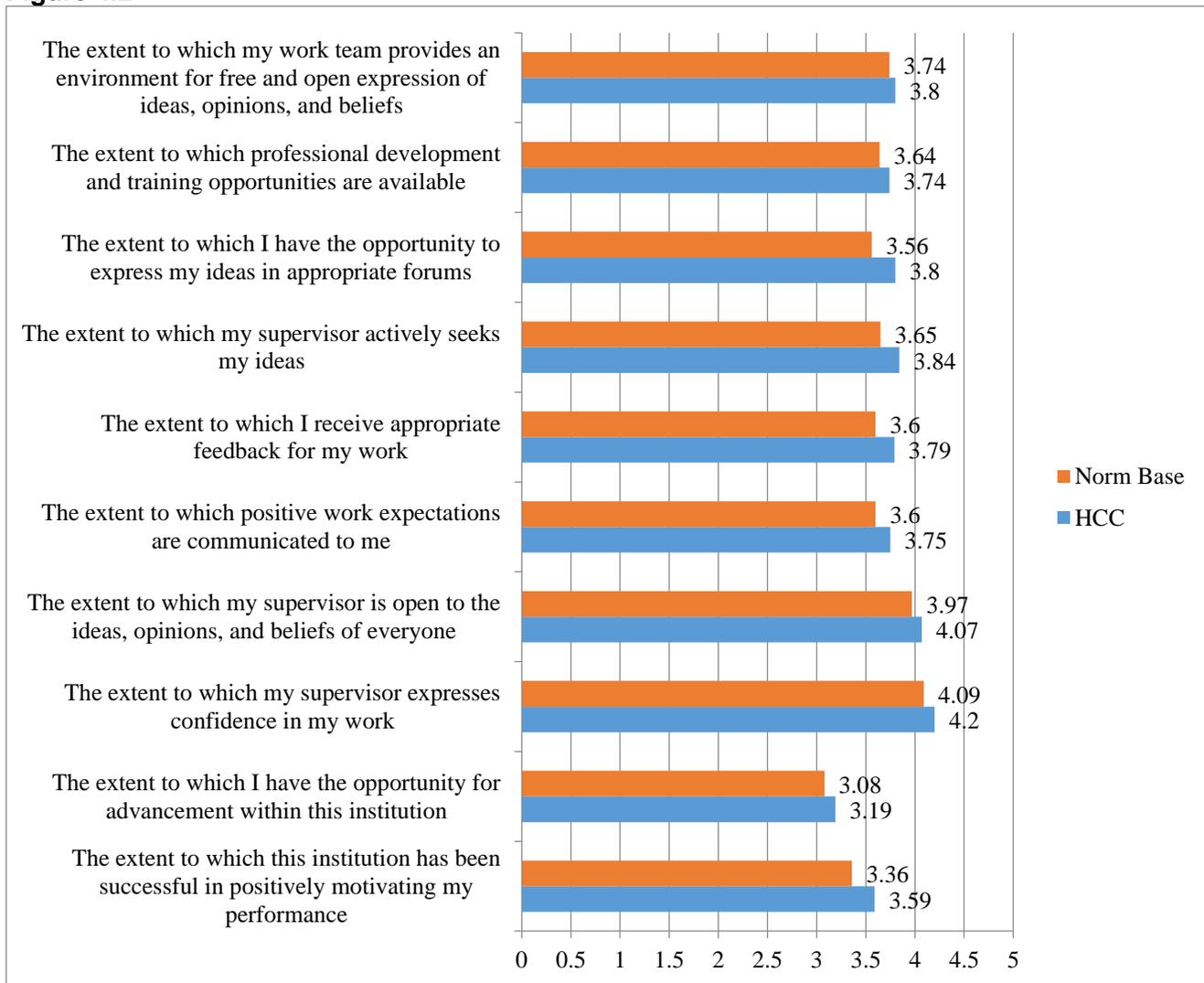
productivity and effectiveness of our staff and faculty. The annual employee feedback process is used as a means to collect data on goal achievement. Employees list the status of goals set from the prior year’s review period and any additional accomplishments. The supervisor of each department/division prepares a summary highlighting individual and department accomplishments for the fiscal year end and shares them with the appropriate Vice President and the President.

Results from the PACE survey administered in 2011 indicated that faculty, staff, and administrators perceive they are able to contribute to goal development and achievement. See Figure 4.1. These results support that employees their voice and actions contribute to achieving the goals more so than the norm base.

Figure 4.1



4R4. This response was rated an O in the College’s 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. In 2011, the College administered the PACE survey for the first time. The results from the PACE survey indicate that employees identify the composite climate at HCC to align with the upper range of the consultative management style. Overall, employees rated the management style in the upper range of the consultative management as well. The College has administered the survey again in the fall of 2014. Figure 4.2 demonstrates how Highland’s responses compare to the NILIE PACE Norm Base, which encompasses 60 climate studies conducted at two-year institutions since 2009. Compared to other community colleges, Highland indicates better performance results in valuing people.

Figure 4.2

411. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. In 4P8, a professional development day and faculty professional development opportunities (brown bags lunches, Last Lecture Series) was noted. Highland developed these initiatives in response to an exercise at our Opening Days in fall 2012. Staff and faculty were broken into two groups to discuss the format of Opening Days and other professional development opportunities available during the year. The feedback garnered during this exercise has been used to make professional development more relevant and attainable for the two groups because their needs are different.

Six-month new hire survey results indicated that the hiring process is lengthy. HR staff researched and implemented an online applicant tracking system, which saved time and paper and promoted efficiency. HR also implemented a timeline for search committees' responsibilities and developed online status updates for internal/external applicants. HR is in the process of implementing a telephone search status line as another method to update applicants.

HR deployed an online self service module for the HR/payroll system to give employees the freedom to access their personal payroll and benefits information in real-time.

The College expanded its orientation for part-time instructors after results from the PACE Survey showed a low score on the statement, "Extent to which PT faculty feel they are included in the Category 4: Valuing People

campus community.” In addition, we also changed our practice for service awards to include part-time employees. Plans to form a task force with the charge to review current recognition awards and make recommendations to improve our awards system are in progress.

After a Strategic Planning Council identified three main goals in the College’s 2010 – 2015 Strategic Plan, the College Council further developed a long-range plan to devise the necessary objectives and projects that would help the College achieve these goals as referenced by the data presented in 8R2. The objectives were then assigned to various administrators for departmental planning and implementation. The College Council was asked to provide progress reports on a regular basis. Near the plan’s mid-point, the Council re-evaluated the goals and objectives to determine if the College was still on course or needed to adjust its plans. The College is also currently analyzing a follow-up survey sent to community leaders in government, business, and education to help determine how well they believe the College is achieving the goals of the plan and meeting their expectations.

Other improvements in the Valuing People category include

- Increased intra-campus communication through roundtable discussions and town hall meetings.
- As a part of the Wellness Program, health screenings continue, and the addition of spouse participation was implemented in Fiscal Year 2012.
- Plans are underway to review the classification and compensation system implemented in 2006 to ascertain at opportunities for improving processes and communication. Additional classification and compensation review members have been added to the team, and further training has been provided.
- A staff mentoring program was developed in 2011 as a response to the Six-Month New Hire Survey that showed orientation to the College needed improvement. Feedback used from evaluations of the program completed by mentors and mentees is used to make continuous improvements to the program.

The improvements noted above were made in response to data collected in our performance results in valuing people. The improvements will continue to be reviewed and analyzed to determine if the expected outcomes of the initiatives are achieved.

412. This response was not addressed in the College’s 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. We structure committee membership to utilize various categories of employees across campus. Standing committees are categorized as strategic, operational, and ad hoc. A collaborative structure helps employees feel comfortable in bringing issues and ideas forward.

College Council utilizes a forum representative of all employee groups and organizational units for providing information sharing, discussion, results of periodic research, and input into decision-making related to administrative and management concerns that cut across the institution. College Council also serves as a communication forum through which information affecting the College is shared by representatives and, unless regarded as confidential, should be reported to the constituent groups within the College. Items needing further refinement or action are referred by this group to College Cabinet.

The College Cabinet is appointed by the President and is an advisory body to the Leadership Team and the President. The Cabinet takes recommendations from the College Council for refinement or to make recommendations. The group may be assigned to conduct research or make recommendations or decisions on administrative concerns, when appropriate, to forward to the Leadership Team. Membership of the Cabinet is based primarily upon position within the College, but may be adjusted from time to time on an ad hoc or permanent basis to accommodate changing circumstances within the College.

The Leadership Team is the senior decision-making body for College decisions regarding College programs, budget, staff, and policy issues. The Leadership Team prepares and reviews information to be presented to the Board of Trustees and provides recommendations to the President.

Figure 5.1 shows the Ideas Flow Chart that was created by Cabinet to illustrate how input is submitted for further discussion and possible action from various areas on campus.

CATEGORY 5: LEADING AND COMMUNICATING

Highland Community College has been driven by its mission since the founding of its predecessor, Freeport Community College in the early 1960s. The College's senior leadership, under the College President, is charged with fulfilling the mission, ensuring that the core values are adhered to and bringing the vision of the College to life. The President serves as the College's chief executive officer reporting to and accountable to the HCC Board of Trustees. The Leadership Team is composed of senior-level administrators. The President also selects members and provides leadership to both the Cabinet and College Council.

The College Council is a larger group with College-wide membership and serves as the input gathering, idea gathering, and vetting body of the College. This group is charged with the initial stages of planning College goals and projects. Items coming out of College Council go to the Cabinet for further refinement, and the Cabinet makes decisions whether or not ideas/projects should move forward to the Leadership Team and then on to the Board for implementation.

Both the College Council and Cabinet provide two-way communication with the larger campus community. This comprehensive communication system related to mission based decision-making places Highland in the aligned level of maturity for institutional communication.

Many of the internal communication efforts responded to in the 2010 feedback have been markedly improved.

As shown in 5R3 (results of PACE survey), personnel perceive the composite climate at HCC to align near the upper-range of the Consultative management style. That style, as defined by NILIE, would indicate that, at Highland, employees are significantly involved in the decision-making process.

5P1. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Highland's mission and core values undergo annual review by the Board but have remained unchanged since the 2010 portfolio. The mission statement was last formally reaffirmed by the Board in December of 2012.

The three core values of integrity, compassion, and respect have remained constant since developed at Opening Days and continue to embody the culture of Highland.

1.A. The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

The mission has contained the same core elements since it was adopted in 1997. A format change has been suggested in order to make clear that the underlying elements are how the mission is carried out. These elements do not qualify as being part of the mission statement but rather serve as vehicles for assuring that critical components of the mission are achieved. At least one time per year the Board reviews the mission statement at a quarterly planning retreat.

5P2. This response was rated an OO in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. HCC followed a comprehensive strategic planning process, led by community members, for the development of its 2010-2015 Strategic Plan. The College intends to replicate that process as we embark on our 2016-2021 plan development, which will commence in the spring of 2015. During the

life of the current Strategic Plan, several milestone status review meetings were held with members of the planning group to ensure that the plan was on track with each of its major goals, as well as division, department, and program goals.

Another alignment vehicle utilized for College planning is our internal long-range financial and operational planning document: Resource Allocation and Management Plan (RAMP). The Vice President of Administrative Services updates this plan each fiscal year with input from the various operational units of the College. These two plans guide the College in formulating and implementing our short- and long-term goals, Action Projects, and critical College-wide improvement initiatives.

College goals are derived from the Strategic Plan and the RAMP document and put into action through objectives developed at the division, department, and program level. Annual individual employee goals based on AQIP principles are developed by faculty and staff as part of the annual feedback process. The President's Cabinet and College Council review and monitor goals and Action Projects to ensure timely completion and attainment of specified goals.

1.A. HCC collaborates with a wide variety of profit and non-profit organizations, educational institutions, business and industry leaders and workforce development organizations in order to fulfill its mission and realize its vision.

HCC's educational programs and student development and support programs underpin and guide efforts as a comprehensive open-door community college.

The College's strategic planning process serves as a guide in aligning efforts with our mission, vision, and core values.

2.C. The duties and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees are outlined in College Policy: 1.06 (Duties and Responsibilities of the Board).

5.C. The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

HCC's long-range strategic decisions are mission driven and planning and budget priorities flow from the mission and out of plan, as well as division, department, and program plans aligned and coordinated with long-range and strategic priorities that are linked and coordinated through the College's annual budget development, review, and approval process cycle.

The College's academic assessment plan is closely aligned and embedded within operational plans and Action Projects.

The Institutional Research department (IR) coordinated environmental scanning and various SWOT-type analysis projects as part of the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan and will refine and replicate as the next round of planning begins in spring 2015.

The IR office has also coordinated the PACE, CSSSE, and locally developed employee survey and presented the results of various surveys to the campus community.

Budget planning encompasses the grim reality that state support has declined dramatically, enrollments have dropped precipitously, and real estate values have decreased drastically. Despite these difficult times, the College budget still remains within the generally accepted guidelines of maintaining a fund balance of 20-25% of the total operating budget.

5P3. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. HCC responds to and addresses the needs and expectations of students and key stakeholder groups through our strategic and operational goals. These priorities are driven by the improvements achieved through AQIP Action Projects. A recent project, Developing a Think Tank, provided an opportunity to make a course correction when the project, as designed, was not able to produce the results intended. The original design was determined infeasible given the size of the College District. The

model was revised to become Lunch with the President, which also resulted in one of our newest Action Projects corresponding with cultivating collaborative relationships. With the financial support and coordination of the College Foundation, lunches in various areas of the College District with key informants have begun producing similar results that the original design hoped for. The key to the redesign was taking the College out into the District for listening sessions and input gathering rather than expecting key leaders to come to the College. This modification has produced very positive results.

During its quarterly retreats, the Board of Trustees conducts planning sessions, annually reviews the mission statement, and provides operational guidance for the upcoming quarter of the fiscal year.

At its regular monthly meetings, the Board approves new course and program offerings before they are submitted to the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), and as part of its Policy Governance Model of Operation, reviews monitoring reports on ends statements and makes requests for revised or alternate reports to ensure that student success is a priority in all programs and services.

The Board conducts itself following policies 1.04 (Authority of the College Board and Transaction of Business), 1.05 (Adopting, Rescinding and Revising Board Policies), and 1.06 (Duties and Responsibilities of the Board).

The Board acts on recommendations from the College President who receives action recommendations from the Leadership Team and through College Cabinet and College Council.

1.B. The mission is articulated publicly.

The College mission, vision and core values were reaffirmed in December of 2012 and have been reviewed and found still valid and appropriate, so there has been no policy update.

HCC is a two-year comprehensive open-door Illinois Community College serving the four-county region (Stephenson, Ogle, Jo Daviess, and Carroll) which comprises Community College District 519. The elected Board of Trustees maintains the College under the coordination of the Illinois Community College Board and the Illinois Board of Higher Education. The College was brought into existence by the people of northwestern Illinois at a public referendum on October 1, 1966. Highland's predecessor institution was Freeport Community College, which was established by public referendum in November 1961 and opened its doors in September 1962. In June of 1967, Freeport Community College became part of the new Highland Community College.

HCC meets its mission by providing instruction to enable students to complete specific vocational degrees and certificates; providing occupational training, retraining, and/or upgrading of skills to meet individual, local, and state needs; providing developmental and General Education designed to meet local cultural needs and encourage lifelong learning; providing opportunities that enhance cultural understanding through international education; providing a range of student support services that recognize and support the educational goals and needs of a diverse student population; supporting economic development through partnerships with business, industry, chambers of commerce, units of local government, and other educational institutions-providing community access as an open-door institution to all College services and facilities.

HCC offers educational programs designed to transfer into a baccalaureate program at senior institutions, lead directly to employment, or satisfy a special interest: Associate or Arts, Associate of Science, Associates of Applied Science, Associate of General Studies, and a variety of short-term, career-oriented certificates of varying length. Highland participates in the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI), which is a comprehensive statewide articulation initiative effort among colleges and universities in Illinois. All Highland courses that apply to the General Education Core Curriculum and Major areas will have an official IAI course code listed at the end of each course description. Updated state-approved lists of General Education and Major area courses are available at <http://www.iTransfer.org>.

5P4. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The College believes that its leaders work to find future opportunities while enhancing a strong focus on students and learning.

HCC encourages its leaders to be involved in key business and economic partnerships that benefit student learning and the College as a whole. The College always keeps a focus on student learning and providing quality student services. Community outreach has been a central part of the College's mission since its founding. The Board of Trustees and HCC leaders continually work towards providing a quality education at an affordable cost to students.

Members of the College's Board of Trustees and Leadership Team sit on various boards and committees that show key business and economic partnerships like the Northwest Illinois Development Alliance (NIDA), the Freeport Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Tri-County Economic Development Alliance (TCEDA).

College leaders actively participate on community boards and committees, and they encourage all College employees to serve on a community board or committee. This participation allows the College an opportunity to share its mission with the community and allows the College to gather input from the community. College leaders also participate in regional, state, and national organizations that facilitate an exchange of new ideas with other Colleges and universities.

The material gathered from these outside interactions is shared with the College community through various avenues. Additionally, this information is taken into account when the College develops its annual goals and during its strategic planning sessions. Previously, this information has led to new program developments and internship opportunities, changes in College procedures, and a recognition that Highland needs to further explore community, corporate, and governmental grant funding opportunities.

College leaders also support professional development for College employee groups. The College recognizes the importance of keeping employees current in their fields and providing access to new innovations. To highlight how important this is, College leaders recently increased the minimum amount of professional development funding for faculty. This funding increase was based on strengthening student learning. Additionally, the College responded to feedback from staff for increased needs related to professional development. The result was the creation of an additional professional development day during each academic semester.

5P5. This response was rated an OO in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The College has taken important steps to improve the decision-making process at HCC. The primary decision-making body is the Leadership Team that consists of the President, Vice President of Academic Services/Chief Academic Officer, Vice President of Administrative Services, the Vice President of Student Development and Support Services, Associate Vice President of Student Services, the Associate Vice President of Human Resources, and the Executive Assistant to the President and the Board. Based on the response in the 2010 AQIP Systems Feedback Report, HCC recognizes the need to engage in more shared governance. Toward that end, the College has a Cabinet, made up of 12 employees that include the Leadership Team and representation from faculty, custodial/maintenance, professional staff, and support staff. The Cabinet takes recommendations from the College Council for refinement or to make recommendations. The group may be assigned to conduct research or make recommendations or decisions on administrative concerns and, when appropriate, to forward these to the Leadership Team. Finally, the College has a College Council, which is made up of 25 employees. The College Council provides a forum representative of all employee groups and organizational units for providing information sharing, discussion, results of periodic research, and input into decision-making related to administrative and management concerns that cut across the institution. Ideas are generated by employees, committees, or task forces, and then the ideas are discussed via the various decision-making bodies (see Figure 5.1). The decision-making process was designed in response to the last AQIP Systems Appraisal. The College

recognizes that this process can be cumbersome and that not all decisions need to be taken through each of these steps. Therefore, the College leadership plans to revise and simplify the decision-making process based on employee feedback and best practices.

