



Comprehensive Quality Review

Highlights Report

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**Lansing Community College
610 N. Capitol Ave.
Lansing, MI 48933**

President: Brent Knight, Ed.D.
Accreditation Liaison Officer: Vicki Deketelaere, Ph.D.

Introduction

The spring of 2013 was a key turning point in Lansing Community College's (LCC's) culture and development as an AQIP institution. Four major events occurred within several months of each other that had a powerful impact on LCC. First, LCC completed and submitted its 2013 Systems Portfolio in June 2013. The process of writing and assembling the 2013 Systems Portfolio helped us to realize that, while we had made significant progress since the 2008 Systems Portfolio and its accompanying 2009 Feedback, we had major work to do, particularly with respect to defining processes, using metrics to assess performance on those processes, and assessing student learning and program outcomes. Our conclusions were confirmed when we received our Feedback Report for the 2013 Systems Portfolio. Since then, these areas have been the focus of significant and large-scale change and improvement efforts during the past two years.

Second, an Academic Senate was established at LCC as a result of the new collective bargaining agreement with faculty. This was LCC's first true faculty or Academic Senate. The Senate was chartered in December 2012 and held its first meeting in March 2013. The Senate has greatly increased faculty involvement, oversight of academic policies, and shared governance. The faculty, through the Senate and its new committees/task teams, have accelerated quality improvements in our curricular, online, and assessment processes.

Third, just prior to the submission of our Systems Portfolio, LCC adopted a new Strategic Plan. The plan is built around a new strategy focusing on continuous improvement in learning, student success, and community engagement. We achieved these improvements by focusing on innovation, improvements in our own culture and communications, and improvements in efficiency/fiscal responsibility. The new Strategic Plan was the result of several AQIP Action Projects: Strategic Alignment Initiative (completed in 2010); Strategic Challenges – Environmental Assessment (completed in 2012); and Strategic Plan Implementation – Phase 1 (completed in 2015). As 2013 unfolded, we moved toward building a new shared governance structure, which included, as noted above, the formation of an Academic Senate (AQIP Action Project completed in 2013).

Finally, coincident with the submission of the Systems Portfolio in 2013, there was a significant turnover among leadership, particularly with respect to those who had led our AQIP efforts. The Provost who had led our rejuvenated AQIP efforts since 2009 left in late 2012. Her successor, our long-time Associate VP of Academic Affairs/Interim Provost, retired in July 2013. In addition, our Director of Institutional Effectiveness (and HLC Liaison), as well as our Director of Strategic Communications, separated from the College during 2013. Since these individuals were key members of our AQIP leadership team/steering committee, their departures had a significant impact on the College's major initiatives.

These positions have since been filled with outstanding, enthusiastic individuals; however, several are newcomers to the AQIP pathway. Our continuity from the previous (pre-2013) AQIP leadership efforts to today's AQIP efforts has been provided by a single faculty member. All of that said, the turnover proved only a temporary setback in our efforts to improve our AQIP maturity. The new Provost, Associate VP of Academic and Student Affairs (HLC Liaison), and Executive Director of the Center for Data Science (a newly established position at the College) brought extensive accreditation experience to the College and provided fresh perspectives and renewed enthusiasm for improving our processes, our curriculum redesign, and assessment of programs and learning. Their efforts have resulted in a group of process improvements and change initiatives that are collectively referred to as "Operation 100%: Achieving Excellence in Student Learning and Success at Lansing Community College."

Operation 100% is a comprehensive, culture-changing, institution-wide student success initiative, whose goal is 100% completion for students in certificate, degree, or transfer pathways, and whose equity-minded vision is “100% success through 100% inclusion.” This initiative is garnering national attention, as evidenced by, for example, a forthcoming article on the initiative to appear in the Association of American Colleges & Universities’ publication *Peer Review*. This project includes:

- the development of carefully designed guided program pathways containing only those options that lead to student success, as well as integrated general education offerings;
- the development of an automated registration process to help keep students on track and to ensure that they receive timely support;
- cutting-edge intake, orientation, and advising processes, including a newly designed advising model that includes academic success coaches and support networks for students, which will include advisors, student peers, faculty mentors, and others (both from within and from outside of the college community);
- a new application built using predictive analytic questions to help the college understand students’ strengths and challenges and assign appropriate support for all students *even prior to the students’ taking classes*;
- a college-wide web refresh and the creation of personalized web pages (“student portals”) for each student, which will enable students to see a dashboard indicating their progress towards completing their certificate or degree and which will contain items of interest tailored to meet the needs of the individual student;
- a radical transforming of the College’s approach to delivering developmental education in order to increase students’ ability to enroll in college-level coursework early; and
- other cutting-edge practices for ensuring student success.

These four events have culminated in the strengthening of LCC’s AQIP efforts. The new Provost, CFO, Associate VP of Academic and Student Affairs, and Executive Director of the Center for Data Science joined the President, the now-current Academic Senate President, and our continuing AQIP faculty member in attending the October 2014 Strategy Forum. At that Strategy Forum, we developed a new AQIP Action Project, which, in response to the current Feedback Report, focuses on cataloging and improving our key processes. The result is a campus awash in significant positive change improving our processes, metrics, and assessment, all with a strong focus on our Strategic Plan.

Systems Appraisal Feedback Report Follow-up

The College’s HLC/AQIP Planning Team and Executive Leadership Team analyzed the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Below are the Summary Comments on the AQIP Categories from the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report, along with our responses to address the challenges and areas that needed improvement.

Summary Comments from the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report: LCC has articulated that helping students learn is at the center of its mission and an Academic Master Plan is in place. There is, however, unevenness across the system with respect to the processes that are needed to fulfill the master plan. The institution appears to understand the importance of assessment in continuous improvement but the processes for identifying specific learning outcomes and direct measures of the outcomes are not

linked to student learning objectives in a consistent and comprehensive manner. Hence, the data reported tends to be anecdotal and is inconsistent across the institution. While a number of changes are identified, these changes are not linked to specific intended outcomes and data collection processes. Therefore, it is not clear whether the change is in fact a data-informed improvement or a reported self-improvement.

The Academic Senate began developing an updated Academic Master Plan; concurrently, the college began working on Operation 100%. This initiative involves the active work of many faculty, including those who were helping to develop a revised Academic Master Plan and/or who serve as area co-chairs on the college's Strategic Planning Steering Committee. It became apparent that the intent and substance of the work for Operation 100% was augmenting the work being considered for the updated Academic Master Plan. Thus, the decision was made to have Operation 100% replace the Academic Master Plan.

Having created a Center for Data Science to strengthen its research and predictive analytic capacities, the College will carefully measure Operation 100% results for continuous improvement. Voluntary Framework of Accountability outcomes will be used as a standardized approach to measuring student success.

Throughout its history, the College has engaged in assessment of student learning, but it has not consistently centralized a continuous improvement process for doing so. Thus, although third-party accredited programs (such as Nursing and Fire Science) have maintained ongoing assessment practices, the College has not embedded such practices college-wide. That said, it should be noted that LCC's College-wide Assessment Committee had been engaged in a centralized process of assessing student learning primarily at the course level, expanding its focus more recently to include assessment at the program and institutional levels. As the focus of assessment expanded, the committee determined that it required additional support to further implement a college-wide assessment system. Therefore, with the formation of the Academic Senate, LCC's shared governance body, it was determined that an assessment committee would now be a standing sub-committee of the Academic Senate.

Now known as the Committee for Assessing Student Learning (CASL), the assessment committee has revised its charter so as to revitalize and expand college-wide efforts to engage in strong, centralized assessment of student learning. The Academic Senate appointed the first CASL members in August 2015 and approved the charter in September 2015. (Further information about CASL can be found on the LCC website at <http://lcc.edu/provost/assess/casl.aspx>.)

Co-chaired by two faculty members, CASL is comprised of voting faculty representatives and non-voting administrative representatives. To assist this committee's efforts, the College has bolstered its assessment-related support by, for example, creating two full-time, director-level positions—the Director of Assessment and the Director of Institutional Research—which help to oversee the day-to-day process of college-wide assessment activities and work closely with CASL. In addition, in the summer of 2015, the College sent members of CASL, along with persons working on our Guided Pathways initiative (as part of Operation 100%), to the HLC Assessment Workshop in St. Charles.

CASL members began their work by building upon the existing LCC assessment framework (dated 2012) to design an updated framework that describes the goals and objectives of LCC assessment and the measurement and management strategies to continuously monitor progress toward these ends. The assessment framework applies a Balanced Scorecard approach and includes a strategy map that aligns

assessment strategic objectives; associated measures to identify what we are measuring at the course, program, and institution levels; targets to identify successful achievement of the strategic objectives; current performance results to identify gaps in performance; and a data collection plan that describes how the data are collected, the source of the data, the methods used to collect data, methods of analysis, and the ways in which the results are used to support continuous improvement. A project plan was then developed to outline associated tasks, identify collaborators, and establish a timeline.

To guide the process of aligning student learning outcomes with program- and institutional-level outcomes, CASL requested all Programs of Study to identify, document, and share Program of Study student learning outcomes statements, methods of assessment for student learning outcomes statements, and 2-year mastery levels. Programs of Study submitted completed templates to LCC's SharePoint system. This process provided a central location to report and analyze Program of Study student learning outcomes statements and assessment methods. CASL then developed a rubric to assess the completeness and quality of student learning outcomes statements and selected assessment methods. Completeness is defined as follows: All Programs of Study identify, document, and share all student learning outcomes statements and link those student learning outcome statements to LCC's Essential Learning Outcomes (the College adopted the Association of Colleges & Universities' researched-based Essential Learning Outcomes—or, ELOs—as our institutional-level outcomes). Quality is defined thus: All reported student learning outcomes statements are specific, measurable, attainable, and results-focused, multiple measures of assessment are applied, more than 50% of these assessments are direct assessment methods, and selected assessment methods are aligned with Bloom's Taxonomy cognition levels.