The College has 28 advisory committees and task forces that are arranged into strategic, operational, and as needed (see Table 5.1). These groups make recommendations on areas like accreditation, assessment, technology, curriculum changes, distance education, diversity, and operational policy. Committee and task force membership largely incorporates all employee groups and, in some instances, students. Each year, committee and task force charges and memberships are reviewed by the President and the Chairs of the respective committee or task force. Based on employee feedback, College leaders plan to review the structure and function of College committees to provide more emphasis on shared governance of the College.

Figure 5.1 Idea Flowchart

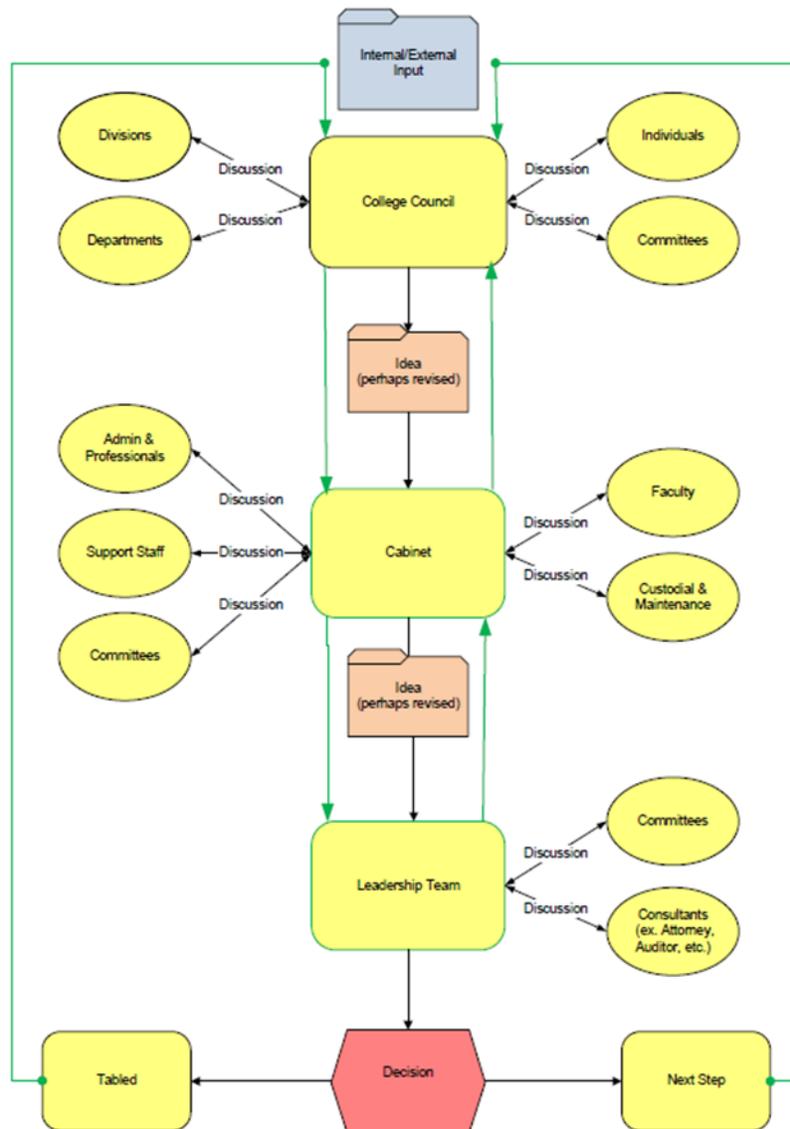


Table 5.1 Advisory Committees and Task Forces 2014-2015

Strategic	Operational	As Needed
Accreditation	ADA Accessibility	Health Insurance
Cabinet	Alternative Delivery	Recycling
College Council	Assessment	Sick Leave Bank
Curriculum and Instruction	Behavioral Intervention/Violence Prevention	Student Judicial Review
Identity Theft Prevention	Diversity	
Leadership Team	Enrollment Management	
Policy Review	Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action	
Strategic Enrollment Management	Global	
Technology	Honors	
	Institutional Review Board	
	Placement Test	
	Safety	
	Support Staff Development	
	Web Advisory	
	Wellness Activities	

Since the College's previous System Portfolio, the College created the ADA Committee. The need for this committee was based on new regulations and requirements from the federal government. Additionally, the College began implementing Universal Design. See 1P9.

The Office of Institutional Research continues to utilize multiple sources to provide and analyze data to assist College decision-making bodies, committees, and task forces. Also, data is gathered from the Illinois Community College Trustees Association and various other regional, state, and national organizations.

5.B. The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

HCC's Board of Trustees is a seven-member governing board elected by the residents of Illinois Community College District 519. A student trustee is elected by the student body. The trustees meet for monthly board meetings, typically on the third Tuesday of every month. Additionally, they hold quarterly retreats. Trustees receive updates from College departments at these monthly meetings and at their quarterly retreats.

The College's academic requirements, policies, and processes are established by College-wide committees that involve faculty, staff, and administrators. These include the Curriculum and Instruction Committee, Assessment Committee, Policy Committee, and Technology Committee.

Overall, the College is committed to furthering shared governance in the decision-making process. The College has made a concerted effort to involve faculty, staff, and students in the planning and direction of the College.

5P6. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. As mentioned in the 2010 HCC AQIP Systems Portfolio, "every four years the College embarks on a comprehensive strategic planning process. This process involves pulling together the College's key stakeholders and using this data to create a five-year Strategic Plan. This plan becomes the overall basis for decision-making." This process resulted in the [2010 – 2015 Strategic Plan](#). The College has begun outlining the comprehensive strategy for the creation of the next Strategic Plan. This will be similar to previous processes and continue to seek key stakeholders and utilize data from multiple sources to produce the next five-year Strategic Plan.

The College continues to rely on data, information, and performance measures to make decisions. Data is reviewed and used by appropriate committees, the College Council, the Cabinet, Leadership Team, and the Board of Trustees. Departments, divisions, and institution-wide agencies use this information in the goal-setting process. Information is then used in the goal-setting process at the department, division, and institutional level. It is also used to make strategic decisions related to the mission and Strategic Plan of the institution. Performance measures are collected throughout the year based on specific goals associated with the mission and Strategic Plan.

A clearly outlined decision-making process is described in 5P5 (see Figure 5.1). The College's Leadership Team continues to monitor performance on indicators of effectiveness and, as mentioned above, will be working to review this process to determine a more simplified process for some decisions.

5.C. The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

Role of Cabinet and Council – The College Cabinet and Council just completed a process to determine projects to be included in the Capital Improvement Bond project. More detail and explanation can be found in 6P2.

AQIP Action Project teams involve stakeholders from throughout the College. The subject matter of each project determines who participates. More details can be found in 8P3.

Based on an Accounting Program Review, the Business and Technology Division was able to secure the creation and funding for an adjunct accounting instructor. A program review in the Nursing and Allied Health Department led to the creation of a Hybrid Nursing Program (See 1P3). Feedback from students and other stakeholders showed a need for evening hours for advising. The advising department responded by making night advising hours available to students and implemented advising appointments via video chat.

5P7. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The College has recently updated various formal and informal communication methods. We continue to recognize that effective communication is an ongoing process. Consequently, various large-group sessions including all employees have been held for communication of routine and critical issues.

When it became apparent that changing the design of our self-insured health insurance plan was necessary due to increasing financial costs and the Health Care Reform Act, we took a systematic and collaborative approach to the process. In the initial step in the process, our insurance brokers met with our Health Insurance Task Force (HITF), which is comprised of representatives from all classifications of employees. This meeting produced recommendations for reducing costs associated with our health plan. In a second step in the process, our HITF evaluated each recommendation by considering the impact on our employees/dependents, recruitment of future employees, and the cost savings. The task force then produced a list of short-term and long-term changes thought to be of value to implement or to consider further. Through town hall meetings, the task force shared information about options for making the health plan more affordable and sustainable and explained the options for the employees to review. After the meetings, employees were able to provide feedback on which options they were in favor of or not in favor of through an online survey. The recommendations of the HITF and feedback of employees was utilized in making changes to the health plan.

Various information updates are distributed via all campus emails, our Faculty/Staff Portal, and on our Facebook page and Twitter account. The College strives to be an open organization but acknowledges that, based on employee feedback, more emphasis needs to be placed on this objective. To address these concerns, the following communication-related activities have been implemented to ensure that the College community is well-informed.

- Faculty Assembly
- Faculty Cafes
- Meetings with various campus constituency groups
- Emailing of Board packet and meeting minutes links
- Board meeting updates via email from President
- Campus-wide forums on state finances, SURS, and the College budget

Additionally, College leadership recognizes the need to evaluate the value of various forms of communications. For example, emails to employees are usually reports and do not necessarily provide opportunities for input. The College continually strives to create a balance between information-sharing and requests for input.

5P8. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Highland prominently promotes and displays the mission statement and core values in all printed materials, on the website, and through the rapidly increasing use of social media.

The core values of integrity, compassion, and respect were highlighted by the President in his fall Opening Days remarks to ensure that new and veteran staff members started the school year with an understanding of how critical these values are to our long term performance.

These core values are bolstered by Highland's four service standards: courtesy; learning; effective communication; and cleanliness, security, and safety.

Highland's employee characteristics were adopted to reinforce the mission statement: "Highland Community College has identified a set of employee characteristics that it believes each employee must possess in order for the College to successfully achieve its stated mission and goals. It is expected that each employee does possess these characteristics and will strive to strengthen and enhance these characteristics as they continue their employment with Highland Community College." Those characteristics are commitment, interpersonal skills, lifelong learner, and sound judgment.

Additionally, Highland long ago adopted the Robert Greenleaf Servant-Leadership model as a principal of operation that supports and enhances the mission, vision, and core values.

1.B. The mission is articulated publicly.

The HCC mission statement is included in the College Catalog (see page 1 of the 2013-2015 catalog) and on the website tab: Mission Statement.

Leaders at all levels personally deploy the mission, vision, and core values through their actions and through a wide variety of internal venues.

5P9. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Highland Community College has provided both external and internal leadership development for the general public, for employees, and for area high school students for over 20 years.

These programs are widely known and are based on the teachings of Robert Greenleaf and his Servant-Leadership model and the Leadership Challenge model of James Kouzes and Barry Posner.

The highly popular employee Leadership Institute is being considered for reintroduction because the College has many new employees and many who were not able to participate when the series was first offered.

Professional development funds exist at established levels for the various employee categories. The support staff group has taken the extra step of establishing its own professional development day retreat to ensure that its members' specific development needs are met. This group establishes its

own leadership and also has a representative on both the College Council and Cabinet. Full- and part-time faculty have specific professional development funds that they can access primarily for the enhancement of their teaching responsibilities.

The HR office circulates news of upcoming staff development opportunities. This office also conducts training based on department requests and compiled needs gathered from the annual feedback process. An attempt is made to encourage staff from various levels and areas of responsibility to assume a leadership role when considering the appointment of committee and task force chairs, co-chairs, and members.

5.B. The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

College committees, workgroups, AQIP Action Projects, and AQIP Portfolio preparation are all examples of how Highland is inclusive by providing College-wide opportunities for faculty and staff participation to encourage and model the shared governance model of operation.

Policies, outlined employee rights, and responsibilities for all staff, regardless of employee level or classification, are laid out in a variety of official documents (hard copy or online): Board Policy Manual, Faculty Contract, Custodial/Maintenance Contract, and College Catalog.

5R1. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The primary performance measure the College uses to analyze leading and communicating processes is the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) developed by the National Initiative for Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness (NILIE) at North Carolina State University. In their research, NILIE has synthesized from the literature four leadership models and organizational systems: coercive, competitive, consultative, and collaborative. The purpose of the PACE survey is to obtain the perceptions of faculty and staff concerning the College climate and to provide data to assist the College in promoting more open and constructive communication. In the PACE model, the leadership of an institution motivates climate factors (institutional structure, supervisory relationships, teamwork, student focus) toward an outcome of student success and institutional effectiveness. The PACE was administered for the first time in 2011 and has been administered again in fall 2014.

Another survey in which the College participated that is considered a leading and communicating performance measure was developed by the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) as part of the Governance Institute for Student Success program and is coordinated through the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA).

Additional performance measures that were referenced in the 2010 Systems Portfolio are periodically analyzed and include responses to the College's community leader survey (**see 3P3**), the President's 360 degree feedback survey, and the College's Employee Leadership Institute Evaluation.

5R2. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. At HCC, the overall results from the 2011 PACE instrument indicate a healthy campus climate, yielding an overall 3.82 mean score (on a five-point scale) or high Consultative management style. The Student Focus category received the highest mean score (4.04), falling into the lower range Collaborative management environment, whereas the Institutional Structure category received the lowest mean score (3.64). When respondents were classified according to Personnel Classification at HCC, the composite ratings were as follows: Administrator/Other Professional (3.88), Classified and Custodial/Maintenance (3.70), and Faculty (3.87).

Of the 46 standard PACE questions, those with the top mean scores and, thus, identified as areas of strengths at Highland Community College are listed in Table 5.2. Questions with the bottom mean scores and, thus, identified as areas in need of improvement are listed in Table 5.3. All are relevant to

leading and communicating, for the PACE Model attributes a positive organizational climate to effective leadership and communication.

Table 5.2 2011 Top Mean Scores from PACE

Question	Mean
The extent to which I feel my job is relevant to this institution's mission	4.40
The extent to which students receive an excellent education at this institution (#31)	4.24
The extent to which this institution prepares students for further learning (#37)	4.22
The extent to which my supervisor expresses confidence in my work (#2)	4.20
The extent to which this institution prepares students for a career (#35)	4.12
The extent to which I am given the opportunity to be creative in my work (#39)	4.10
The extent to which my supervisor is open to the ideas, opinions, and beliefs of everyone (#9)	4.07
The extent to which the actions of this institution reflect its mission (#1)	4.07
The extent to which students are satisfied with their educational experience at this institution (#42)	4.05
The extent to which student needs are central to what we do (#7)	4.03

Table 5.3 2011 PACE Identified Areas In Need of Improvement

Question	Mean
The extent to which I have the opportunity for advancement within this institution (#38)	3.19
The extent to which I am able to appropriately influence the direction of this institution (#15)	3.41
The extent to which my work is guided by clearly defined administrative processes (#44)	3.44
The extent to which institutional teams use problem-solving techniques (#11)	3.46
The extent to which decisions are made at the appropriate level at this institution (#4)	3.53
The extent to which information is shared within this institution (#10)	3.56
The extent to which this institution is appropriately organized (#32)	3.58
The extent to which this institution has been successful in positively motivating my performance (#22)	3.59
The extent to which a spirit of cooperation exists at this institution (#25)	3.61
The extent to which unacceptable behaviors are identified and communicated to me (#13)	3.64

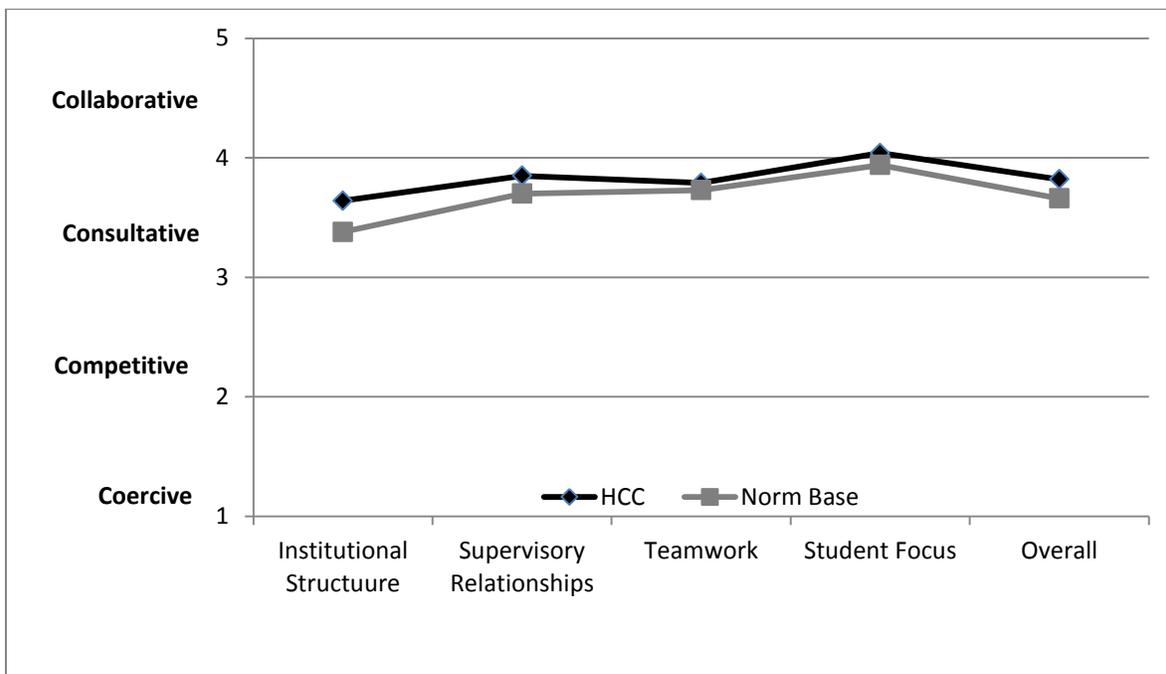
Table 5.4 contains the results from the Governance Institute for Student Success (GISS) survey. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest, the Highland Board of Trustees responded to questions related to their governance role. These results will be used by the trustees to guide their improvement efforts and to help form the framework metrics which will enable the Board to monitor that Highland is continually assuring the success of our students.

Table 5.4 GISS Survey Data

Question	Average Score
Whether their work presents clear evidence that the Board understands that its primary role is in policy making	4.67
Whether the Board adheres to a code of ethics and avoids any perception of potential conflict of interest	4.50
Whether they have sufficient data, information, and study time before adopting policy recommendations	4.17
Whether the Board spends sufficient time planning and providing clear priorities for the President and the College	3.83
Whether the Board is adequately informed about important internal issues facing the College	3.83

5R3. This response was not addressed in the College’s 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Figure 5.2 shows how the College compares with the NILIE PACE Norm Base, which included approximately 60 climate studies conducted at two-year institutions. As shown in this figure, the College’s means for each of the climate factors and the overall mean are higher than the Norm Base. While the College has identified areas of improvement, these results are considered favorable, especially considering that, of the more than 120 studies having been completed by NILIE, few institutions were found to have achieved a fully Collaborative environment (mean score of 4).

Figure 5.2 HCC Climate Compared with the NILIE PACE Norm Base



5I1. This response was rated an S for 5I1a and an OO for 5I1b in the College’s 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The College has updated material for the first question and provided new information related to how the College has a systematic and comprehensive process for Leading and Communicating.

Highland Community College has made concerted efforts since 2004 to address organizational communication concerns and to begin to measure and analyze the effectiveness of those efforts. To that end, to maintain an understanding of the key factors that affect workforce engagement and satisfaction, HCC began administering the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE),

in 2011. Participation in the survey is open to all employees. In 2011, 55% of all employees responded to the survey, indicating a high-level of interest in providing feedback on the climate of the institution. The information was shared with employees through various informational sessions.