With a new rubric to assess completeness and quality, CASL established the reliability (i.e., distinguishing levels, appropriate criteria, clarity of the descriptions, calibrated scoring) and validity (i.e., time to complete, directions for use, recommended processes, ease of use, feasibility, utility) of the instrument through a series of inter-rater agreement studies in CASL meetings, small group activities, and professional development days. To analyze the results of submitted templates, CASL divided the submitted templates among members and established decision rules should two CASL members score more than one point difference on the rubric. CASL feedback is then incorporated into the Program Review cycle, thereby providing support for improvements to outcomes statements and/or assessment methods.

To assess the alignment of Programs of Study learning outcomes to LCC's ELOs, CASL developed another template to identify these links. CASL requested that all Programs of Study identify these links to LCC's ELOs by December 1, 2015. A CASL self-review identified an opportunity to combine Program of Study learning outcomes and LCC's ELOs into one template, thereby reducing duplication of work and burden to faculty. An updated template is now being designed to collect learning outcomes at all levels in one template.

CASL also reviewed LCC's Program Review process designed to provide well-rounded insight into the strengths of and opportunities for programs. LCC applies three guiding questions for all program review teams to consider:

- What are the key purposes/functions/goals of your program?
- How well is your program doing, and, how do you know?
- What concrete, measurable steps need to be taken to strengthen your program?

To collect data that responds to these questions, a Program Review questionnaire is provided to each Program of Study one to two semesters prior to the scheduled Program Review. Thoughtful responses to these questions encourage dialogue concerning the ways in which student learning evidence has an immediate use and value to faculty and sets the direction of annual program improvements. Accompanying follow-up documents include an Executive Summary, which is to be shared with various college constituencies, and an Annual Improvement Plan, in which specific, continuous improvement projects are linked to the College's Strategic Plan and budget process, as well as to the formation of subsequent comprehensive Program Reviews.

Program Review is conducted by faculty and staff associated with the Program of Study, along with a support team comprised of personnel from various areas of the College. This collaborative approach contributes to a shared understanding and accountability and builds networks across the campus in which all collaborators channel efforts and resources toward the success of our students. The Program Review support team collaborates before, during, and after the review to work through any assessment challenges throughout the process. This practice results in support for Program of Study faculty, staff, and administration as they review data packets, interpret the data, derive improvement plans, and prepare for the workgroup session at the end of the semester in which the Program Review is conducted. Follow-up meetings are then scheduled, as needed, to support the design of a measurement strategy for annual continuous improvement efforts.

To maximize collaborative efforts, some members of CASL also serve on the College's Curriculum Committee. In addition, CASL is engaged in all academic assessment processes, including Program Review. Findings from Program Review are then used to identify targeted areas of successes and improvements. Members of the Program Review support team follow up with the program faculty to assist with developing measurement plans of selected improvements and to support faculty in selecting or designing assessment methods. The Center for Data Science and CASL then monitor implementation fidelity annually.

Summary Comments from the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report: LCC has identified a clear set of non-instructional activities. They are aligned with the objectives of the institution and are fully subscribed to the continuous improvement culture at the LCC. While data is collected to assist in improving and changing activities, comparative data may help assist in the development of assessment tools used for non-instructional activities.

Since the writing of the Systems Portfolio, LCC has strengthened and increased its non-instructional activities as part of Operation 100% and in response to the College's ongoing commitment to continuous improvement. For example, recognizing the need to continue strengthening diversity awareness and empowerment on campus, this past year a new campus-wide group has been formed to address challenges faced by and to provide support for faculty, students, and staff from the LGBTQ communities. Recently, the College has also been accepted to participate in the Association of American Colleges and Universities' national initiative to close the equity gap with quality education for all; LCC is one of thirteen colleges to be selected to participate and one of only three community colleges.

More generally, in response to information gathered and analyzed by the President's Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion, the College has created a Centre for Engaged Inclusion, which hosts a Difficult Dialogues series on sensitive but important diversity-related topics; film and discussion events aimed at increasing multicultural awareness; and other such activities involving students, faculty,

and staff. The College has committed reassigned time to two faculty members to help with this work and has hired a Chief Diversity Officer who supervises and helps to plan the Centre's work. Presently, the College is in the search process to hire a Coordinator for the Centre.

Also, in the area of Student Affairs, the College is augmenting its ability to assist struggling students by hiring academic success coaches, and it is developing a new advising model to help students remain on track. The Student Affairs Division is also creating a student support network process that will enable students to have ongoing support from peers, faculty, persons from the community, and others.

Benchmarking visits to Georgia State University (a 4-year university whose student make-up is similar to that of LCC's) and Arizona State University (a prime architect of an automated student tracking model) have resulted in a restructuring of the College's advising model and support services, along with the implementation of automated tracking by means of Degree Works. These changes are in alignment with known best practices to improve retention and completion. For FY 16, four additional advising roles were approved as a way to begin improving LCC's student/advisor ratio from approximately 1,100:1 to 300:1.

Summary Comments from the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report: LCC demonstrates growing maturity related to the accomplishing of non-instructional objectives. Through its recent creation of three community-focused positions, the institution is purposefully creating opportunities for the College to build relationships with external stakeholders. It has a thorough and comprehensive process for seeking external stakeholder input—but has opportunities to link that input to identification of needs and alignment of resources. Additional opportunity exists to link external regional/national comparisons through benchmarking to LCC. As LCC grows and matures these processes, continued improvement may be anticipated.

Although the college continues to work with a community engagement consultant, a new organizational structure resulting in the creation of a "Community Education and Workforce Development (CEWD)" division (formerly, the "Extended Learning and Professional Studies" division) has taken on greater responsibility for the college's efforts to augment community relations.

Among others of its community engagement-related initiatives, this year the CEWD division created a Lifelong Learning and Centralized Services Department. In addition, instructional areas within CEWD were bundled, and divisional delivery and logistic areas were centralized. In this way, diverse community learning venues became better coordinated and systematized. Similarly, new processes were created to optimize time, reduce operational inefficiencies, improve productivity, reduce expenses, and increase revenue. The outcome in corporate training alone reflects a year-to-date sales increase of 25% over fiscal year 2014 – 2015, an increase in participants trained of 50%, and an overall budget decrease of 13%.

Additionally, the newly created Lifelong Learning and Centralized Services (LLCS) area will meet community needs through new processes for course proposals, creation, implementation, and review. LLCS will serve as the research and development arm of the division and will gather information from surveys, forums, and advisory sessions from the departments within CEWD. Information received will follow the new formal Program Review Process for non-credit programs.

The College has continued to use external stakeholder input to drive our identification of needs and alignment of resources. For example, joint advisory sessions have been held for technical education

(Welding and Mechatronics) and will be expanded to include Allied Health. Community surveys and forums have also been conducted in the area of Diversity and Inclusion Workforce Training and Advanced Manufacturing to determine industry needs. CEWD is also participating in joint advisory sessions with college academic departments. Additional cross-divisional weekly meetings between key stakeholders are also occurring in Manufacturing, Healthcare, and Information Technology. These sessions have served to coordinate activities, increase communication concerning community needs, and coordinate college activities among academic division faculty and staff, apprenticeship coordinators, Student Affairs staff, and the CEWD division.

Additional coordinated activities with internal college partners include joint grant writing, job fairs, the creation of an Academic Success Coach for Manufacturing, and “Get a Skill/Get a Job” activities for Healthcare, Manufacturing, and IT.

Another community engagement activity at Lansing Community College involves the launch of the Diversity Lansing Initiative Advisory Committee. Representing LCC on this committee is the College’s Chief Diversity Officer, Dr. Paul Hernandez, who is a part of the Lansing Economic Area Partnerships’ Diversity Lansing Initiative Advisory Committee. Diversity Lansing focuses on assisting the Lansing region business community with recruiting and retaining world-class diverse talent. The work group encourages and leverages partnerships that celebrate and embrace the core values of a diverse, welcoming, and affirming region, an approach intended to strengthen our economy generally and, in particular, to create economic opportunities in Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham counties. The work group also recognizes that having a well-rounded diverse workforce helps attract top talent. Additionally, the work group will research case studies from other companies and cities that have successfully implemented diversity programs.

Finally, since the writing of the Systems Portfolio, the College has been engaged in key local, statewide, and national initiatives. For example, in the area of K-12 relations, the College has launched a community-wide initiative entitled “Coalition for College and Career Readiness,” which brings together partners from business and industry and from K-12 to work with college personnel on increasing high school students’ college and career readiness. Corollary initiatives in the planning stage include team-teaching arrangements for K-12 and LCC instructors and the implementation of “College 101,” a college readiness initiative for at-risk high school students, created by the college’s Chief Diversity Officer (see Dr. Hernandez’s book, *The Pedagogy of Real Talk: Engaging, Teaching, and Connecting With Students at Risk*). Other efforts include the High School Diploma Completion Initiative, which has produced 169 graduates as of December 2015; the delivery of college-level courses for 8 local school districts; and The Early College. The Early College is a three-year program designed to provide mid-Michigan high school students with the opportunity to earn up to sixty college credits as part of their high school learning experience. The Early College has had 116 students who have earned their High School Diploma, 80 of whom have earned a certificate or higher degree from LCC.

Summary Comments from the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report: Utilizing Achieving the Dream and continuous improvement as its cornerstone, the College may be underway to develop a systematic process to engage stakeholders, internally and externally, and to understand their needs. LCC has recently implemented institutionalized Educational Development Plans, the Achieving the Dream requirements, and annual Program Quality Improvement Process to focus improvements on providing students with the right information, resources, and support to achieve success and attain goals. As it moves these disparate activities into a more refined and systematic process, continued improvements may emerge.