The College used the results of the PACE survey to implement a reorganization of the President's Cabinet and the College Council. This reorganization was designed to address Identified Areas In Need of Improvement shown previously in Table 5.2. Questions 4, 10, 11, and 15 had responses that indicated a need to change the organizational communication flow to provide more and wider opportunities for input. The effect on campus communication as a result of the reorganization of these two communication and decision-making bodies will be evaluated through the results of the fall 2014 PACE survey administration.

Additionally, enhancements were made to shared governance by utilizing the negotiations strategy advocated by Roger Fisher and William Ury in *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*. This process is commonly known as Interest Based Bargaining. The Faculty Senate, Custodial/Maintenance Union, and the College administration invited in an outside consultant to train all three sides on this process. Once the training was over, each group worked through the process of developing interests and communicating those interests to the others. This interest-based conversation led to creative strategies being developed to help meet the needs of the interests presented. The three groups, while not completely successful in meeting solutions for all interests presented, did work together and creatively and amicably managed tough concerns facing the College.

The Custodial/Maintenance Reorganization (See 6R4), Staff Mentoring Program (See 4P4), Turnitin (See 1P9), Health Insurance Plan Design Changes (See 5P7), and the Staff Development Day (See 5P4) are all new initiatives that highlight improvements made in Leading and Communicating.

The College has made advancement in this area from our previous report, but it continues to work toward processes and initiatives that provide a systematic and comprehensive Leading and Communicating environment.

5I2. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Highland Community College continues to work toward implementing a continuous quality improvement environment at all levels and strives to attain the attributes of a high-performing organization. AQIP Actions Projects assist in these improvement efforts. These projects are worked on by various teams, and the projects are guided by the AQIP Steering Committee as outlined in 8P3.

HCC is constantly striving for improvement, and the institutional culture has grown over the last four years to provide more support for efforts in leading and communication.

CATEGORY 6: SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONAL OPERATIONS

The College has made progress in this category since our 2010 Systems Portfolio. Now that we have completed a few years of our Institutional Survey Plan, we have more data in many areas relating to support services for students, faculty, staff, and administration. More data can be benchmarked against national or Illinois community college results. Overall, the College has made significant improvements, particularly in measurement and results to document our processes.

6P1. This response was rated an S and an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The reviewers indicated an opportunity to develop more formal processes to identify the support service needs of other key stakeholder groups. The College identifies the support service needs of students and other key stakeholders using a variety of formal and informal methods. Highland is in the first year of our second cycle through the Institutional Survey Plan. Various parts of this plan collect data on the needs of students, staff, and other key stakeholders. Examples of the methods used are listed here in the tables below.

Category 5: Leading and Communicating

Student needs	Measures/methods
Satisfaction Campus-wide concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noel-Levitz student satisfaction survey • In class surveys • Forums with students (Pizza/Breakfast with President) • Feedback from Student Senate and inter-organizational committee, student clubs, and organizations
Success Persistence Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment analysis reports provide data on enrollment trends, persistence, and retention rates. This information helps determine academic program and course needs of students. • In class surveys provide data to make possible mid-course adjustments. • Adult learner inventory
Successful transfer to another institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer Survey (bi-annual) allows us to determine support needs of transfer students.
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCSSE • SENSE
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service utilization data for services such as registration, testing, tutoring and library circulation and interlibrary loan help the service areas of the College plan for staffing and appropriate resources to meet student needs. • Targeted student surveys on specific items such as one recently to identify student interest in a mobile app for phones and tablets
Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College's Policy Review Committee has a flowchart for identifying needed policies and determining how they should be brought to the Policy Review Committee. This primarily focuses on feedback filtering from department levels to the Cabinet/Council and Leadership Team discussions.

Stakeholders/ needs	Measures/Methods
Board of Trustees need to understand student needs at all levels of the College.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Trustee (advisory member of the Board) shares information from the student body with the Board of Trustees (monthly at Board meetings) • Board annual self-evaluation process
Area employers need potential employees with an education level and skills to fill openings in the workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupational survey (annual) • Workforce development monitoring report/ends statement (annual) • State licensure pass rates (RN, LPN, Cosmetology) • Advisory committees
Other Stakeholders need a wide variety of information about the College and its completers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Leader's Survey (every 5 years). Results help the College set priorities in the long-range plan by identifying various community needs and priorities.
Alumni need information to stay connected the College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal feedback from Alumni Association program advisory committees • Graduate Survey

6P2. This response was rated an S and an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The identified opportunity recommended developing processes which could more directly solicit the organizational support needs of faculty, staff, and administrators. The College has developed more systematic methods of identifying the administrative support needs of faculty, staff, and administrators since this question was last addressed in the 2010 Systems Portfolio. A number of information gathering methods such as the PACE employee survey, division and departmental meetings, and the annual feedback process inform the College's administrative and budget managers about various administrative support needs. Examples of how departments have created process to gather input include:

- HR administers the PACE employee survey, conducted on a three-year rotational basis; a staffing request process; and the annual review process to gather and analyze information about current needs.
- IT conducts needs assessments for various departments and computer labs/academic areas to review current use and future projected needs. Results are incorporated into IT planning documentation which flow to project and budget planning.
- Major College units have been charged with creating three year strategic plans that align with the College goals and long-term objectives. These plans, along with the processes that helped create them, will act as sources of information about the needs of the staff and faculty in subsequent years.

These needs are then documented through several tools that assist the College with prioritizing and funding the administrative needs of the College. The tools include the annually updated Resource Allocation and Management Plan (RAMP), in which administrators supply data and information about the various needs and associated costs of items that require more long-term financial planning, and the annual budgeting process which is designed to incorporate input from all employees regarding their administrative needs. The Leadership Team routinely looks for collaborative strategies or other means of fulfilling the needs. One method has been the technology/equipment bond sale process, which has been used five times in the last 20 years. The bond sale preparation follows a process of gathering employee needs and presenting those needs to the College Council for prioritization.

6P3. This response was rated an S and an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The identified opportunity regarded the need for evidence of processes used to track safety and security processes. It also suggested a need for evidence of the techniques used to train employees and students on safety and security issues. Table 6.1 illustrates the College's efforts to track safety and security processes and provides evidence of training for campus employees and students.

Table 6.1

Process	Hazards Identification	Maintaining and Evaluating the Process	Communicating and Training
Emergency operation planning	Accident reports	security cameras	Campus Emergency Operations Plan
	Deputies assigned to campus	OSHA audit request sent to Department of Labor	Risk Management Plan and duties incorporated into job descriptions
	Surveys	Table Top Exercises	Signage including no concealed carry, threat assessment, severe weather shelters, and response to emergencies
		De-brief meetings following incidents	Emergency call boxes in classrooms
		Annual review of CEOP	NIMS training and certification for First Responders
			All emergency actions including drills are reported to STCOEMA
			Campus-wide lockdown, fire, and severe weather drills conducted annually
		Participation with the Stephenson County Emergency Management Services Team	
Violence prevention	Maxient online reporting system	Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT)	Violence prevention Plan
	Campus counselor	College joined NABITA to assist with evaluation, policy development, etc.	VAWA and Campus Save Act related training for students and employees
	Deputy	Annual review of the Violence Prevention Plan	First Year Experience Seminar student workshop on violence prevention
	Use of NABITA threat assessment tool		Ongoing training for BIT members
			In service training for employees
		FYES workshop, drills (frequency), email to employees, VAWA and CampusSave Act related training	
Emergency preparedness	Larger scale safety projects are assessed and planned as a part of our Protection, Health & Safety (PHS) process.	Testing public address system	Mass text and media alert systems
	A prioritization process assesses urgency of needs and available funding.	Table top exercises with emergency responders	Use of an App for emergency responders
		Simulated active shooter training event	
		Back-up digital phone system	

In 2011, the Campus Emergency Operations Plan (CEOP) was completed, implemented, and made available to all involved HCC personnel and outside agencies including Freeport Rural Fire Dept., Stephenson County Sheriff's Dept., Illinois Emergency Managements Agency (IEMA) and Stephenson County Emergency Management Agency (STCOEMA). The CEOP is an all hazards plan that addresses any foreseeable emergency action required of HCC. The CEOP dictates the roles of HCC personnel during specific emergencies and explains how the situation will be communicated to the Campus community and other outside agencies as well as post-incident review, post-crisis support, and business continuity. HCC also makes available to all students, staff, and visitors, a comprehensive Emergency Guide outlining the desired initial response to an emergency as well as how to initiate a response to an emergency by HCC staff via the HCC website.

As a part of ongoing improvement of its emergency action plans, HCC also reviews all of its emergency communications and procedures. HCC has an all-Campus Public Address system with battery backup power to alert the Campus community of emergency situations. The PA system can be accessed by authorized personnel via the Campus telephone system or from a cellular telephone from virtually anywhere in the world. HCC utilizes its digital telephone system as a backup for emergency announcements in the event of a failure of the PA system. HCC also uses other communication systems such as mass e-mail, mass text messaging, and media alerts to notify off-Campus stakeholders of an emergency situation on Campus.

HCC contracts for the services of the Stephenson County Sheriff's Department by having three full-time sworn Sheriff's Deputies assigned to HCC to provide security for Campus on a specified schedule. In 2012, as an evaluation of our security provider, HCC completed a competitive Request for Proposals process for Campus Security. Proposals were reviewed by a task force, providers were interviewed, and, ultimately, HCC chose to contract for the services of the Stephenson County Sheriff's Department. Key HCC staff meets monthly with Sheriff's Deputies to assess any concerning activity, upcoming security issues and any safety concerns, and how to best handle those concerns.

In addition to safety and security in emergency situations, HCC also helps to ensure the safety of all employees and students by maintaining all OSHA required documentation and safety plans. Plans are reviewed annually and updated as necessary. HCC, as an audit of its OSHA documents, has invited the Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL), which performs OSHA compliance and enforcement for educational facilities, to Campus as a part of IDOL's On-Site Consultation service to ensure the accuracy of all documentation and the physical safety of Campus. HCC also provides First Aid Kits, Blood Borne Pathogen Kits, and AED's in strategic locations.

Non-emergency safety concerns are identified by routine assessments by area supervisors and Physical Plant staff, reports by stakeholders, and occasional surveys. Copies of all injury reports or notes of safety concerns are relayed to the Director, Physical Plant and Maintenance for assessment of the situation and determination of any required corrective action. Larger scale safety projects are assessed and planned as a part of our Protection, Health and Safety (PHS) process. Projects are prioritized according to urgency of needs and available funding. One example of a project that was identified by surveys and funded through PHS is an upgrade to our campus lighting.

6P4. This response was not addressed in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Highland's Leadership Team, which reports to the President, provides oversight and reviews major changes to College policies and processes. Day-to-day operational management for student, administrative, and institutional support is the responsibility of the Deans, Directors, and Vice Presidents to which they report. Data collection, analysis, and dissemination play an important role in this management. Regularly scheduled division and departmental meetings are held to discuss data received and resolve issues. The following are three examples of data that are collected and acted upon:

- A new process was put into place to determine long-range goals for the College's Strategic Plan. A champion was assigned to each College goal. Each champion was made responsible for guiding the project, documenting progress in a spreadsheet, and reporting back to the College Council (see 8R1).
- Point of service surveys are administered to students after receiving help from Student Services staff. The data is collected by the Director of Institutional Research and is shared with Student Services staff members. Appropriate action is taken based on the data.
- The Financial Aid Office utilizes our enterprise resource software system to identify ISIRs in the weekly download for students who have enrolled at HCC, which allows the Financial Aid staff to prioritize those students' files for completion.

6P5. This response was not addressed in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Many departments within the College utilize a shared network location on the College network to maintain information about processes. The College recognizes the value of process documentation in training student workers, retaining organizational knowledge during turnovers, improving shared processes between two or more departments, and empowering employees to innovate and improve operations; therefore, college-wide training on process mapping and other planning tools were provided during professional development sessions. Processes are often mapped as cross-departmental teams gather to brainstorm and identify improvements or new processes. Examples provide evidence of the wide-spread use of process mapping and documentation at Highland:

- The Cashier's Office has documented many processes and makes them accessible to all accounting staff via a computer drive, including a recent new process for monitoring and documenting the application of the registration fee.
- Information Technology maintains a centralized knowledge base for IT staff to easily retrieve documented fixes and procedures.
- Financial aid has a binder documenting their Veteran's and other student procedures.
- Financial Aid has cross-trained frontline staff in admissions and advising so that they may answer general financial aid questions and access basic student information to respond to individual questions. The tools and processes are documented on a shared network location.
- Use of Maxient online reporting system automates the process and documentation to manage student early alert cases. Routing of reports submitted by faculty to the appropriate staff encourages timely intervention so that student concerns can be handled rapidly and with appropriate external and internal referrals.

The College also invests in tools such as the shared network location, faculty/staff online portal, and Moodle sites to facilitate knowledge transfer. Investments are also made in joint meetings between departments. For example, regularly scheduled common intake meetings bring together all of the staff from Admissions, Testing Center, Advising, and Student Services administration to discuss and improve intake processes. These frequent sessions have allowed the College to sustain and continuously improve the Common Intake system, which was developed through an Action Project spanning 2006 - 2009.

6R1. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Particularly, the reviewers wished to see evidence of the processes the College uses to select, measure, track, assess, and use data to improve support services. The College uses diverse measures to determine the success of its processes in student, administrative, and institutional support functions. Information is regularly collected through various software systems and through the College's data warehouse. The institutional research office assists as requested with identifying key metrics and corresponding data or data collection needs. Table 6.2 and 6.3 below provides examples of measures that are routinely used to assess the performance of our support processes. The examples encompass the varied types of data that is assessed, including use of services, system performance, financial performance, satisfaction information and benchmark comparators. Other chapters expand on the measures used across campus. See 7R1 and 7R2 for additional examples of measures used for system and knowledge management analysis.

Table 6.2

Measurement	Data Source	Frequency of Collection	Description
Student Services			
Engagement of entering students in six effective practice benchmarks: Early Connections, High Expectations and Aspirations, Clear Academic Plan and Pathway, Effective Track to College Readiness, Engaged Learning, Academic and Social Support Network	SENSE - Nationally normed survey	Every three years	Benchmarking engagement against other institutions in the cohort, small colleges. Provides trend analysis for HCC.
Service satisfaction	Point of Service Surveys - institutionally developed	Daily	Student satisfaction with advising and admissions "front door" services.
Recruitment Outcomes - high school matriculation and inquiry conversion	Reported through HCC's student information system and staff tracking of data	Annually	Published in the Recruitment and retention Monitoring Report these measures show percentage of high school seniors matriculating to Highland and percentage of inquiries that enroll.
Progress of students receiving tutoring	HCC data warehouse	Semesterly	Success rates of students receiving tutoring compared to those who didn't
Total hours of Perkins tutoring	HCC data warehouse	Semesterly	Total tutoring hours for student eligible under Perkins funding
Test Center usage	Internal data collection	Daily	Collecting the types of tests, number of tests given by hour of day
Placement testing usage and outcomes	Compass	Monthly	Types/number of tests provided, course placement and units consumed
Number of student with an advisor of record	HCC data warehouse	Annually	Benchmark our student access to advising
Number and type of conduct reports	Maxient system reports	Annually	Monitor use of the system, review for student educational opportunities and safety/security information
Number of submissions to Turn It In	Turn It In system reports	Annually	Student Use of anti-plagiarism software
Library circulation	Innovative Interfaces Sierra circulation software	Monthly/Annually	Determine library material types and subject matter to inform future acquisitions
Inter-library loan use	Innovative Interfaces Sierra circulation and OCLC WorldShare software system reports	Monthly/Annually	Determine library material types and subject matter to inform future acquisitions
Library facility use	Internal data collection	Semi-annually	Determine staffing needs
Number of FAFSA's received, number of those students enrolled, number of those enrolled for whom financial aid is authorized	HCC data warehouse	Monthly - weekly during peak periods	This measures our efficiency and allows us to focus efforts on students who are enrolled, rather than those who aren't.
Rate of default on student loans for Highland Community College students.	Department of Education	Annually	This identifies whether the college needs to place student financial planning education and student loan default management systems as a priority.

Table 6.3

Administrative Services			
Number of students and dollar amount of student accounts going to collections.	HCC data warehouse	Semesterly	This provides information that is needed for operational budgeting.
Number of students with past due payments on payment plan.	Touchnet Online Bill Pay System	Monthly	This data is used to project student bad debts and is considered when looking into payment plan structures.
Bookstore sales, number of textbook rentals, sales of e-books, texts purchased through buyback.	Internal data collection and HCC data warehouse	Semesterly	This indicates students' preferences and guides future purchases.
Total sales, number of customers, type of payment, and items purchased.	Cafeteria sales data	Daily	The cafeteria uses this information to plan future menus, schedule staff, implement promotions, and create a budget.
Financial reports on each fund type	HCC data warehouse	Monthly	Detailed budget review is conducted monthly. Budgets can be adjusted immediately if needed. Lists of unanticipated needs are made and funded toward the end of the fiscal year.
Self insurance comparing budget to actual expenditures	Third Party Administrator	Monthly	Informs health insurance task force and college administrators of health plan financial results.
Comparison of non-union employee salaries to market.	Internal data collection and staff collecting from benchmark institutions	Annually	This data is used to determine the appropriateness of HCC salary range placements for positions.
Institutional Services			
Event type, organization name, room(s) rented, other resources utilized or requested in the conference center.	Internal data collection and HCC data warehouse	Monthly	Updates and improvements are noted for future budgets. Marketing and promotion can be more targeted.
External network vulnerability	Third Party Vendor	Monthly and quarterly	This is a safety scan taken as part of Payment Card Industry compliance and identity theft prevention plan.
Capital needs, campus deferred maintenance, campus safety projects is maintained.	Internal data collection and HCC data warehouse	Annually	Budgeting and special funding opportunities.
Campus security camera system logs - compared camera access to in-house log in sheets.	Internal data collection and HCC data warehouse	Bi-monthly	An audit is done bi-monthly to ensure proper usage of security camera system.

6R2. This response was rated an S and an OO in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Nationally normed data was particularly desired by reviewers. Since the College last reported on this item in the 2010 Systems Portfolio, more systematic and nationally normed methods of measuring performance, along with additional opportunities for trend analysis and benchmarking the performance results, have been implemented. Following the College's Common Intake System Action Project, which was completed in 2009, Highland initiated two methods of measuring performance results. A point-of-service survey was developed for use in the one-stop location and in the admissions office to provide student satisfaction information immediately following their interaction with the advising and enrollment services staff. The survey is completed on iPads and tabulated in Survey Monkey, an online survey tool. The SENSE was also administered in 2010 and 2013 as a way of benchmarking these front door services and other services and as a way to collect and report benchmark and trend data. The College also administered the CCSSE for the first time in 2012 and believes that additional administrations of that survey will continue to provide important information about the performance of student support services. The College also continues to ask students to evaluate programs and services as discussed in the 2010 Portfolio through evaluation sheets for First-Year Experience Seminar course, QuickStart, Transfer Survey, Experience Highland and Orientation. The feedback gathered through these evaluations is routinely reviewed and used to make

modifications to individual programs and services. For example, the QuickStart evaluations indicated that there were too many workshops overlapping with advising sessions, and prospective students were unable to participate. As a result of the feedback, the workshops were reviewed and some were eliminated.