In 2015, LCC “stopped-out” of its membership with Achieving the Dream (ATD) because it had become involved with various institutional, statewide, and national initiatives that are augmenting the College’s ability to achieve the ATD goals in significant and substantial ways. To this end, although the College is no longer involved with ATD, it remains committed to supporting the mission of ATD—increasing student success and closing achievement gaps. In 2015, the Provost announced “Operation 100%,” a new, college-wide student success initiative that in part is designed to engage internal and external stakeholders, close achievement gaps, and provide comprehensive wrap-around services that are meant to help students succeed

As we pursue our work with Operation 100%, we are keenly aware that, as laudable as this initiative is, we cannot claim that it is successful unless we achieve success with those of our students who need additional, special attention, who are particularly vulnerable, or who otherwise require that we go the extra mile even on this already ambitious journey of student success support. We also are keenly aware of our obligation to meet the needs of employers who will hire our students and to ensure that our students are well prepared to succeed in long-term gainful employment. As this report illustrates or intimates, we are working diligently to effect progress in both of these areas.

Summary Comments from the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report: LCC self-reports standard practices for hiring, training, and valuing employees. However, the processes along with their key measures and the alignment of these processes to instructional and non-instructional objectives to goals as well as to the strategic plan are not evident. Without a clear focus on identifying critical measures, collecting and analyzing trend and comparative data, and utilizing these results to guide decision making, the College is limiting its ability to assess its overall effectiveness.

The College has incorporated a number of practices to ensure that the caliber of faculty and staff, as well as appropriate staffing levels, are maintained to support student success. Dovetailing with the College’s Strategic Plan—specifically, with the Plan’s strategy to “...develop leaders and encourage exemplary leadership behaviors at all levels of the organization through professional development and growth opportunities consistent with academic excellence”—these practices include:

- continued funding of a special Professional Development Fund (in the amount of \$200,000 each fiscal year) in order to augment divisional training budgets and thus to strengthen support for faculty and staff training (which includes attendance at conferences) and to provide opportunities to research best practices;
- regular review by the Provost’s Cabinet of faculty vacancies in order to prioritize staffing needs and identify those positions that need to be filled in the upcoming hiring cycle. The number of fulltime faculty positions filled over the past three fiscal years reflects the College’s commitment to student success at the most critical points—in the classroom and with robust student support services (FY14: 10; FY15: 21; and FY16: 24);
- biweekly review of requests to fill positions by the Vacancy Management Review Team, which is charged with authorizing the hiring process to proceed;
- review by Human Resources of proposed credentials for non-faculty positions to be filled and by the Academic Affairs Office for faculty positions to be filled. As part of an initiative to enhance consistency in terms of faculty credentials, a review of the job descriptions for faculty positions was undertaken with an emphasis on standardizing key job duties and credential language, with the revised template implemented in 2015;

- evaluation of credentials of applicants by trained search committee members as well as by Human Resources;
- ongoing review of job descriptions by Human Resources and, as appropriate, the Academic Divisions, to verify that the minimum qualifications needed for the specific position are valid and appropriate;
- enhanced training programs for faculty and staff. Examples include the development and implementation of a Leadership Academy, implementation of a Speaker Series with a focus on professional growth topics, and refined New Administrator Orientation modules;
- implementation of an online Learning Management System (LMS) that delivers a broad range of training material on demand and that has enhanced reporting and record keeping capabilities. The LMS also reinforces employee expectations by providing policy-specific, mandatory training such as that pertaining to Title IX, IT Security (“Securing the Human”), and Workplace Violence; and
- development and roll-out of an online faculty performance evaluation system that includes a professional development component.

In terms of ensuring that the institution operates with integrity, the College has a number of policies in place that delineate the standards of workplace conduct, including ethical conduct, that are expected of our faculty and staff. In addition to including information on such policies in new employee orientation, the College has integrated an ethics component into the new administrator orientation.

Communications campus-wide are routinely issued to reinforce employee expectations (e.g., regarding the prohibition against accepting gifts from vendors, the compliance with our Acceptable Use Policy, and so on). Violations of policy are thoroughly investigated, and appropriate action is taken when warranted.

Finally, with the implementation of the College-Level Balanced Scorecard in 2015, the Human Resources Division has identified Key Performance Indicators that relate to time-to-fill positions, employee turnover, and employee demographics (race/ethnicity). As a result of reviewing the data related to time-to-fill, the Division undertook an analysis of the current hiring process, re-tooling the process flow with the goal of streamlining and shortening the time it takes to fill vacancies. Feedback on the revised process is currently being gathered, and it is anticipated that the revised process will be implemented with the start of the new fiscal year.

Summary Comments from the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report: LCC has demonstrated that it is intentionally seeking to improve its efforts in Leading and Communicating and appears committed to those efforts. It has reported its commitment through prioritizing and aligning Leading and Communicating as strategic imperatives and the focus of an Action Project. As these efforts are implemented as systematic processes and the institution identifies comparative data to benchmark against, it is expected to continue to realize improvements for this category. Although the College does review its mission, motto, and guiding principles at the Board of Trustees level, wider stakeholder input may allow the college to be more responsive to its stakeholders. Developing this, along with other processes, as a systematic, comprehensive process may move the College forward in planning. Attention to its improvement efforts for this category may support effective leadership as the institution embraces the changes it has committed to accomplishing.