Highland's Institutional Research staff calculated institutional benchmark scores from the SENSE that allow us to better understand how our performance has changed over time. As seen in Table 6.4, the College has shown significant improvement in the clear academic plan and pathway benchmark and has declined in the engaged learning benchmark. Student Services department leaders have been analyzing the information provided by SENSE and utilizing custom reports to identify particular strengths and weak areas requiring improvement. Table 6.5 and Table 6.6 provide data related to the items where the College showed significant change between the administrations.

Table 6.4

Benchmark	Raw Score		Benchmark		
	2010	2013	Difference	p-value	Significance
Early Connections	0.6127	0.5931	-0.0196	0.338	
High Expectations and Aspirations	0.8528	0.8422	-0.0106	0.321	
Clear Academic Plan and Pathway	0.6422	0.6941	0.0519	0.003	***
Effective Track to College Readiness	0.7952	0.7993	0.0041	0.774	
Engaged Learning	0.3451	0.3024	-0.0427	0.004	***
Academic and Social Support Network	0.7867	0.7937	0.007	0.61	

Table 6.5

Clear Academic Plan and Pathways Benchmark		Mean		p-value	Significance
Item		2010	2013		
Item 18: Think about your experiences from the time of your decision to attend this college through the end of the first three weeks of your first semester/quarter.					
1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree					
18d. I was able to meet with an academic advisor at times convenient for me		3.88	4.16	0.001	***
18e. An advisor helped me to select a course of study, program, or major		3.96	4.02	0.479	
18f. An advisor helped me to set academic goals and to create a plan for achieving them		3.27	3.51	0.031	*
18g. An advisor helped me to identify the courses I needed to take during my first semester/quarter		4.13	4.26	0.0857	Marginal
18h. A college staff member talked with me about my commitments outside of school (work, children, dependent, etc.) to help me figure out how many courses to take		2.6	2.95	0.001	***

Table 6.6

Engaged Learning Benchmark Item	Mean		p-value	Significance
	2010	2013		
Item 19: During the first three weeks of your first semester/quarter at this college, about how often did you do the following?				
Item 20: Think about your experiences from the time of your decision to attend this college through the end of the first three weeks of your first semester/quarter. How often did you use the following services?				
1 = Never, 2 = Once, 3 = Two or three times, 4 = Four or more times				
19a. Ask questions in class or contribute to class discussions	2.77	2.76	0.908	
19b. Prepare at least two drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	2.28	1.9	0	***
19e. Participate in supplemental instruction (extra class sessions with an instructor, tutor, or experienced student)	1.58	1.36	0.004	***
19g. Work with other students on a project or assignment during class	2.6	2.49	0.272	
19h. Work with classmates outside of class on class projects or assignments	1.55	1.57	0.8	
19i. Participate in a required study group outside of class	1.22	1.18	0.38	
19j. Participate in a student-initiated (not required) study group outside of class	1.32	1.13	0.001	***
19k. Use an electronic tool (e-mail, text messaging, Facebook, MySpace, Class Web site, etc.) to communicate with another student about coursework	2.27	2.09	0.099	Marginal
19l. Use an electronic tool (e-mail, text messaging, Facebook, MySpace, Class Web site, etc.) to communicate with an instructor about coursework	2.3	2.14	0.132	
19m. Discuss an assignment or grade with an instructor	2.27	2.05	0.022	*
19n. Ask for help from an instructor regarding questions or problems related to a class	2.39	2.32	0.474	
19o. Receive prompt written or oral feedback from instructors on your performance	2.41	2.51	0.33	
19q. Discuss ideas from your readings or classes with instructors outside of class.	1.59	1.51	0.383	
20.2d. Face-to-face tutoring	1.31	1.24	0.343	Marginal
20.2f. Writing, math, or other skill lab	2.35	2.12	0.072	
20.2h. Computer lab	2.27	2.12	0.209	

Results from the CCSSE show that several areas involving student support services rate high as an aspect of student engagement. For example, 69.7% of Highland students report using advising services with a frequency of Sometimes or Often compared to 59.3% of the 2013 CCSSE cohort. Additionally, 67.5% of the students report Sometimes or Often as the frequency for using computer labs compared to 62.7% of the CCSSE 2013 cohort. Highland also participated in the special focus items component of the CCSSE. The results provided benchmark information against the 2013 CCSSE cohort related to orientation, First-Year Experience programs, early enrollment, and learning communities. This information is currently being shared with campus stakeholders; however, trend analysis is unavailable because this was our first CCSSE administration.

6R3. This response was rated an S and an OO in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The outstanding opportunity was to move towards identifying the differences in survey results between employee classifications identified in the Fiscal Year 2010 Employee Survey. In Fiscal Year 2011, as a follow-up to that survey, focus groups were held with the various employee groups to gather additional explanation around the responses to three survey items on the Fiscal Year 2010 Employee Survey where staff indicated a small (or fairly small) percentage of agreement as seen in Table 6.7. For example, in response to the statement, "I have adequate input into how the budget is created in relation to my department," only 46% Agreed or Strongly Agreed to the statement. As a

result of the survey and focus group analysis, the Vice President of administrative services has improved the budget building process each year to improve consistency, increase understanding of the process, gather more input from all employees, and assign increased accountability to supervisors to involve staff.

Currently, the College primarily utilizes information gathered from the PACE Employee Survey and the Six-Month New Hire Survey to measure performance results for administrative support services. Information on the results of these surveys is also covered in section 4R2. A sample of the results from these surveys is listed below.

- 89% of employees responding to Six-Month New Hire Survey rated the interview process Excellent or Good, with 11% rating it as Fair.
- 81% of employees responding to Six-Month New Hire Survey rated the application process Excellent or Good. 19% rated it as Fair, citing issues with the length of the process.
- In response to the question, “Do you feel your orientation with Human Resources (benefits, employment policies, etc.) was sufficient?” 96% answered Yes on the Six-Month New Hire Survey.

Further results from the PACE related to administrative support services that differentiate between employee groups are shown in Table 6.8. In response to the majority of the questions focused on administrative support services, the responses from all employee groups fell into the consultative range. Additional PACE results are featured in 4R4.

Table 6.7 Percentage of Agreement to Select Employee Survey Items by Employee Group

	FT Admin. and Prof.	FT Classified Staff	FT Faculty	PT Faculty
I have adequate input into how the budget is created in relation to my department.	46.0	31.1	30.3	10.4
I believe the most qualified and best performers are promoted within the organization.	36.0	22.2	27.2	31.3
The Board of Trustees responds to the needs of the staff and College.	58.0	44.4	48.5	37.6

Table 6.8 Sample Results from the PACE Institutional Structure Questions

Institutional Structure	Administrative and Other Professional	Classified and/or Custodial Maintenance	Faculty
The extent to which my work is guided by clearly defined administrative processes	3.43	3.38	3.49
The extent to which institution-wide policies guide my work	3.88	3.75	3.75
The extent to which administrative leadership is focused on meeting the needs of students	3.98	3.77	3.97

6R4. This response was not addressed in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Information and results are gathered, options are studied, and improvements are implemented when possible. Information and results consist of observations and feedback made by staff, feedback from students and students' families, and data gathered in other many ways. Service improvement results can include a re-engineering of a process, a contingency plan for high traffic/extremely busy time periods, implementation of a technological solution, or greater awareness of certain difficult points in some processes.

Since the last portfolio, the College has seen a dramatic fluctuation in enrollment (reached peak levels in 2010-2011 and has returned to more historically consistent levels). Information regarding enrollment levels and demographic information about students has been used during these years to adjust our services. For example, during peak enrollment, a work station was established outside the bookstore for financial aid students to stop at and ensure proper documentation is on file prior to those students standing in line. In years of large influxes of students who are non-traditional due to large company lay-offs, services are adjusted to meet those students' needs, such as increases in group information sessions for financial aid held in computer labs to assist those students in completing financial aid forms.

Data regarding class schedules, campus events, and community use of the facilities was used to work with the Sheriff's Department to adjust the schedules of the deputies assigned to the College. Feedback from staff and visitors indicated that coverage wasn't adequate at night or on weekends. Data was reviewed to ensure this perception was accurate and schedules were changed to provide for night and Saturday scheduling of deputies. Phone system data was utilized to determine peak periods for phone calls to campus. Phone system messages are updated to acknowledge this high traffic time. Staff members from other areas are trained to help in an all-hands-on-deck manner. During staffing shortages, several staff members helped the ADA Services department by proctoring exams for students with disabilities that had accommodations for a quiet testing location or a test reader. This process has allowed the College to maximize staff resources to meet student needs.

Comparisons to industry and other colleges have been used to determine best practices for areas such as the custodial department and student billing. For student billing, a cross-functional task force was named to examine the College's payment options. After interviewing other colleges and reviewing various processes, the task force recommended an online payment plan and bill payment solution, which was implemented during production of the 2010 portfolio. Since that time, the cross-functional team has continued to meet and has made many adjustments to the payment system and process. The changes are based on input from staff and students, and from information regarding other colleges' processes. As a follow-up evaluation and example of how the College uses benchmarking data, the College used the Illinois Community College Trustees Association Quick Survey service to disseminate, collect, and report survey results in 2014 on student billing practices and payment strategies. These specific survey results are currently being utilized to determine how Highland compares to other Illinois community colleges with regard to these practices. Additionally, the custodial department implemented a reorganization utilizing a team-cleaning approach that allows for more cleaning to be done during overnight hours and for more uniform use of supplies and equipment. This change was made after reviewing models utilized in other institutions and businesses.

6R5. This response was rated an S and an OO in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. In the 2010 Systems Portfolio, the College recognized a need to choose and implement a national standardized instrument for benchmarking to other institutions. Because the second full cycle of our institutional survey plan is underway, we have more statistics available for comparison and benchmarking with other peer institutions. Important comparative data comes from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems (IPEDS) data feedback report. Other national comparison data is available via the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). The National Community College Benchmark Project Report is another useful tool for comparison. These sources

provide staff ratios per FTE student, employee statistics and expenditures, staffing headcounts, and use of and satisfaction with various student services. The ICCB Uniform Financial Reporting system is used to compare financial results with our cohort colleges.

Here are some sample results From CCSSE 2013 in Support for Learners:

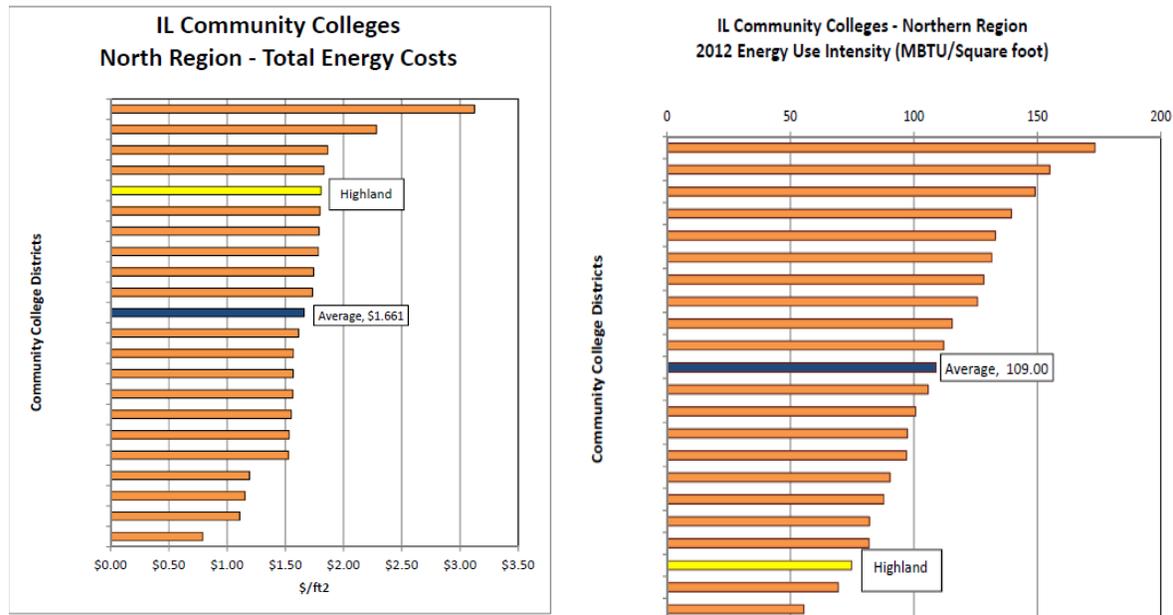
- Almost 75% of the students indicated that the College emphasizes providing the support students need to help them be successful. Our mean scores were close to those of other small colleges and the 2013 Cohorts.
- Roughly 56% of students indicated that the College provides the financial support they need to afford their education. Though not significant, our mean was a bit higher than that of the 2013 Cohort.
- Nearly 70% of students reported using Academic Advising Sometimes or Often. Though not significant, our mean was higher than that of other small colleges and the 2013 Cohort.
- Nearly 72% indicated that the College provided very little or some support that they needed to thrive socially. Though there were no significant difference to the comparison groups overall, there was a significant difference when broken out by enrollment status. HCC full-time students indicated less support than full-time students at other small colleges.
- Nearly 70% of our student said they rarely used or didn't know if they used career advising

From the 2013 National Community College Benchmark Project Report:

Benchmark	Institution			NCCBP Percentiles				
	Reported Value	%Rank	N	10th	25th	Mdn	75th	90th
Form 5 Student Satisfaction and Engagement (Most Recent Data)								
Noel-Levitz Summary Items								
Would enroll here again	6	79%	97	5.5	5.6	5.8	6	6.2
Overall satisfaction with experience	5.7	76%	97	5.2	5.4	5.6	5.7	5.9
College experience met expectations	4.9	54%	97	4.7	4.7	4.9	5	5.1
Noel-Levitz Satisfaction Scales								
Academic Services	6	96%	74	5.3	5.4	5.6	5.8	5.9
Safety and Security	5.9	95%	97	4.9	5.1	5.3	5.6	5.7
Admissions & Financial Aid	5.8	91%	97	4.9	5.1	5.3	5.5	5.7
Registrations Effectiveness	5.9	88%	97	5.3	5.4	5.6	5.8	6
Service Excellence	5.7	88%	74	5	5.2	5.3	5.6	5.8
Academic Advising/Counseling	5.8	85%	96	4.9	5.1	5.3	5.5	5.8
Concern for the Individual	5.6	85%	73	5	5.1	5.3	5.5	5.7
Responsiveness to Diverse Populations	5.9	85%	73	5.3	5.4	5.6	5.8	5.9
Student Centeredness	5.7	80%	97	5.1	5.3	5.5	5.7	5.9
Instructional Effectiveness	5.7	74%	97	5.2	5.4	5.5	5.7	5.9
Campus Climate	5.7	71%	97	5.1	5.3	5.5	5.7	5.9
Campus Support Services	5.5	70%	96	4.8	4.9	5.2	5.6	5.8

Benchmark	Institution			NCCBP Percentiles				
	Reported Value	%Rank	N	10th	25th	Mdn	75th	90th
Form 18 Student Prof Student Serv Staff Ratio (Fall 2011)								
Career Services	2,382	23%	204	1,339	2,443	3,735	5,803	9,876
Counseling and Advising	721	53%	221	346	488	700	941	1,607
Recruitment, Admissions, Registration	560	31%	224	321	478	723	1,212	1,935
Financial Aid	677	16%	220	569	798	1,109	1,670	2,787
Student Activities	1,959	29%	213	1,148	1,789	3,174	5,214	7,591
Testing & Assessment Services	541	3%	194	892	1,426	2,637	4,593	8,802

The College participated in the IGEN comprehensive analysis of energy usage in 2014. In comparison to other Illinois community colleges, Highland has high energy efficiency but also has a high energy cost. The study provided recommendations such as continuing energy efficiency efforts and monitoring the electricity supply purchasing options.



Highland has a process for handling unpaid student accounts receivable. Recently, in response to Board member feedback, Highland requested a survey on this topic to be conducted through the Illinois Community College Trustee's Association. Among the items collected and compared were the amount of student accounts written off or included in an allowance for doubtful accounts. The survey results indicate that Highland's percentage of 2% annually is amongst the lowest of the 18 colleges that responded to the survey. In addition, survey results showed that Highland is one of the few colleges that has not yet participated in the Illinois local debt recovery system. After considering that information, the business office staff has taken steps to learn more about that system.

611. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Several recent improvements are documented in Category 6 that demonstrate a concerted and consistent effort to benchmark our operations against other colleges and to monitor trend data related to the performance of these processes. These efforts also demonstrate that the College has enhanced the knowledge of its employees by providing training and emphasizing the importance of making data-informed decisions for supporting institutional operations. Examples of recent improvements include:

- Significant changes to the threat assessment practices and campus emergency operations were intended to make our safety and security processes more systematic and comprehensive. For detailed account see 6P3.
- The creation of more systematic enrollment related business practices intended to improve the College's experience with unpaid student accounts. Significant changes have been made to create a more systematic set of processes, and the processes are being monitored and benchmarked against other institutions to determine their effectiveness. See 6R4.
- Changes have been made to the delivery of advising services including the refinement of a QuickStart event that reaches 70% of our in-district matriculating recent high school graduates before their high school graduation. They visit our campus for one-stop placement testing, advising, and registration services. The College believes this change, in addition to other changes resulting from our Common Intake System Action Project, has contributed to the

improvement in our SENSE results for questions related to advising practices (Tables 6.4 and 6.5 in 6R2).

- When faculty identified a need for online student testing and evening services, the College responded by developing a Testing Center. A cross-departmental team worked collaboratively to design the facility specifications and provide input on the processes, and the Center opened in August 2011. The Testing Center Coordinator has consistently collected and monitored usage data, and hours of operation and other adjustments have been made as a result of the information. The department also plans to launch a student satisfaction point-of-service survey.
- A B4U Test program was designed to help students build confidence when testing and brush up on their skills to prepare for the COMPASS placement test. This two and one-half hour workshop, offered once a month, covers test-taking tactics, essay writing, and reading reference and reasoning skills. Students reinforce math skills by reviewing core concepts and learn unique approaches to the study of math. Students who have already taken the Highland Placement Test and would like to improve their scores or those who are about to take it for the first time are encouraged to attend. Between January 2013 and July of 2014, of the students who took the test before and after the class, 94% improved their score. Of the students whose scores improved, 44% moved into a course one or more higher than they originally tested into.

612. This response was not addressed in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Our campus culture of Servant-Leadership keeps us mindful of keeping students' needs first (see 5P9). A large percentage of our employees have undergone the training available through our employee Leadership Institute. The College's size facilitates quick communication about student needs across service areas of the College. The College demonstrates its consultative style of leadership through a structure of College's Council and Cabinet groups (made up of personnel from areas all around campus). These groups discuss improvements needed for supporting institutional operations and track progress toward achieving the College strategic goals through long-range objectives. Despite increased budget pressures, the College has invested strategically in the implementation of the Institutional Survey Plan (adopted Fiscal Year 2010). The survey results have enabled the College to benchmark processes, monitor processes that need improvements, and determine areas that need action. Results demonstrating a need for improvement are discussed at Cabinet and Council meetings. Once services or processes are identified for improvement, the College utilizes cross-departmental task forces and ad hoc committees in setting targets to improve services.

CATEGORY 7: MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

Highland's processes for measuring effectiveness have matured beyond reactive, and overall, would be best categorized between *systematic* and *aligned* but not yet fully *integrated*. The processes for selecting, managing and distributing performance information (7P1, 7P2) are relatively stable, coordinated processes that are evaluated regularly for improvement. The data processes for supporting planning and improvement efforts have been strengthened through the incorporation of annual long-range objectives. Determining the data needs of departments (7P3) has long been met through more reactive completion of one-time data requests from departments to Information Technology (IT) or Institutional Research (IR), but this process has been improved with the use of the College's data analytic and reporting tool, allowing automatic and regularly scheduled report runs. This process has also been improved through the development of improvement plans by major College units and AQIP action plans that are aligned with strategic priorities (7P6).

The processes for developing major reports containing analysis of data and information regarding overall performance (7P4), and that are considered in conjunction with each other, have been in place for several years. Furthermore, many of these reports are developed collaboratively across various departments and units. Evaluation of the institution's overall performance has been improved further through the incorporation of additional and scheduled benchmarking initiatives, such as participation

Category 6: Supporting Organizational Operations

in NCCBP (7P5). The systems and measures put in place ensuring the timeliness, accuracy, reliability, and security of the College's information systems (7P7) and from which much of the College's data and information is mined, are comprehensive and regularly evaluated. The results presented in 7R1-7R3 provide evidence of the strength of these systems.

7P1. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Factors influencing the selection of data and performance information to support instructional and non-instructional programs and services remain largely the same. Examples include the assessment of student learning data, data from special research studies, state performance data, and key performance indicator data for the College's monitoring reports. However, these data and information are becoming more helpful given the length of time we have been utilizing them. For example, at the time the 2010 System Portfolio was written, the College had developed a three-year institutional survey plan and had just begun administering many of the large-scale surveys in the plan for the first time. Currently, the College is administering the same surveys for a second time; therefore, change data has started to become available, demonstrating where improvement has been made and where improvement is still needed. As such, training has focused on understanding and utilizing survey data. The College's Student Services team regularly schedules time to analyze and discuss survey data in particular. Time has also been allotted on staff development days. See 3P1.

A detailed description and summary of the systems used to manage much of the data at HCC was provided in the 2006 Systems Portfolio in response to 7C1. However, an update is warranted here. In addition to the data management items listed in the 2006 Systems Portfolio, the College's IT team reviews processes with business unit managers to perform a review of system use in an effort to ensure our business practices align with best practices, providing efficiency, reliability, and usefulness of the system itself and the data. For example, the College underwent a process review within the finance module budgeting component of our Banner Administrative System: During this review, we contracted with an expert to help us redesign our budgeting process and enhanced its usefulness to administration and budget managers.

The distribution process also remains largely the same. Table 7.1 in the [2010 Systems Portfolio](#) outlines the methods utilized dependent on the type of data and performance information to be delivered and to whom it is delivered. In effort to increase the awareness and availability of certain data and reports, however, a dedicated area on the College's group network drive has been organized as a centralized location to access this data and information.

7P2. This response was rated an S and an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The selection of data and performance information to support planning and improvement efforts remains guided through HCC's strategic planning and institutional goal-setting and action planning efforts. The [2010 Systems Portfolio](#) response to this question outlined the process used to develop our 2010-2015 Strategic Plan and provided a description of the master timeline for establishing institutional goals and developing action plans. Since the 2010 Systems Portfolio, the College has established annual long-range objectives for the Strategic Plan goals, for the purpose of guiding the direction of the College. For each objective, we have named a champion and a committee and/or department lead, which has helped align institutional and departmental goals and plans. Also incorporated in these long-range objectives was a midpoint review through the plan to ensure that it remained relevant to the current needs of the College. The process of establishing and reviewing long-range objectives has been an instrumental step in improvement planning and goal attainment and guiding data collection and analysis. In preparation for the development of the College's next Strategic Plan, HCC is incorporating work with an external consultant to conduct an environmental scan into its planning process. This scan will review a wide range of data sources addressing economic, demographic, educational, and workforce trends.

To help better manage data and performance information, the College recently upgraded WebFOCUS, the College's Business Intelligence / Data Analytics and Reporting tool, which is used to

query data from the College's enterprise resource system, enabling campus leaders and decision makers to run data reports for their specific business needs.

The distribution process for data and performance information to support planning and improvement efforts largely reflects the process noted in 7P1 for supporting instructional and non-instructional programs and services.

5.D. The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

- The College's strategic planning process, establishment of long-term objectives, and action planning guides data collection and analysis that provides evidence of performance and improvement efforts.
- The College's enterprise resources system and data analytics and reporting tool help enable the management and analysis of data and information for campus leaders and decision makers.
- Data and performance information is distributed, shared, and discussed using a variety of communication avenues.

7P3. This response was rated an OO in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. This rating stemmed from the College's own acknowledgment that the extent to which department/unit data and information needs could be comprehensively determined was negatively influenced by some units' lack of developmental maturity in continuous quality improvement principles. Essentially, while the process described may have been reviewed as a strength, the uneven implementation across the College was not.

As such, AQIP emphasized the need for the College to ensure that all areas have a mission, goals, etc. so that data and information needs can be determined more comprehensively. Since the submission of the last Systems Portfolio, major College units have developed improvement plans that include the unit's mission, vision, commitments, key assumptions, and priority areas targeted for improvement and corresponding strategies. As all departments are contained within one of these major units, departments have become more directly involved in the continuous quality improvement process, and these plans have become another important resource for determining data and information needs. For example, a strategic priority for the College is to increase the number of students who are college ready, reducing the number of transitional level courses students are taking. A corresponding priority area for Student Services is retention, specifically of students who do not place in college-level courses. A related objective for the Transitional Studies Program and Testing Services Department was to assess current ACT cut-off scores for placement to ensure that these scores accurately place students. As a result, this data and information need was met, providing the College's Placement Test Committee with essential data to make decisions regarding the change of cut-off scores.

Additional data and performance information needs of departments are also communicated to Institutional Research (IR) and Information Technology (IT) formally by completion of the College's data request form or informally by contacting an IR or IT staff member directly. Dependent upon the frequency in which the data is needed, the request is filled as a one-time data report (in which case the report is typically emailed to the requestor), or if the report is to be run more frequently, the report is housed in WebFOCUS where departments are able to access and run a report using their own login, and for some reports, supplying various parameters (i.e. academic semester) to tailor the report to their needs. Many reports within WebFOCUS are automatically run on a regular schedule and delivered to users in a variety of ways. As part of the most recent WebFOCUS upgrade process, IT and IR collaborated with each department to determine reports which are still utilized and relevant. The approximately 600 strategic and operational reports currently in WebFOCUS demonstrate how much it is used and valued by departments. It is a key resource for delivering data and information needs.

Certain data requests are more extensive, as in the case of a research or evaluation study. As conveyed in the last Systems Portfolio and currently in 7P1, the IR office works with departments and units to formulate research/evaluation questions and study design, assists in carrying out the study, analyzes the data generated, and helps to interpret the results for the department/unit.

7P4. This response was not addressed in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. There was no rating or feedback provided to the College regarding the response to this question in its 2010 Systems Portfolio. The methods used to analyze data and information remains the same: they vary depending on the research question and how the data was collected, but typically analyses are mostly descriptive and inferential statistics are used when possible. Analyses also include comparative data, whether it is comparing the College to itself over time, to peer institutions, and/or to an available target.

The major report types in which the analysis of data and information regarding overall performance is shared also remains largely the same. Detailed information on each report can be found in the last Systems Portfolio; however, a summary is provided here:

- Monitoring reports which focus on the recruitment and retention of students and the extent to which the College is meeting the expected outcomes for the College's transfer, occupational, workforce preparation, and adult education programs.
- Institutional survey reports and presentations to document and share the background, methodology, results, and conclusions of the major institutional surveys administered.
- Reports published by Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) that utilize data submissions required from each community college every fiscal year and include enrollment, financial, human resource, and other accountability and performance-based data.
- Financial reporting that includes detailed monthly reports provided to the Board of Trustees, a five-year Resource Allocation and Management Plan, and an annual audit which follows state and federal guidelines.

Smaller preliminary reports containing preliminary data related to the overall performance of the institution are also provided to campus leaders and decision makers on a regular basis. For example, after the data for various ICCB data submissions are mined, summaries of those data are shared and distributed. Two of these reports include census enrollment related data and the number of reimbursable credit hours generated at each semester and fiscal year end.

Much of the data in these reports are considered in conjunction with each other, and the monitoring reports, in particular, relate the data to current educational legislation and research. The key performance indicators on the College's Institutional Scorecard are currently in the process of being reviewed after considering various accountability frameworks (i.e. Complete College America, Voluntary Framework of Accountability, and other state community college models) and the National Community College Benchmarking data that the College is now collecting.

Individually, the reports document various facets of institutional performance and together, a more comprehensive picture, providing the College with information for and evidence of improvement efforts. These data are shared similarly to the ways communicated in 7P1. As new data and information becomes available, College departments and committees have the opportunity to ask questions with respect to how it compares and relates to data and information already collected and analyzed, and how the new data and information fit into the larger picture of the College's overall performance. This has been established as the most valuable method of sharing data.

5.D. The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

- Monitoring reports that focus on the extent to which the College is meeting various outcomes – reports documenting institutional survey results, reports published by the governing body of Illinois community colleges, and financial reporting – are the major report types where analysis of data and information regarding overall performance is documented and shared with the college community.
- Individually, the reports document various facets of institutional performance, and, together, they document a more comprehensive picture, providing the College with information for and evidence of improvement efforts.

7P5. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. In this response, the sources HCC uses for comparative data and information included: reports and publications from ICCB, normed national survey data, the Integrated Postsecondary Data System (IPEDS), and the Common Core Data Set. More detailed information on each of these sources and an explanation of how and why the College utilizes them is provided in the last Systems Portfolio response.

At the time the last Systems Portfolio was written, the College was considering participation in the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP), and the portfolio feedback indicated that the College should continue its evaluation of NCCBP and consider joining, as participation is highly valuable. The College joined NCCBP for the first-time in 2013 and found the comparative data very insightful because the project contains benchmark data on indicators that the College had not previously accessed. From some of these indicators, the College learned that targets previously set were perhaps not high enough given the benchmark data.

The criterion used remains the same as cited in the last Systems Portfolio. Standardization of measurement, reliability, and validity testing for surveys and the scope of information the source will provide (local, regional, and/or national) are all considered.

7P6. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. As was stated previously in response to other Category 7 process questions, the development of long-range objectives was incorporated into the institutional strategic planning process with champions and committee and/or department leads named to each objective. In addition, because major College units have implemented individual plans that align with institutional goals, the departments within those units are contributing to data and information analysis that align, as well.

In addition, current AQIP Action Projects, led by specific departments and committees, are underway and are aligned with strategic initiatives. For example, the enhancing a comprehensive transitional (developmental) math studies program aligns with the College's increasing college-level enrollment priority. See 8P3 for more information on Action Projects.

Finally, both IT and IR staff serve on a variety of committees and task forces, which helps ensure department and unit analysis of data and information aligns with institutional goals. Examples of these teams include Alternative Delivery Committee, AQIP Steering Committee, Academic Assessment, Technology Committee, Enrollment Management, and College Council, and Cabinet.

7P7. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The College operates a centralized information technology system and team to ensure consistent timeliness, accuracy, reliability, and security of our systems and processes. This was rated as a strength (S) in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report and continues to function in the same standardized manner today. Highlights from the 2010 submission's ensuring factors include

- Standardized system monitoring and management tools with event and alert generation and notification for key personnel when key system thresholds have been exceeded for business or availability of College information systems
- Daily analysis of critical system logs and events
- Datacenter environmental safeguards, including generator, redundant air cooling units, and fire suppression systems.
- Red Flag guideline and adherence for a framework of enhanced security of personal and sensitive information to minimize the risk of identity theft for students and employees

Additional processes that have been improved or enhanced since the previous Systems Portfolio submission categorically include the following:

Timeliness:

- Information systems and upgrades are planned and managed around key reporting deadlines and periods of heavy registration or key administrative processing windows.
- Consolidated use of Oracle Enterprise Grid Control and SolarWinds Orion for network performance and system availability monitoring systems, which alerts specific IT staff members of specific database, system, and network conditions including thresholds, usage, outages, etc. and provides immediate alerts delivered via text messaging.

Accuracy:

- Enhanced testing plans and shared ownership of testing plans between IT and individual departments for system upgrades, ensuring data and processes are validated in a test environment before being applied in the live production environment, which also ensures that pre-upgrade and post-upgrade data is accurate.
- Use of the College's Business Analytics/Data Warehouse reporting software suite (WebFOCUS) for producing edit reports that are either run by users or delivered automatically via email to ensure key processes are validated for data accuracy and completeness. Examples of edit reports include 1) A report that allows staff responsible for student test score entry to double-check scores for proper range and accuracy, 2) An edit report for verification of student first, middle, and last name data entry, adhering to College naming standards, and 3) A report for verifying the work of an automated system that generates student email accounts for communication of tuition bills, financial aid, and course work.

Reliability:

- Key College infrastructure components at the network's core contain redundant components in the event of failure.
- System uptime and availability nears 100% with all College systems and is tracked in SolarWinds Orion and Oracle Enterprise Grid Control.
- Network and system analysis and health checks are routinely performed to ensure the College is adhering to hardware and software vendor support dates.

Security:

- An annual audit of the College's IT systems and procedures is a part of the College's financial audit. Key security questions are asked and operations are validated against 3rd party IT auditor recommendations. All recommendations have been implemented and are current.
- Approval of the College's entire credit card processing environment and processing procedures by the credit card's industry guidelines, the Payment Card Industry (PCI) Security Standards Council. The College has been PCI Compliant for several years, and

the technical enhancements and procedural enhancements have further secured the College's network as a whole.

- Monthly external network penetration testing and internal quarterly penetration testing of the College's network.

7R1. This response was rated an OO in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Thus, using the feedback provided by the review team, a full set of data measured and why it is useful is provided in 7R1, the evidence of its measurement and effectiveness in 7R2, and comparators to other institutions information and knowledge management systems in 7R3.

The College collects data on many of its systems and their use to ensure the performance of the application, system, and intended use is adequate, in balance, and producing positive benefits to those who rely on their information, data, and functionality. Management software and systems are used to gain additional insight into specific data and trends as a way to ensure its continued usefulness and to assist in planning for future changes and enhancements.

Management software collects statistics and reports alerts for immediate attention when thresholds are breached for immediate attention. Various reports and data analyzed within our information and knowledge management systems we collect and analyze regularly include some of the following:

System Utilization. Monitoring the overall system utilization of specific servers, routers, switches, databases, and applications for available processing capacity and memory availability is critical to ensuring systems remain responsive and available, especially during peak times of usage like key registration and processing times of the year.

Network Utilization. Monitoring the overall network utilization ensures there are no data bottlenecks as network traffic crosses the College's wired and wireless network links back to the datacenter and internet. Quickly resolving bottlenecks keeps the network in good health and useful to users.

Student Wireless Usage. The College's wireless network is the lifeblood of our student's connected experience to their digital life, class content material, and College business applications for registration and payment, etc. Student satisfaction with the availability and quality of the College's network can have a profound impact on their learning environment and ability to gain access to the resources they need.

IT Service Desk (Help Desk) Incident Creation and Resolution. The College's IT department collects requests for service and analyzes response times and patterns of frequent requests for service to look for ways to minimize trouble points for student and users. The results are utilized in analyzing repeat issues and performance trends and allow the College to document standard IT resolutions in a knowledgebase.

Student and Campus Internet Bandwidth Usage. With so many of our faculty and student resources available on the internet, it is critical to have plentiful bandwidth for all campus online activity at all points of the day. Monitoring the trends of bandwidth usage and availability is key to ensuring faculty have access to materials to supplement their lectures and course materials, as well as ensuring student access to research material and online course content. The business of the College also requires adequate bandwidth for file exchanges with various bureaus and agencies to complete payroll processing and submission of online orders for various vendors and systems.

7R2. This response was rated an OO in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The evidence the College's systems for measuring effectiveness meets our needs for accomplishing our mission and goals is evident in the following graphs, indicating optimal performance and availability of key College systems to support teaching and learning and run the business operations of the College.

Measurement	Evidence																				
<p>System Utilization. This figure indicates an example of three systems that are in an acceptable utilization range for optimal performance.</p>	<p>Top 10 Nodes by Average CPU Load</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>NODE</th> <th>AVERAGE CPU LOAD</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>M1-3750.hcc.edu</td> <td>31 %</td> </tr> <tr> <td>T2-3750.hcc.edu</td> <td>31 %</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H1-3750.hcc.edu</td> <td>30 %</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	NODE	AVERAGE CPU LOAD	M1-3750.hcc.edu	31 %	T2-3750.hcc.edu	31 %	H1-3750.hcc.edu	30 %												
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<p>Network Utilization. This figure shows a subset of network interfaces with sufficient available bandwidth for users.</p>	<p>Top 10 Interfaces by Percent Utilization</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>NODE</th> <th>INTERFACE</th> <th>RECEIVE</th> <th>TRANSMIT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>HCC-IAAN-FW.hcc.edu</td> <td>Adaptive Security Appliance 'inside' interface - inside</td> <td>2 %</td> <td>13 %</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HCC-IAAN-FW.hcc.edu</td> <td>Adaptive Security Appliance 'outside' interface - outside</td> <td>13 %</td> <td>2 %</td> </tr> <tr> <td>CORE.hcc.edu</td> <td>GigabitEthernet1/7 - Y1-3750</td> <td>3 %</td> <td>3 %</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Y1-3750.hcc.edu</td> <td>GigabitEthernet1/0/1 - CORE G1/7</td> <td>3 %</td> <td>3 %</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	NODE	INTERFACE	RECEIVE	TRANSMIT	HCC-IAAN-FW.hcc.edu	Adaptive Security Appliance 'inside' interface - inside	2 %	13 %	HCC-IAAN-FW.hcc.edu	Adaptive Security Appliance 'outside' interface - outside	13 %	2 %	CORE.hcc.edu	GigabitEthernet1/7 - Y1-3750	3 %	3 %	Y1-3750.hcc.edu	GigabitEthernet1/0/1 - CORE G1/7	3 %	3 %
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Y1-3750.hcc.edu	GigabitEthernet1/0/1 - CORE G1/7	3 %	3 %																		
<p>Student Wireless Usage. This figure shows concurrent wireless users on the network and gives indicators of maximum system usage, which is within an acceptable range for the equipment our College utilizes.</p>	<p>Client Count</p>																				
<p>IT Service Desk (Help Desk) Incident Creation and Resolution and Resolution Response Times. These figures show Service Level Agreement (SLA) times are above 80% with a less-than 24 hour issue resolution time on all helpdesk issues.</p>																					
<p>Student and Campus Internet Bandwidth Usage. These figures indicate the type of internet traffic being consumed and overall consumption, indicating sufficient bandwidth and fast response.</p>																					

In addition, the College has also received a successful recognition evaluation completed by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) since the submission of its last Systems Portfolio. The timeliness, accuracy, and format of required data submissions containing student, faculty/staff, facilities, and other data were analyzed during this evaluation. Our successful recognition by ICCB is further Category 7: Measuring Effectiveness

evidence that the College is in compliance with external standards for an effective system of data and information management utilized to support the College's institutional mission and goals. The use of these data is detailed in 7P4.