A focus on leadership development for key personnel across the institution has manifested itself in the form of multiple leadership and organizational development activities that have been incorporated into ongoing operations. Some examples include new administrator training, and THRIVE, the College’s

newly developed leadership academy. In recent years, many employees have had institutional support to pursue advanced degrees in fields that are relevant for their work at the College. Additionally, a myriad of employees have attended and presented at national conferences on topics relevant to the College's student success initiatives, while others have visited institutions which employ best practices in academic support, persistence, retention, and completion. Improvements in these areas are wholly aligned with the College's Strategic Plan.

The College's efforts to improve culture and communication include the administration of a climate survey by a third party in Fall 2014. Results of the survey have helped the College focus on strategies and tools designed to close communication gaps and improve working environments. Based on feedback related to communication and engagement, some of the initiatives implemented or enhanced include the development of a speakers series, a one-book campus-wide reading initiative, the opening of the Centre for Engaged Inclusion, the creation of a weekly e-newsletter (*The Star*), as well as campus-wide strategic planning, Operation 100%, and budget planning forums. These recurring activities promote transparency, information sharing, engagement, and inclusion. One of many benefits of the strategic planning, Operation 100%, and budget planning forums is that employees can both directly participate in the College's planning efforts and witness how financial and human resources are aligned to support the College's mission and strategic goals. Follow-up surveys will be conducted every 2-3 years.

Prior to the development of its next strategic plan, the College will review, in conjunction with the broader campus community, its mission, motto, and guiding principles to ensure that the College's focus and resources support the fundamental purposes for which LCC exists. In particular, in light of Operation 100% and the various concomitant initiatives being undertaken (for example, regarding closing the equity gap with quality education), the College is in the process of reviewing its mission statement in order to construct a statement reflecting the College's clear intentionality with respect to student success and community engagement.

Summary Comments from the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report: LCC has accomplished infrastructure improvements that will improve access and reporting of performance results. The College also self-reports using anecdotal evidence that a review of data collection, storage, and accessibility requirements are conducted, comparative data for benchmarking is published, and budget development includes enrollment forecasting. Based on the information presented in the Portfolio, there is limited ability to respond to the institution's ability to measure effectiveness. While the college appears to have dashboards and other methods to display data, this evidence is not provided and many of the processes for developing and implementing these improvements have not been adequately described.

Summary Comments from the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report: LCC has implemented data and reporting systems as well as a three-year strategic plan. Data are collected and accessible both on- and off-campus to appropriate stakeholders. LCC reports use of formal and informal measures and stakeholder engagement resulting in the recent development of a three-year strategic plan with broad-based alignment throughout the institution. Strategic planning is reported to include results from its environmental scans and analysis of its performance; yet, little evidence is provided in the Portfolio beyond a discussion of activities and listing of data it collects making it unclear that processes and metrics discussed are in place and what achievement the college has experienced. In addition, best practices from its Action Projects are not evident in improvement efforts in other areas. Opportunity exists for the College to incorporate the use of comparative data and benchmarking in its planning efforts. LCC is poised to institutionalize processes used for measuring effectiveness in planning

continuous improvement and may move forward to utilize its initial efforts and learning to implement processes in a systematic effort.

The following are some ways in which the College benchmarks its operations against other institutions and utilizes the data to identify opportunities to improve processes and resource allocations, as well as to identify opportunities for process improvements.

LCC participates in the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP) and the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA) to provide performance comparisons to the Executive Leadership Team and Board of Trustees. NCCBP and VFA provide community college-friendly metrics and are also able to provide a broad database of comparable institutions.

The Information Technology Services Division completes the Educause Core Data Survey each year. LCC staffing and expenditure data are compared with those from peer institutions to determine if we are in alignment with industry norms and trends. Significant variations are evaluated to determine if they are warranted or if action is required to align more closely with peer institutions. The Chief Information Officer meets quarterly with other higher education IT executives by way of the Merit's Michigan Information Technology Executives (MITE) Forum to share and discuss challenges and opportunities with the goal of improving IT services to our respective communities.

Human Resources uses benchmarking sources such as the Society for Human Resource Management, the College & University Professional Association for HR, the Michigan Community College HR Association, IPEDS, and the National Community College Benchmark Project to assess performance in areas such as time to fill positions, employee turnover rate, percentage of minority employees, and minority employee to population ratio.

In 2013, the College began an initiative to identify, measure, and improve service delivery to students and staff. Our objectives were to create a one-stop, online mechanism for requesting non-academic services (IT, HR, Finance, Facilities, and Marketing); reduce paperwork; automate approval processes; and provide a means for measuring and improving service delivery. The College acquired the TeamDynamix enterprise service management application (see below) and, in early 2015, replaced its Help Desk software and implemented an online KnowledgeBase with the launch of the Five Star Service Center. The services that can be requested via the Service Center are organized under the categories of Facilities, Finance, People, and Technology in order to make them easy for persons to locate without their having to know the organizational structure of the College. A prioritized list of services to be requested/delivered through the Service Center has been created. A Service Catalog identifying these services is currently under development; by means of the Service Catalog, students and employees will be able electronically to request services from all areas of the College. Requests will then be automatically routed to the appropriate provider for approvals and fulfillment with the goals of significantly reducing paperwork and improving the effectiveness of service delivery. Service delivery performance will be measured against Service Level Agreements so that opportunities for improvement can be identified and addressed.