7R3. This response was rated an OO in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Beyond data collected by various systems for ensuring performance and effectiveness, the College utilizes survey data and discussions among its peer community colleges within the state to analyze usage, trends, projects, products, and solutions that are successful among other colleges with similar enrollments and needs. IT leaders in cohort college groups often collaborate via email to benchmark systems usage and utilization as well as internet bandwidth and student wireless network access and strategies. IR leaders have semi-annual meetings to share tools, tips, strategies, and processes related to measuring institutional effectiveness. Comparing data and solutions from peer institutions (some larger and some smaller) gives great insight in to the shared challenges in other college environments and allows institutions to learn from one another while designing improvement enhancements.

Analysis of trends from other institutions is achieved by participating in EDUCAUSE and student surveys, data sharing and collection, listservs, and conferences, which gives the College a chance to benchmark itself against schools its own size and larger while keeping an eye to the larger trends in higher education.

Examples of data analyzed and benchmarked using EDUCAUSE Core Data Services (CDS) include:

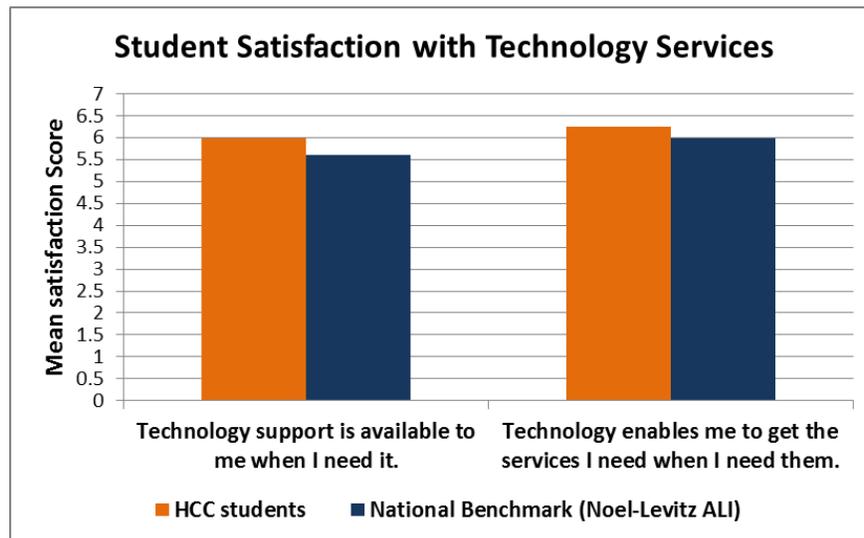
- Median central IT expenditures per institutional FTE (students and staff)
- Median central IT expenditures per institutional employee
- Median central IT expenditures as a percentage of institutional expenses
- Median percentage of central IT capital expenditures
- Median percentage of central IT operating expenditures
- IT Support FTEs per 1000 institutional FTEs

The figure below demonstrates that College IT expenses are fiscally responsible and lower than many peer institutions when compared to three different institutional classification sets.

Central IT Expenditures as a Percentage of Institutional Expenses

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
Less than 2000 FTE	4.32%	4.54%	4.83%
All Institutions	4.25%	4.12%	4.31%
Highland	4.22%	3.85%	3.85%

Survey results presented in the figure below demonstrate students are satisfied with the College's technology services and support. Mean satisfaction scores were high, and also significantly greater than the national benchmark results.



711. This response was not addressed in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Many of the recent improvements made have been communicated in the responses to other questions in this category. Thus, a summary of these improvements focusing on the related outcomes is detailed here:

- Increased awareness of access to data and informational reports through the utilization of a more central location for which to house them.
- Increased alignment of institutional and departmental goals through the development of annual long-range objectives for each of the Strategic Plan goals, development of improvement plans by major College units, and targeted AQIP Action Projects.
- Incorporation of an environmental scan into the College's strategic planning process.
- Increased benchmarking efforts through participation in the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP) and EDUCAUSE and other student satisfaction surveys.
- Repeat administrations of large scale surveys that help demonstrate where improvement has been made and where improvement is needed.
- Review of the College's use of its Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to ensure College business practice alignment with software best practices.
- Upgrade of the College's Business Intelligence/Data Analytics and Reporting tool, which is used daily by faculty and staff and currently contains approximately 600 reports, with the new version giving the College dashboarding capabilities not previously possible.

One other notable improvement made in this category recognizes the importance of access to data and information contained in College systems. Plans and investments were made in IT disaster recovery strategies. Planning began with numerous data valuation exercises: College leaders identified which systems and data are most critical to College operations and classified recovery time and recovery point objectives for each. These exercises paved the way for further documentation of college information systems disaster recovery tasks and strategies, as well as funding for additional redundant systems to minimize downtime and impact of interruptions due to natural or man-made disasters. Protected systems now have data replicated real-time to a second datacenter on campus and in a different building to prepare for a failure of the production system.

In regard to the systematic and comprehensive nature of the processes and results for measuring effectiveness, the College believes that the category introduction, describing the maturity of the institution's approach to this topic, adequately addresses this question.

712. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. As departments and users continue to realize the value of the data and its ability to guide solid decisions, usage of data is increasing. This, in turn, has increased demands for a more supportive infrastructure, Category 7: Measuring Effectiveness

and requests for additional investments and usage of data analysis tools have driven new projects and uses. Responses in this category have mentioned recent upgrades in the College's business intelligence/analytics tool WebFOCUS, repeat administrations of student surveys, participation in benchmarking studies/projects, and enhanced security of data. These are all evidence of investments in solid infrastructure to support institutional data needs. Another example demonstrating this synergy of infrastructure and culture can be demonstrated in a recent project request for automatic upload of test scores into the College's ERP system for increased accuracy, reduced turnaround, and better reporting and tracking student success. The users of the data see the value in having the data and the infrastructure to enhance their ability to use, analyze, and improve decision-making, and the College provides the necessary resources accordingly.

Additionally, the College has recently transitioned a staff member with expertise in mining data from the College's ERP system from IT to IR. This transition demonstrates an organizational culture change in the use of the data, giving the IR office increased oversight for and understanding of data requests from campus departments. The transition allows the IR office to better assist requestors with obtaining, analyzing, and interpreting the data they need from the system to make informed decisions. Oversight for many required state and federal data submissions also transitioned to IR, allowing for greater leverage and use of those data for monitoring and improvement efforts.

CATEGORY 8: PLANNING FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Category 8 largely focuses on how the Strategic Plan and other action plans impact the institution. Our 2010 Systems Portfolio reflected primarily on our strategic planning process and its impact on continuous improvement around the HCC campus. While short-term planning occurred in addition to the strategic planning process, it was not as well documented in the previous portfolio as it is today. Our institution has more thoroughly embraced the need for data-driven decision-making and its impact on continuous improvement, and evidence of this is presented in many forms throughout this category, including documentation of Action Projects and multiple reviews of the Strategic Plan that have occurred throughout its life cycle.

When reviewing our 2010 Systems Portfolio, one could assess that many of our actions were very reactive but they were still firmly grounded in the Strategic Plan. Since then, the institution has focused efforts on the ideologies presented in the Strategic Plan and has seen measured success in achieving many of the strategic goals proposed therein. This increased focus has led to an overall more systematic approach to many planning processes around campus. While we acknowledge that some planning is still reactive, many of the College's planning processes approach aligned. This mix of maturity levels allows us to constantly pursue continuous improvement goals for the institution.

8P1. This section was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Many of the processes documented in the College's 2010 Systems Portfolio are the same today. The College's Strategic Plan and strategic planning process provides a framework for most of the planning that occurs at the institution. In addition to the five-year Strategic Plan, we also utilize long-range objectives and annual goal-setting process that ensure alignment with the goals set forth in the Strategic Plan. Development of the 2016-2021 Strategic Plan will include input from the College and external stakeholders as outlined in our present Strategic Plan.

8P2. This section was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Our response in 2010 outlined the process for development of our Strategic Plan, but feedback identified an absence of documentation pertaining to short term strategies.

At least annually, progress on long-range objectives and short- and long-term strategies associated with the goals and objectives is assessed. Our goal-setting process involves representatives from around campus and assures that short-term strategies align with the strategic goals, objectives, and strategies set forth in the Strategic Plan.

Short-term goals are developed to achieve long-term objectives. An example is the Summer Bridge Program cited in goal number three of the Strategic Plan. Section 1P8 presents this program in more detail.

Another example of a short-term goal is the web-based tool for gathering programmatic suggestions. This was identified as a short-term strategy of goal number 1 of the Strategic Plan. It was determined that this could easily be implemented on our website with existing resources and technology. The President of the College worked with Marketing and Community Relations to make this strategy a reality.

8P3. This section was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The College continues to use the charter document as a part of the process to develop action plans. AQIP Action Projects also help the institution support strategically important activities. Table 8.1 provides information on the next set of Action Projects the College will pursue.

Table 8.1

Name of Project	Goal of Project
Expanding and Evolving Community Education toward Lifelong Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serving increased numbers of students in what would ideally be re-branded as Lifelong Learning. • Expanding our diversity and number of positive learning experiences for students primarily from our district but also for those out-of-district.
Developing a Comprehensive Transitional (Developmental) Math Studies Program	<p>Our primary goal for this Action Project is to build upon progress toward a stronger support network for transitional students in order to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the amount of time before they are able to move into transferable college-level courses • Increase the retention rate for these students • Increase the completion rate for these students
Cultivating Collaborative Relationships with External Partners of HCC	<p>Primary goals of this project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze and strengthen these relationships • Explore innovative opportunities to expand existing collaborative activities <p>Key organizational processes to review and modify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment • Community input for the institution • Organizational partnerships for student opportunities, program development, and expansion of specialty academic programs.

8P4. This section was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Planning processes, organizational strategies, and action plans developed by the institution are firmly grounded in the Strategic Plan and aim primarily at achieving the goals set forth by the Strategic Plan. Administrative components of the College, such as Cabinet, have been outlined in Category 5, and those groups are responsible for coordinating action plans around campus to align with the Strategic Plan. In many cases, a process similar to the action planning process is initiated, and participants from all areas and levels are requested to assist with projects as necessary.

Since the submission of the last Systems Portfolio, major College units have worked on developing improvement plans, which include the unit's mission, vision, commitments, key assumptions, and priority areas targeted for improvement and corresponding strategies. As all departments are contained within one of these major units, departments have become more directly involved in the continuous quality improvement process, and these plans have become another important resource for determining data and information needs. Additional details can be found in 7P2 and 7P3.

8P5. This section was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The strategic planning process helps to identify long-term objectives for the institution. The objectives set forth by the Strategic Plan help to define more concise deliverables to help achieve the strategic goals of the institution. The College continues to collect feedback from internal units and external organizations/individuals to help us identify objectives and provide measures to identify success for each objective. The Institutional Research office then helps the group/committee tasked with the objective to identify measurables and deliver results that help determine whether the objective was achieved.

One example of this is our General Education Assessment project. Because we attempted a number of variations over the past five years, an Action Project was created, and we were able to determine one model that worked well; therefore, we were able to begin assessing written communication skills in 2012. This process has been further outlined in 1P1 and 1P18.

8P6. This section was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The College utilizes a Resource Allocation and Management Plan (RAMP) that is updated annually by the Vice President of Administrative Services. The plan builds on historical trend information provided in past updates, incorporates actual prior fiscal year results and the permanent budget of the present fiscal year, and identifies current concerns that may impact future budgetary planning. Included in this plan is historical information on revenues, expenditures, fund balance, debt management, and tax rate management. The majority of the plan is dedicated to projections that include revenue assumptions, expenditure assumptions, projection results, and new opportunities and challenges.

The strategic planning process highlighted in 8P1 includes considerations for resource allocation. In addition, the annual budget process includes participants from all campus units to ensure financial resources are allocated correctly and modified if necessary to handle any budgetary shortfalls identified by the institution.

The Vice President of Administrative Services regularly meets with all budget managers on campus to maintain balance as fiscal factors change throughout the year. For example, the Deans, as budget managers, request that faculty/staff members with budgets review their line items to monitor expenditures and balances. This active approach to resource management helps to ensure an inclusive budgeting process. In addition, program planning surveys are completed by faculty and include questions about additional faculty and other anticipated program needs. Identifying and documenting these needs helps to anticipate the resources needed to help develop future programs and/or courses.

The budget-building process is instrumental in identifying current resources and future needs and has been outlined in more detail in Category 6.

The College has recently completed the initial stages of a bond issuance. College Council members completed a process in which College-wide needs were determined and potential projects to be funded with bond proceeds were proposed. Members evaluated projects using a rating process, in which a high-priority designation was given if a project was deemed to help the College achieve its mission, address one or more of the strategic goals, address College goals or AQIP, have a measurable effect on recruitment/retention, or address other factors.

5.A. The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

- Throughout the portfolio, we highlight our strengths in resources and infrastructure. 4P2 and 4P3 provide examples of how we maintain our level of quality in human resources on campus. In addition, the campus has completed an internal needs assessment and compared results to nationally normed data as outlined in 6R2.
- The RAMP document outlined in 8P6, partnered with the other planning processes on campus, helps to maintain a satisfactory financial resource base to fulfill the needs of the College. The College also partners with entities such as the Foundation to assist in covering additional costs as needed.
- Highland's mission of "shaping the future of our communities by providing quality education and learning opportunities through programs and services that encourage the personal and professional growth of the people of northwestern Illinois." Serves as the cornerstone of our institution. Nearly everything documented in this portfolio lends itself to the support of that statement.
- Highland takes great pride in providing faculty and staff that are properly trained in the areas that they serve. Educational requirements are clearly identified and expectations for continuing education are also well documented for each position on campus.
- The RAMP document, in coordination with the budgeting process that is participatory from all areas of campus, provides the institution with the necessary tools for budgeting and expense monitoring and needs/risk assessment.

8P7. This response was not addressed in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. As part of the strategic planning process, a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis is performed on risks identified from community surveys, key informant interviews, forums, focus groups, and a review of state and College reports. This analysis is summarized in the Strategic Plan.

Our implemented model of continuous improvement allows us to re-assess our short and long-term goals to minimize risk potential for each activity. There is a significant amount of planning put forth for most processes on campus. Proper planning prior to implementation allows for the identification of potential risks before they become a reality.

The College's risk management plan is updated annually. Within the document, areas of risk, such as the safe conditions of buildings and grounds; protection of College property; and the health and safety of college students, employees, and the general public, are identified and measured. Steps taken to minimize risk in these areas and responsibility for minimization are assigned to various College personnel. In addition, the risk management program includes a provision for an insurance program to provide protection to the College against liability. The College is also incorporating an environmental scan into its planning process as outlined in 7P2.

The IT department continually assesses risk within the College's information systems environment, in a continuous improvement effort to ensure personally identifiable information and secure data are not at risk of misuse or wrongful access. To that end, the College has an Identity Theft Prevention committee that reviews business processes and potential weaknesses that exist with the goal of creating actionable projects to enhance campus identity and information security. The committee also reviews security policies and incident response plans and is the first to respond should an incident

Category 8: Planning for Continuous Improvement

occur. The IT department leads an annual recertification process for the College's Payment Card Industry (PCI) certification. This certification examines the people, process, and technology aspects of conducting financial transactions online and in person using a credit card. The outcome of this certification process results in a lower-risk environment in which the College may conduct electronic commerce with better trained staff, better standard protocols, and enhanced technology safeguards.

8P8. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The institution continues to offer many training opportunities as outlined in Category 4. Our Opening Days session that starts each semester is a valuable source of information for all employees of the College. In addition, both faculty and staff groups have created learning modules developed around specific needs for training.

Our Support Staff have been active in providing training activities throughout the year. These activities include teambuilding and campus wide spotlights that highlight programs and activities available at HCC. They also hold an annual retreat that provides training in a skill set important to the institution. Past retreats have included humor in the workplace, maintaining a student-centered workplace, and healthy living/wellness.

Funding for professional development activities for full-time faculty is required by the faculty contract. Additional professional development funding is available for both full- and part-time faculty on an annual basis through the Baumgartner Staff Development Funds.

The College also actively participates in Higher Learning Commission activities, such as the Strategy Forum, the annual meeting, and numerous activities related to assessment. Representatives in attendance at these activities return to share results with others. Our last visit to the Strategy Forum successfully produced one of our current Action Projects related to developmental learning.

8R1. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The College performed a mid-point review of the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan. This review included members of the campus community and representatives from around the College District. Feedback was collected via the following questions:

- Since the Strategic Plan was developed, what has changed in the environment that is impacting your community?
- What should Highland's role be in helping communities with those impacts?
- If you had to select one thing to focus on, what would it be?
- Looking ahead, how should we prepare for the next strategic planning process?

The mid-point review was very helpful in determining members' reactions to the plan and its perceived alignment with current conditions in the College District.

College employees completed the PACE survey in 2011 and will complete the survey again in the fall of 2014. Four items in the survey indicate the most significance related to effectiveness of planning processes. These items will be discussed in 8R4.

The Community Leaders' Survey is also a valuable tool in measuring institutional effectiveness. The results of this survey are outlined in Category 3. In the first administration of the survey, the leaders' top expectations were largely based on maintaining a competitive tuition rate, assisting students with financial aid, alternative delivery and scheduling, and partnering with business and industry. In the follow-up administration, however, preliminary results indicate that community leaders heavily prioritize partnerships: partnerships with K-12 districts, transfer institutions, and especially with business and industry were the top expectations. The results of the follow-up survey represent a significant shift in expectations of leaders around the College's District.

8R2. This response was not addressed in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The following tables represent the goals documented in the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan and certain completed activities pertaining to each goal.

Goal #1 - Proactively identify emerging programmatic opportunities.
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Completed Objectives:

- Identify, recruit, and orient external stakeholders for the Think Tank that will be charged with strengthening the College's environmental scanning.
- Develop a web-based tool to gather programmatic suggestions from the community and internally from faculty and staff.
- Pilot and implement web-based tool to capture community-wide input.
- Initiated annual student surveys (ex. SENSE, CCSSE, Noel-Levitz, etc...)

Goal #2 - Meet program delivery needs of current and prospective students
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Completed Objectives:

- Implement integrated testing center to increase capacity for test proctoring, placement testing, and outcomes assessment.
- Staffing plan and budget established for testing center.
- Alter facilities to accommodate testing center.
- Assemble and disseminate relevant data to groups with proper definitions and explanations.
- Continue to gather more information from and about current students related to program delivery.
- Review all processes to ensure students receive equal services (not required to be physically present).
- Submit self-study and application for substantive change for delivery.
- Review usage and staffing of testing center.
- Increased availability of online tutoring and academic advising
- Increased availability of online library services and eBooks.
- Increased number of transfer agreements.
- Accelerated remedial math courses.
- Transfer student survey conducted by IR as part of the transfer plan.
- Increase in online enrollment.

Goal #3 – Increase college-level enrollment
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Completed Objectives:

- Gather data on current high school student achievement practices.
- Assess currently used e-Write placement scores for COMM 090, ENGL 121 087Q, and ENGL 121.
- Investigate starting point of the COMPASS Math test.
- Expand Early Alert program to include all transitional courses.
- Develop summer bridge program in math.
- Develop First-Year Experience Seminar (FYES) Career Exploration section to be taught by a student advisor.
- Create and promote Diversity at Its Best Club.
- Promote and support the Adult Student Network (ASN)
- Continue Enrollment Management Alignment Committee efforts with area high schools.
- Increase communication with area school administrations.
- Utilize data to design options for math, reading, and writing programs
- Explore the use of modularization and spiral learning in the transitional math curriculum.
- Investigate the development of a COMM 090/COMM 120 /General Education learning community
- Pilot transitional reading, writing, and math program redesign plans
- Develop a process for retesting transitional students
- Assess use of Career Cruising and develop a plan for further implementation.
- Implement Support Plan process in advising
- Evaluate the math summer bridge Fast Forward
- Expand summer bridge Fast Forward program to include reading and writing components

8R3. This response was not addressed in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. As mentioned in 8P1, HCC will soon begin work on the 2016-2021 Strategic Plan. Part of this work will include the development of targets and projections to assist the institution in future improvement. In addition, the table below outlines goals associated with our three active AQIP Action Projects.

Name of Project	Goals
Expanding and Evolving Community Education toward Lifelong Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expand Community Education course offerings to include more learning opportunities for additional categories of continuing education for professional advancement and additional content areas reaching wider segments of our populations served 2. Create an effective marketing plan for Lifelong Learning 3. Develop and implement marketing plan 4. Process for course development with less than 20 steps 5. Increase course offerings by 50% 6. Provide increased teaching opportunities for these courses to current and potential full- and part-time faculty and staff 7. Increase courses that are held by 50% 8. Recruit and enroll more students into Lifelong Learning courses 9. Streamline the enrollment process for prospective students (online registration, acceptance of credit card payments, not requiring social security numbers) to break down the barriers to growing the program as identified by stakeholders 10. Increase enrollment in lifelong learning courses by 50%
Developing a Comprehensive Transitional (Developmental) Math Studies Program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5% increase in the course completion rates of transitional math courses offered in the Math Lab 2. 5% increase in the fall to spring retention rates for transitional students
Cultivating Collaborative Relationships with External Partners of HCC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase in number of collaborative relationships with external partners 2. Increase in quality of existing collaborative relationships with external partners 3. Increase in campus-wide interaction with other organizations

In addition to the Action Projects mentioned above, the College completed the last three Action Projects that are documented in the AQIP Action Project Directory. While the institution collected some valuable findings and continues to utilize/evolve each of these former projects, it struggled with the scope of each project. Each project evolved into something slightly different than originally anticipated, and, ultimately, that led to longer timelines for those projects. These previous reactionary projects have been retired and replaced with the more systematic projects documented above.

8R4. This response was rated an OO in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. HCC utilizes nationally normed data to confirm our results compare with other institutions of higher learning. The PACE survey results documented in 8R1 help us to observe comparisons between HCC and other institutions.

Of the 46 standard PACE questions, the following were among the top mean scores:

- The extent to which I feel my job is relevant to this institution's mission (HCC: 4.40; Norm Base 4.33)
- The extent to which the actions of this institution reflect its mission (HCC: 4.07; Norm base: 3.78)

In addition, two of the custom items are relevant but lack comparative data:

- The extent to which the institution has determined how its key processes work to accomplish its mission and objectives (3.69)
- The extent to which the institution adequately measures performance relative to its goals (3.44)

We acknowledge that opportunity for improvement exists because the results for the last two items fell in the consultative range (rated between 3 and 4). As is the case with many first attempts at data collection, these items provide a baseline for measuring future success in this area.

8R5. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The mid-point review mentioned in 8R1 provided a number of items for the institution to consider as we continued with the goals of the Strategic Plan. Some items identified also produced significant results.

- Sustainability of HCC West, our satellite campus in Elizabeth, IL, was identified as a concern. After further consideration, it was decided that HCC West would be closed because of declining utilization due to expanded online offerings and dual credit classes held in the regions high schools. HCC vacated the location in 2014.
- The IFiber project (providing fiber optic networking to organizations/individuals throughout northwestern Illinois) was cited. HCC was part of that project and is now connected to the network to provide higher bandwidth capabilities to the institution.
- "Teaching students the way they want to learn" was mentioned in the mid-point review and has contributed to the creation of new alternatively delivered courses and consideration of alternative schedules discussed in 3P1.

8I1. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. As stated previously in this category, our institution has become more data driven. With the increasing amount of data now available, the College's faculty and staff rely more heavily on data, thus improving the decision-making process.

Highland has provided more access to our student records systems (Banner/WebFOCUS) to allow for more educated decisions related to enrollment. For example, a faculty member can check on enrollment levels for present courses and check historical enrollment levels to help identify enrollment patterns. In addition, the College strives to ensure the data related to declared majors is up-to-date so staff and faculty can focus internal recruitment efforts on smaller groups of prospective students for new courses and/or programs.

The College has also expanded the Institutional Research (IR) department to manage the collection, processing, and distribution of data across campus. Collecting data via surveys, benchmarking and other sources can be a daunting task to faculty and staff who are not familiar with the process of doing so. Our IR department removes barriers in data collection and also assists with concerns related to methodology and follow-up as necessary.

8I2. This response was rated an OO in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The strategic planning process emphasized throughout Category 8 also illustrates the institution's dedication to becoming more systematic in its planning process. The Strategic Plan is not just something that one group develops; it is a document that is revisited frequently and guides in the ongoing improvement of the College.

In addition to large-scale planning, individuals and groups help the institution select the smaller scale projects that help the institution continuously improve. Our process for managing Action Projects serves as a good example. Our Accreditation Committee requests ideas for Action Projects and then (with input from others around campus) determines the best Action Projects to pursue. As part of the creation of an Action Project, a champion for each project is selected. Continuation of Action Projects

is also important. After Action Projects have been completed based upon the requirements provided by the Higher Learning Commission, we continue to utilize and support the processes identified.

Examples of completed projects that have continued support include our most recently completed projects in student mentoring and General Education assessment. These projects continue to be valuable to the institution, and they continue to evolve. The student mentoring project started with African-American male students; however, it will enter its second implementation with a new focus on non-traditional students with a new team that will foster the success of the project. Additionally, the General Education assessment project was initially focused on written and oral communication but will soon utilize a new Critical Thinking course to assess critical thinking and utilize existing resources in the library to assess information literacy.

These processes have support and assistance at every level of the institution, including administration, faculty, staff, and students around campus.

CATEGORY 9: BUILDING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Highland Community College has developed key collaborative relationships with educational institutions, community organizations and businesses, and the College Foundation. The College partners with sixteen public and private in-district schools, three vocational delivery systems, and other out-of-district secondary schools nearby. The College's processes for building collaborative relationships would best be described as *systematic* and moving toward *aligned*. Highland offers educational opportunities through high schools such as dual credit and dual enrollment, and supports high school graduates through scholarship programs, academic enrichment programs, bridge programs, adult education, career and technical preparation, and various articulation agreements. The institution also partners with veterans of the armed forces. The institution individually assesses those that served and provides credit for prior learning. Highland partners with various businesses and community agencies by forming advisory committees charged with directing the development of occupational programs to meet local needs and offer educational opportunities to their employees and/or clients. In addition, HCC's Business Institute works with district employers to provide customized training opportunities.

9P1. This response was rated an S in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. A systematic process guides our work in building collaborative relationships. This process is built around a network of relationships that are cultivated via personal contacts throughout the district and community we serve. We have found that the processes built through these connections have allowed collaborations to be successful in building partnerships. Criteria used in prioritizing College relationships include alignment with the institution's mission and strategic goals, compliance with state and federal regulations, stakeholder needs, and budget priorities. The following is a list of steps the College uses to build collaborative partnerships:

1. An external or internal stakeholder or group has an idea or makes a request for the College to consider and perhaps adopt a new collaborative partnership.
2. One of three types of partnerships is identified: required, recognized, or requested. Required partnerships include those such as secondary schools and advisory committees for career and technical programs. Recognized partnerships are those that are vital to meeting the College's mission and Strategic Plan, such as building student enrollment and program growth. We recognize partnerships through several needs assessment activities. These activities are varied and not always long-term. New technology development may encourage us to collaborate with Wind/Solar or other Alternative Energy groups. There are also grant funds made available to support key national or regional concerns.
3. The idea or request is communicated to the appropriate College administrator or facilitator.
4. The requester and facilitator determine whether the partnership will be a long- or short-term collaboration.

5. The facilitator assesses resources needed and available, such as staff time, funds, etc.
6. If the proposed partnership is supported, the facilitator determines if it may be forwarded to College leadership for consideration. If not, the partnership originator is informed of the decision and rationale.
7. If the facilitator determines the partnership should be considered by College leadership, the proposal may proceed through the appropriate approval process. At that point, it may be determined whether or not to move forward with full implementation of the plan. If the decision is to proceed fully, the partnership will be implemented using the appropriate resources. If a proposal is partially approved, an alternate plan may be developed and implemented using appropriate resources.
8. Evaluation and feedback are provided to all involved parties. For long-term collaborations, the partnership will continue to be evaluated on a regular basis.

The process of building relationships with the educational institutions and other organizations from which we receive our students is demonstrated through the following examples:

Recruitment and Retention: Although recruitment and retention is considered to be the responsibility of all College faculty and staff, the Student Services department has a major role in recruiting students. With the capable assistance of academic advisors, the Student Services department routinely provides current information and administrative assistance to high school guidance counselors concerning the academic, financial, and curricular offerings of the College through a variety of mechanisms.

HCC hosts a Guidance Counselor Luncheon each year. Plans are in place to host a mid-year event for guidance counselors to visit our campus so they may discuss subjects of value and interest to them. In addition, a monthly newsletter is distributed to all high school counselors in our district, as well as a few close out-of-district counselors.

A program called Experience Highland brings prospective students to visit the campus. Students are surveyed prior to the visit to determine potential academic majors. Faculty and staff members also visit regional high schools and vocational programs, and they participate in various career fair opportunities. The College distributes reports to superintendents, principals, and counselors annually. These reports contain information regarding students' academic performance at HCC.

ADA Support Services: Beginning in 2013, ADA Services established an ADA Committee consisting of faculty and staff members from various divisions and departments and representatives from community agencies and programs. Examples of community agency representatives include high school counselors or those specializing in students with disabilities, Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Department of Human Services (DHS), and Northern Illinois Community Action Agency (NICAA). The purpose of the advisory board is to build sustainable relationships with community members to promote better understanding of barriers in education, educate faculty and staff members in current practices and changes in the disability services field, and advocate for students. The ADA Coordinator works directly with high school counselors and staff to create access to College services and classes for individuals with disabilities.

Adult Education Program: The College has collaborated with the GED program to build a bridge program for recent- or near-completers of the GED program to take a summer welding course. This course is free of charge and is used to introduce GED students to welding as a career pathway or a college-level program of study.

CollegeNOW: A board member and principal of an area high school approached the College President three years ago about developing a program to allow regional students graduating with a high school diploma and an associate's degree simultaneously. Although there were reservations about how this task was going to be accomplished, College staff members worked diligently on scheduling models, success plans for students, and the development of communication items for all parties. Neighboring college boards and high school boards collaborated to ensure all students would

be treated equally and with the same policies. Recently, other schools have followed this example (see 3R5).

9P2. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. The College collaborates with a wide range of organizations with varying missions that depend on a supply of quality students from our institution. A majority of our students transfer directly to a four-year institution or enter the workforce. As addressed in 9P1, the College prioritizes these collaborative partnerships based on alignment with the College's mission and strategic goals, as well as stakeholder needs and budget priorities. Items are prioritized by timeline allowing for immediate success in many cases.

Transfer Institutions: The College develops articulation agreements in specific academic disciplines and through General Education courses. HCC participates in the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) which is a statewide transfer agreement in which more than 100 colleges and universities participate.

Institutional staff and faculty members have participated in statewide organizations, committees, and conferences related to articulation. The College's Transfer Coordinator assists students and College personnel with the transfer process and facilitates the articulation process at the state level. When the Transfer Coordinator receives confirmation via appropriate documentation that courses have been approved for articulation by IAI or various four-year institutions, the coordinator sends the information to the appropriate Dean. Information is disseminated to students through a variety of methods that include the following: state transfer day (event where four-year institutions are present to meet with students), Private Illinois Colleges and Universities transfer days (days when different institutions are set up at tables to meet with students), and First-Year Experience Seminar.

HCC partners with the National Student Clearinghouse to review students' paths after leaving the College. Within the last two years, HCC has signed articulation agreements with state universities. Recent new agreements include articulation agreements with the University of Illinois and its Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences program, a 2+2 agreement with Western Illinois University that aligns with our Wind Turbine Technician program, and an Honor's Program agreement with Western Illinois University.

Nursing Department: The Nursing and Allied Health program currently has contracts with 26 organizations that provide placement opportunities for students participating in clinical fieldwork. Organizations are located in northwest Illinois and south central Wisconsin. Nursing students complete clinical fieldwork in their freshman and sophomore years in eight different courses. For Medical Assistant (MA) students, four classes involve clinical fieldwork. In 2013-2014, 44 RN students and eight MA students graduated from the program. After students complete fieldwork experiences, a survey is provided to students approximately nine months after graduation to gather input regarding the student perspective on the knowledge, skills, and abilities that Highland's nursing students and graduates exhibit. The same survey is provided to each organization that hosted Highland nursing students for fieldwork experiences and to institutions that hire Highland nursing graduates (See 3R2). Institutions are also asked the same questions regarding the knowledge, skill, and abilities exhibited by nursing students from other local and regional programs exhibit. Feedback received from all involved parties provides nursing faculty and staff members an opportunity to assess and improve the program.

Program Advisory Groups: As required by the Illinois Community College Board and the Carl D Perkins Career and Technical Education grant, each career and technical program has an advisory group made up of businesses, agencies, and organizations that employ or may employ future HCC graduates. The advisory groups are required to meet once a year, but some program advisory groups meet more often. The purpose of the advisory groups is to review and provide input regarding recommendations of program outcomes, recommendations of program offerings, expectations of program graduates, and feedback of new challenges and issues in the field.

Continuing Education: The College's Business Institute partners with businesses and builds collaborative relationships through the following: pre-call planning, the pursuit of and/or partnering with area chambers of commerce and other economic development organizations, responding to prospective clients, nurturing the relationship, understanding and determining training needs, and maintaining and enhancing the collaborative relationship. While standard course offerings serve the needs of students on campus, the Business Institute delivers course offerings and customized classes specifically designed for employers' audiences. After courses and trainings are completed, participants evaluate the training they received. The employer receives an aggregate report and has a face-to-face follow-up meeting to discuss the report and other related concerns and futures needs. Feedback is also shared with the training facilitator.

Career Services: Career Services provides an opportunity for area employers to post employment openings. Several of these employer postings originate from other departments on campus that have more direct contact with employers. Relationships with employers and potential employers are built through informal processes, such as those that participate in career program advisory groups.

The College has made available a portal that allows direct online posting of student résumés through College Central Network (CCN). As stated in the 2010 AQIP Systems Portfolio, the College had paper binders containing résumés of students and graduates that area employers had to travel to the campus to view student résumés. It was identified by both the College and area employers that the system was outdated and inefficient. Hence, area employers requested an updated website option to post résumés. Appropriate College departments and staff members met to explore internal and vendor options. The committee researched various vendors and found CCN to be the best option. Research findings were presented to the Leadership Team and received approval to move forward with the project, with implementation already underway.

The Career Services Coordinator sent out letters to 150 local businesses inviting them to join the CCN and create an account that allows them to post job openings and review résumés. Student accounts are currently being created allowing students to view the job openings.

9P3. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. HCC acknowledges the value of relationships with organizations that provide services to students to prevent barriers to student learning and educational opportunities. The processes for creating, prioritizing, and building relationships for organizations that provide services to our students are the same as described in 9P1. Relationships are also built informally as we become aware of specific student needs through various student engagement opportunities, such as conversations, student surveys, and staff development meetings. If the need cannot be addressed by the College's existing services, staff members identify possible partnership opportunities designed to meet the need. Prioritization is based on the College's goals and facilitating student learning and outcomes. As the local economy has evolved in past years, the needs of students have changed significantly. The following are examples of some partnerships that have been created and maintained:

Nursing and Allied Health Department: As presented in 9P2, surveys are sent to participating health organizations that accept students as they complete fieldwork experiences.

Counseling Services: HCC has developed a relationship with the FHN Counseling Center to provide counseling for students on campus. The need was identified for counseling services, so an RFP process followed to select an external provider, and a primary contact person was identified to serve as provider with limited hours provided on campus. The availability of services was communicated to staff and faculty and an electronic referral process was implemented. Services are also communicated to students so they are aware that they may self-refer. A Behavioral Intervention Team is in place and referrals are tracked.

Stephenson County Sheriff's Office: The College has established an agreement with the Stephenson County Sheriff's Office to provide deputies who patrol campus on a regular basis. A

deputy is on duty at the College to offer services at College events. The agreement is regularly evaluated by the leadership and the Board of Trustees to assess the agreement.

YMCA: Recreational, athletic, and health opportunities are made available to students, faculty, and staff members through a partnership between the College and the YMCA. This cooperative effort assists the College and staff to meet the health and wellness goals identified through our insurance program. The partnership also provides membership to the YMCA that may not have occurred otherwise. See Category 2.

9P4. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. As a public institution, HCC follows legal regulations pertaining to the creation and maintenance of relationships with suppliers of material and services. Those potential vendors wanting to be considered to provide \$25,000 or more in products or services to the College are required to follow the bidding process to help prioritize and build stronger relationships with the vendors the College employs (except where exempted by law). Policies regarding bids and purchasing are found in the College Policy Manual. How relationships are created, prioritized, and built is dependent upon the type of service, supply, or material needed. Significant materials or services purchased from vendors may include, but are not limited to, general stores and office supplies, printing, banking services, auditing, insurance, food services, bookstore services, technology services and equipment, and programmatic services and materials. In administrative services areas such as purchasing and vending, HCC focuses on building trust with providers through repeated contact.

Prioritizing the need to create or re-evaluate relationships with external material and service providers is prompted by external environmental factors. These include changes within the markets for these materials and services that create potentially favorable or unfavorable price or cost positioning for the College. End-of-year reviews for expiring agreements are conducted by Division Deans and Department Coordinators who are directly responsible for those agreements. These reviews may signal the need to create new or revise existing relationships. In some situations, performance results of existing, ongoing provider relationships may result in the College modifying or ending relationships.