Work has begun on the implementation of a robust project management methodology using the TeamDynamix system as a foundation. Processes are being developed to support the submission and prioritization of institutional projects that align with and support the College's Strategic Plan and drive the allocation of financial and human resources.

Beginning in the academic year 2015-16, a Baldrige-based balanced scorecard (BSC) was developed with key institutional processes or indicators identified to guide the work and focus of the College's Executive Leadership Team (ELT). This initial scorecard includes a clear definition of how each metric is calculated, how often it will change, and which comparable benchmark data we will use (with source if available). Where benchmarks are not available, baseline values are being calculated during the first year of the BSC. The scorecard is reviewed four times per year at ELT meetings and reviewed annually by ELT to ensure that the measures are meaningful and that appropriate improvement activities are underway. As the institutional BSC becomes integrated in the senior leadership's decision-making processes, there are plans to expand this initiative and develop division-level BSCs that tie in with the institutional scorecard.

Each quarter, a student success report is developed and presented to the Board of Trustees. These reports include various measures of student success (e.g., retention, transfer, completion, engagement data, and the like). Data presented in the student success reports highlight efforts currently underway at our college that have produced or contributed to increasing student success. This high-level report provides a quick and effective communication tool for the Board to use to track the College's progress in the area of student success; often, it includes appropriate benchmark data from IPEDS, VFA, or NCCBP.

LCC is one of only a handful of colleges accepted to participate in the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education's national, three-year "Gateways to Completion" (G2C) initiative. LCC has been recognized by the Gardner Institute as a leader in this project, and LCC personnel have been invited by the Gardner Institute to present at various statewide and national conferences. LCC's G2C work specifically targets student success in foundational, high-enrollment, high-fail courses in several disciplines (Math, History, Accounting, Writing, and Biology) that are key gateway courses through which students are to proceed on their way towards certificate or degree completion or transfer to a four-year school. In 2013, the G2C Taskforce created a College Inventory of Qualitative and Quantitative data in the G2C online platform that was studied by the G2C Steering Committee and Course Committees, in order to write not only course-level action plans, but also a Comprehensive Plan for improvement at the College. Two recommendations at the college level were made, both of which have been implemented. The first is a policy that all faculty provide students with early and regular feedback in a centrally located digital space that is accessible by students 24/7. The other recommendation that has been implemented is a completely online process for student-teacher evaluations. The latter implementation gives faculty the ability to review their student evaluations as soon as final grades are submitted. Faculty can thus make adjustments to their teaching before the next semester begins.

Data in Argos (an Enterprise Reporting System) and the G2C Platform are made available for review by all faculty at LCC, including those teaching the selected gateway courses. These data help to determine the student success activities at our college. Although our college chose to work with five gateway courses in our G2C work (per the requirements of the national initiative), G2C-related data are provided for all LCC classes in the G2C platform as well as in Argos. Best practices are shared regularly internally and through state and national networks and reported annually.

Some of the course-level action plans that have emanated from our G2C work are being completed by faculty committees in the selected gateway courses: Accounting 210, Biology 121, History 212, Math 112, and Writing 121. Below are some examples of the G2C course level action plans:

- providing students' increased access to tutoring and supplemental instruction;
- providing students with more timely feedback earlier in the semester;

- creating a course-wide syllabus review committee whose purpose is to ensure consistency of classroom assignments, learning evaluations, and student learning assessments;
- retrieving and analyzing course assessment data to improve teaching and learning;
- designing and implementing a mentoring system for new instructors;
- updating and disseminating the Math Library Guide;
- revising course learning outcomes and means of assessing them; and
- re-examining course pre-requisites.

As a specific example, Writing 121 has a typical fall enrollment of about 2,000 students and thus, changes to the official course syllabus will be impactful because of the large enrollment in that class. The Writing 121 faculty G2C course committee reviewed and revised that course's learning outcomes to align with contemporary practices and other sequential courses. The new Writing 121 course learning outcomes were inserted into the official course syllabus for that course and are now used in all sections of WRIT 121 on campus. The new outcomes provide appropriate focus and clarity for both Writing 121 faculty and students.

In early 2015, a Director of Institutional Effectiveness was hired into the Center for Data Science to provide direction and support in the development of documented institutional processes (initiated with an AQIP project). The work of this director will help to improve and document efficiency gains, provide professional development, and deploy a BSC system at the College. Institutionalizing templates for chartering projects, facilitating post-mortem discussions, and formally closing projects will help the institution to retain institutional knowledge.