A specific process example on a smaller level of supplying materials is the toolkits that are purchased and used in the automotive mechanics and auto body repair programs. Each year vendors are provided with a list of tools for the toolkits for the high school program and a list for the College program that are required and the vendors are invited to provide quotes for the cost of the toolkits. The vendor is chosen based on the quote that best meets the needs of the program, regardless of cost. This practice is in keeping with our strategic goal to "meet program delivery needs of students."

9P5. This response was not addressed in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. As HCC creates and builds relationships with education associations, external agencies, consortia partners, and the general community following the same process as described in 9P1. The College builds these relationships by inviting representatives from these groups to serve on advisory boards related to their areas of interest and expertise. Relationship building and prioritization are driven by the effects on student learning and Highland's strategic goals of proactively identifying emerging programmatic needs and meeting program delivery needs of current and prospective students. A joint educational agreement among Highland, Blackhawk Technical College, and Southwest Wisconsin Technical College was signed so students may access programs at another institution if those programs are not available at their home district institution. Students participating in these programs are not required to pay out-of-district tuition.

The College regularly and actively participates on several committees related to economic growth. Highland's favorable and accessible geographic location allows optimum availability to those economic development agencies it serves. Each group partners with multiple agencies to build economic plans and oversees those activities. The College frequently provides staff and other resources to these activities. HCC also participates on the Workforce Development Coalition (WDC), whose principal goal is to assist areas businesses in developing local human resources to meet their

current demand for a skilled workforce. A community survey is sent out through the WDC to businesses to assess community needs as determined by the businesses and organizations. As a part of the consortium, HCC is privy to these results and is able to build partnerships and programs that meet the mission and strategic goals of the College.

An example of partnership-building that includes each of these categories of collaborations occurs through the HCC Foundation. (See Category 2). The Foundation has been active above and beyond general fund raising and scholarship activities; the organization regularly works with residents and business owners. During a Foundation meeting with a regular donor, discussion arose regarding the question of how funds provided to the College may, in turn, benefit the donor's specific business. After several initial meetings and planning efforts, the business worked with HCC staff to create a Hospitality AAS degree program.

The Foundation has recently supported several Lunch with the President events that brought together groups with similar backgrounds to meet with the College's President and staff. These meetings provided an opportunity for open discussion and collaboration on activities that would benefit those in attendance.

9P6. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Ensuring that partnerships meet the diverse needs of the partners requires that each partner is represented in the planning processes through community engagement and conversations. Partner relationships with the College are evaluated in varying ways dependent upon the nature of the function or services provided. Contracted services are reviewed on a regular basis. If a partnership is not aligned with the College's mission or Strategic Plan or does not support student learning opportunities, the partnership may be reviewed by parties involved and decisions made based on an evaluation. The following are examples:

Freeport Health Network: A need was identified as described in 9P3. Regular meetings are scheduled with the provider, and the service is reviewed annually. A report is made to the Board of Trustees, and services are adjusted annually on an as-needed basis.

Student Surveys: Because students are main stakeholders in higher education, the following surveys have been administered: Community College Survey of Student Engagement, Noel Levitz Adult Inventory, and Survey for Entering Student Engagement. Results are shared via email to staff and faculty. Following up on next steps based on these data allows us to respond to student needs (see 3R2 – 3R5).

Community Leader Surveys: In preparation of reviewing and writing strategic goals for the next cycle, a community survey was sent out to high school personnel, business leaders, and city/county officials in the HCC district to receive input from these community leaders on what our strategic priorities should be moving forward. Results suggest that community leaders feel our top priorities should be partnerships with K-12 school districts, transfer colleges and universities, and business and industry to ensure programs are responsive to local needs. Those expectations listed as secondary priorities include developing outreach plans for adult (non-traditional) students, providing alternative delivery (i.e. online) and scheduling of courses and programs, and maintaining a competitive tuition rate. A second portion of the community leader survey involved gathering what community leaders perceived as essential environmental issues that HCC should consider in carrying out its strategic planning. The following are the top four environmental issues selected: creation of new jobs, college readiness levels among high school graduates, educated/skilled workforce, and work ethic of workforce. HCC plans to use these results while preparing strategic and program planning. More information and the results of this administration and the last one is presented in 3R4.

Nursing Surveys: As presented in 9P2, surveys are sent to participating health organizations that accept students as they complete fieldwork experiences.

9P7. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. As The College acknowledges that effective communication and relationship-building is an ongoing process. Various large-group sessions, including all employees, are held as a way of communicating College news and updates, and emails from the President and Vice President of Academic Services/Chief Academic Officer is another form of communicating news and updates. Communication is maintained through email, the HCC internal and external website, Board reports, HCC's Facebook page, and mobile texting. In order to keep Trustees informed, administrators provide written updates to their appropriate Vice President or Associate Vice President to be included in a monthly administrative report to the Board of Trustees.

Common Intake Meetings: These meetings, which bring together several departments, are held weekly or bi-weekly to update staff members. Some outside agencies or organizations that provided services to students may be invited to provide information regarding their services. Some of the departments include staff from Admissions, Advising, Career Services, Success Center, and Project Succeed.

Division Meetings: These meetings keep faculty and staff members within each division informed of current events and serve as reminders of committee work that needs to be completed.

Opening Days: Opening Days is an event that takes place the Thursday and Friday before the beginning of a new semester (both spring and fall). The first half of the day on Thursday is spent on College updates and new program information. The Vice President of Academic Services/Chief Academic Officer requests faculty and staff to provide updates to their programs, divisions, and events that they wish to distribute to faculty and staff members. Information is gathered and sent out in an email to all faculty and staff.

Standing Committees: The College promotes internal collaboration through its wide variety of standing committees, including committees focusing on diversity, commencement, dual credit, common-intake systems, alternative delivery, and many more.

9R1. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. As The following is a list of measures relevant to building collaborative relationships at the College and collected and analyzed regularly:

- Survey data (Student, Community Leader, and Placement surveys)
- Evaluation data (Business Institute, Experience Highland program)
- Success (i.e. enrollment and baccalaureate completion) of transferring students
- Percent of high school graduates recruited by HCC
- Enrollment in dual credit programs
- Retention rates

The College has also collaborated with the regional trade union Local 23-Plumbers and Pipefitters. An Associate of Applied Science degree in Industrial Training was developed for which each partner provides its portion of the training.

Since 1973, the Highland Fine Arts Department has presented theater and musical productions to large and appreciative audiences. These events bring together a myriad of singers and actors, ranging in age from five to 80. Casts and performing personnel range between three and 50 student and community performers. Over the course of nearly 100 productions, over 2,000 singers, actors and musicians have participated. The average run of these shows or concerts is six performances with an average attendance of 250 patrons, bringing the total number of patrons over the years to over 25,000.

The College provides quality customized training through its Business Institute (BI). Recently, a highly customized training course was delivered to employees of a local manufacturer. In

appreciation of BI's efforts, the business donated a one-time gift of \$50,000 to the Highland Foundation's general fund.

As addressed in 9P2, the College is implementing a new program through Career Services with the College Central Network (CCN). Through this program, opportunities to gather data to evaluate the effectiveness and utilization of the program may also be available. Consequently, the College will be able track usage by students, graduates, and area businesses.

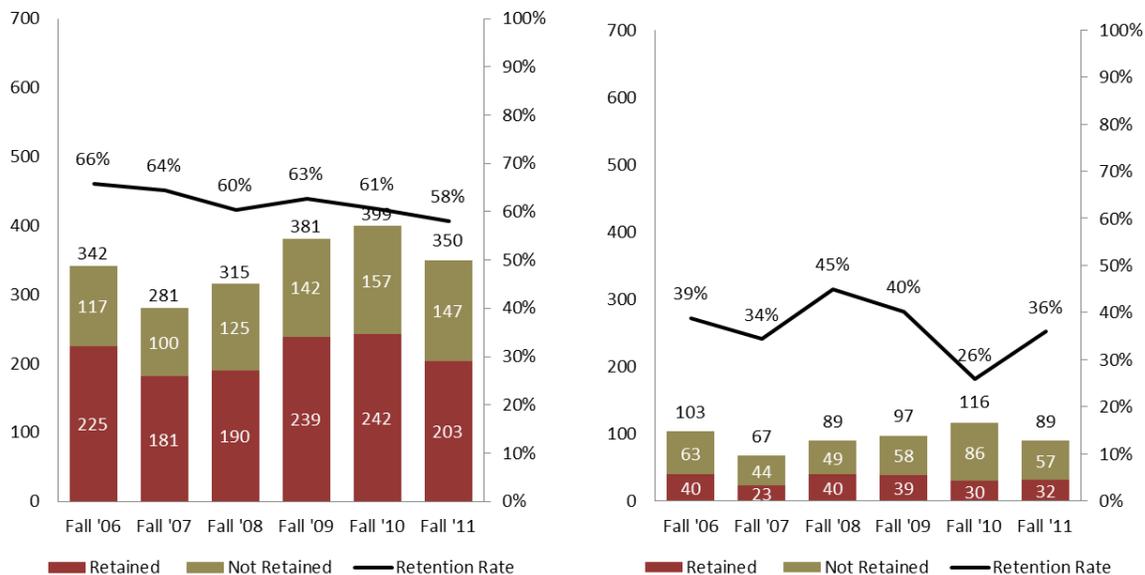
9R2. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Results from the College's administration of student surveys have been shared throughout the Systems Portfolio, but, in particular, in 3R2, 3R3, 3R6, and 6R2. Results from the College's administration of its Community Leaders Survey, Nursing Employer Survey, and the PACE survey were also shared in other categories of this portfolio, particularly in 3R2, 3R4, 3R6, 4R2 and 4R3. All relate to our performance in building internal and external collaborative relationships.

Additional performance results indicative of the key internal and external collaborative relationships that the College has built are indicated in the College's Monitoring Reports. These reports present information about the recruitment, retention, and academic successes of students at HCC and at their transfer institution. Table 9.1 provides the numbers and percentages of high school seniors recruited to the College, and Figure 9.1 provides the retention rates for first-time full- and part-time students for the past several years.

Table 9.1 High School Recruitment

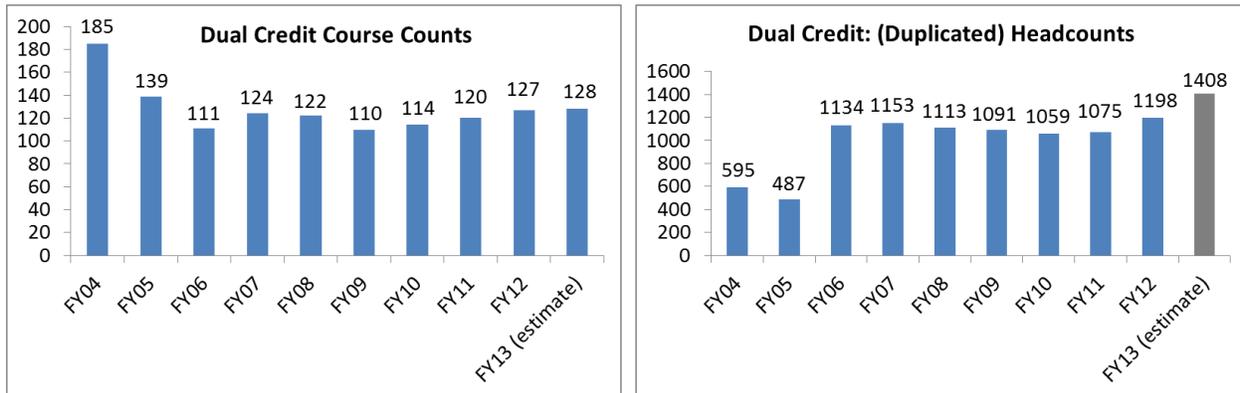
	<i>Fall 04</i>	<i>Fall 05</i>	<i>Fall 06</i>	<i>Fall 07</i>	<i>Fall 08</i>	<i>Fall 09</i>	<i>Fall 10</i>	<i>Fall 11</i>	<i>Fall 12</i>	<i>Fall 13</i>
Total # of HS Seniors	1104	1101	1177	1105	1034	1023	1023	1009	974	955
# Seniors Attending HCC	329	311	327	309	355	325	319	290	296	289
% of Total Attending HCC	30%	28%	28%	28%	34%	32%	31%	29%	30%	30%

Figure 9.1: Fall to Fall Retention Rates



Figures 9.2 – 9.3 provide information on the College’s dual credit programming and enrollment. A dual credit course is a course that enables a high school student to enroll in a college-level course and, upon successful completion, concurrently earn both college credit and high school credit. Most notable is that despite the decrease in the number of course offerings, enrollment increased, as shown in Figures 9.2 and 9.3. This increase may be attributed to the College’s efforts to more aggressively contact district high schools regarding dual credit opportunities, better informing parents regarding the opportunities, and addressing misconceptions related to dual credit.

Figures 9.2 and 9.3



Other notable initiatives and results include a formal agreement between Sauk Valley Community College (approximately 35 miles southeast of Freeport) and Highland Community College to offer Criminal Justice courses over interactive television. This partnership allows both institutions to maintain a viable program and, at the same time, alleviate the necessity for HCC students to travel to Sauk Valley Community College. Within the last three academic years, 172 students have completed these courses, generating 756 credit hours. According to survey results, student evaluations, and faculty reviews, the program has been very successful.

In 2012 a new organization, the Highland Friends of Fine Arts was launched. The mission of this community-member based organization is to “increase the level of participation and broaden opportunities for students of visual and performing arts,” while also “expanding the College’s effort to enhance the culture and art” in our communities. This organization began three years ago with no funds and a fledgling membership. Today, we have nearly 100 members who have donated about \$10,000 toward this effort. Thus far, two \$500 scholarships have been awarded to promising students in the Fine Arts.

CollegeNOW: In May of 2014, HCC graduated the first students who participated in the CollegeNOW program through Pecatonica High School. There were six students that graduated through the CollegeNOW program, and one of the students graduated Summa Cum Laude. Since fall 2012 when Pecatonica High School began this venture, five other high schools have joined and many other high schools are communicating with HCC to explore the options of providing this opportunity for their students.

9R3. This response was rated an O in the College’s 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. As noted in 9R2, much survey data relevant to building relationships has been shared throughout the Systems Portfolio, and much of these data are benchmarked against national norms. Thus, the response to this question focuses on transfer student data. The primary transfer institutions the College has collaborative relationships with are Northern Illinois University, University of Wisconsin-Platteville, Illinois State University, Columbia College-Missouri, and Rockford University. Tables 9.2 and 9.3 provide data comparing the retention and performance of Highland students who transfer to

Northern Illinois University (NIU) and that of NIU native students and students transferring to NIU from other institutions.

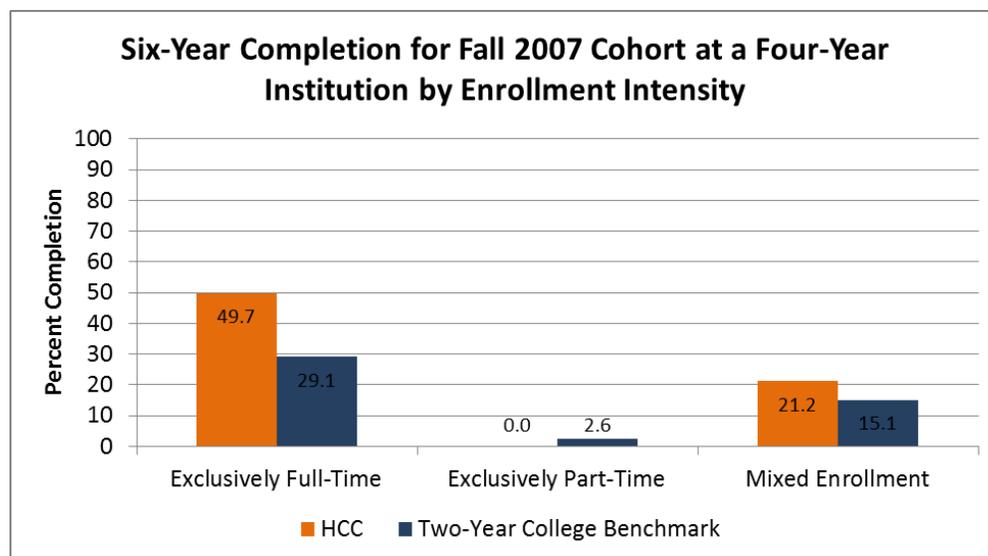
Table 9.2 Transfer Students Retained for at Least Three Semesters

	2008-2009		2009-2010		2010-2011		2011-2012	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
All Transfer Students	2377	80.9	2363	80.6	2475	78.8	2305	79.0
Highland Transfer Students	49	92.4	25	73.5	28	77.8	31	91.2

Table 9.3 Average Annual GPA

	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
NIU Natives Students	2.773	2.919	2.916	2.858
All Transfer Students	2.901	2.891	2.873	2.880
Highland Transfer Students	3.002	3.165	3.156	3.105

The figure below provides data from a National Student Clearinghouse benchmark study that tracked community college students who began their studies for the first-time in fall 2007. This figure provides the number of students who completed a four-year degree broken down by enrollment intensity. Roughly half of the exclusively full-time Highland students in the 2007 cohort completed a four-year degree compared to 29% of students in the benchmark group. A greater percentage of the Highland students with mixed enrollment in the cohort completed a four-year degree than those with mixed enrollment in the benchmark group, and very few of exclusively part-time students from either Highland or the benchmark group completed a four-year degree.



911. This response was rated an O in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Recently Highland Community College made a significant improvement in our collaborative relationship with area high schools with the introduction of a new program called CollegeNOW.

This new program was created in order to better serve the high school students in our district, specifically the academically high-achieving students. Beginning with one high school, we began the program for high school juniors and seniors who become Highland Community College students while also finishing requirements for their high school diploma. Students must be recommended by their high school leadership, have completed a chemistry course, be enrolled in or have completed Algebra

II and be on track to graduate on time. After students have been recommended to CollegeNOW, we use the COMPASS Placement Test to ensure that they are ready for college-level courses, especially math and English.

During the program's first year, seven CollegeNOW students from one school district participated in the program. This year, our third year running CollegeNOW, we have approximately 30 students from six school districts. Our students have participated in the Honors program, earned awards as college students, and our first seven students all successfully graduated last May from both Highland Community College and their high school. Of these seven students, five continued to four-year schools and two decided to work before going on in school.

In order to make sure that this program is successful and truly helping these students, we keep in close communication with the various high school counselors and meet regularly with all CollegeNOW students. We also require these students to take a class with their advisors during the first semester in order to help make the transition successful.

912. This response was rated an OO in the College's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. While our historic process of creating collaborations has worked effectively, the College recognizes that there may be a great benefit in creating a more aligned and integrated process. The process used by Highland's Business Institute (BI) and College Central Network (CCN) has the potential to provide appropriate examples of successful and effective approaches to building collaborative relationships. Those individuals involved with these ventures could aid in consulting with other College departments about creating, establishing, and building collaborative relationships.

Finally, the College may elect to ask personnel in our Institutional Research department to help explore effective approaches to gathering the types of data and research that will allow the College to systematically build and evaluate collaborative relationships. A review committee may also investigate and recommend ways to assess collaborative relationships and study how benchmarking may be compared internally in comparison with other institutions.