Following are some examples of changes based on strategic initiatives to improve the College's operations:

- The College uses the Strategic Plan as its overall institutional focus. It is supported by the Technology and Facility Master Plans and the new Operation 100% Plan. A three-year financial forecasting model is now being used to assist the planning process.
- The Balanced Scorecard and its concomitant KPI's are now being used to monitor specific measures and set performance targets. Administrative units have begun to develop and implement Service Level Agreements for key processes. Human Resources has utilized information from the Balanced Scorecard to recommend improvements in the hiring process that will reduce the timeline of the process.
- The annual budget is the financial implementation of the Strategic Plan. The six focus areas of the Strategic Plan are used as the basis for approving changes to the annual budget for the subsequent fiscal year.
- Internal financial reports are provided to the Board of Trustees on a monthly basis. A new quarterly review of divisional budgets is conducted by the Executive Leadership Team. These reports are utilized to inform the Board of Trustees and the Executive Leadership Team of the College's current financial picture. This allows the College to manage the College's expenses within the available resources.
- A \$67 million capital project is nearly completed. Its major emphasis is the renovation of the [Arts and Sciences](#) and [Gannon](#) buildings (Gannon houses many student services functions, as well as a food court, the Centre for Engaged Inclusion, and other entities). Also, the Aviation

program has been upgraded with a new state-of-the-art facility. The major focus in the design of this capital project was to support the Strategic Plan focus areas of Learning, Student Success, and, Resource Management and Fiscal Responsibility. Creative and innovative design features were incorporated into this project to enhance student learning and success. In addition, the entire project was accomplished without increasing the College's annual debt service requirement by utilizing multiple sources of revenue: State of Michigan capital appropriation, foundation fund raising, refunding of existing debt, internal funds accumulated for this specific purpose, and new bond proceeds.

- Formal budget amendments are no longer completed; rather, more attention is focused on the development of the Adopted Budget. The Board expects the Administration to manage budget-to-actual variances and to keep the Board informed of any significant financial issues.

Summary Comments from the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report: Guiding Principle Nine provides a clear mandate for collaborative relationships. LCC appears to have established collaborative partners. Yet, there is no evidence, however, that these relationships are developed from strategic and carefully planned processes. Measures for systematically assessing the needs of stakeholders and for assessing the effectiveness of the relationships are not documented. Comparative data is also not included. Of particular concern is that the continuous improvement culture at the institution has not made more progress in putting systematic and comprehensive processes in place in this area.

LCC has a well-established network of collaborative relationships, including K-12 partners, colleges and universities, employers, local economic development councils, organizations providing services to students, organizations providing materials and services, educational associations, the local community, and external agencies.

Although we still need to make improvements in implementing more systematic processes, we have made some advancements in this area. The following examples demonstrate this progress.

Since the writing of the Systems Portfolio, and as noted above, the College has launched a community-wide initiative entitled Coalition for College and Career Readiness (C3R). C3R is a partnership between multiple stakeholders, including public school districts, parents, students, post-secondary institutions, faith-based organizations, business and workforce development agencies, and community organizations. The goals of C3R are to identify the gap in college and career readiness skills in students from high school to college; prepare high school students for college-level academic courses; increase students' academic success; and, improve students' college and career readiness. The stakeholders work together to review data; create tools, activities and/or projects; identify pilot locations; and evaluate the effectiveness of the activities/projects. One of the teams of C3R, the Data Action Team, is charged with developing a comprehensive and coordinated system of collecting, analyzing, and using data to inform policy and best practices among the C3R action teams and partners.

Additionally, in the contract training area of the Continuing Education and Workforce Development Division, training needs are identified and prioritized through direct feedback from regional employers. On a daily basis, Business Development Managers determine training needs by means of face-to-face conversations and industry surveys. Finally, industry meetings are held to hear the collective voice of our regional employers and thus to better understand both their training needs and how LCC can best

meet these needs. This information is then aggregated, and training programs are offered to meet these demand-driven needs.

LCC is developing dual admission agreements (complete with guided program pathways) with four-year institutions. By means of these agreements, students will be concurrently enrolled in degree-seeking programs of study at both LCC and a four-year institution, enjoying the full rights and privileges of both institutions.

Currently, we are developing such partnerships with Michigan State University (MSU), our top transfer institution, and Western Michigan University (WMU). We are hoping to establish dual admission agreements with Central Michigan University, Ferris State University, the University of Michigan-Flint, Grand Valley State University, and Eastern Michigan University, as well, since, along with MSU and WMU, these five universities account for nearly 60% of our students' transferring to four-year institutions.

In addition, at LCC's University Center, students can pursue bachelor's degree completion programs without having to attend the host institution's home campus. Such programs are available through Ferris State University, Northwood University, Siena Heights University, University of Michigan-Flint, and Western Michigan University. We are seeking additional partners, with an eye towards our having partners whose programs of study do not compete for the same students served by our existing University Center partners.

Finally, with consideration of the College's strategic goals and competing priorities, LCC's Executive Leadership Team began a college-wide effort to identify and prioritize projects across the College. This prioritization will conclude with an analysis of resource utilization by division/department. Building on the previously mentioned efforts related to the development of an executive-level balanced scorecard, this prioritization management effort represents another significant step towards a data-driven decision-making culture at LCC.

Conclusion

In this report, we have described the actions that are underway to address the strategic concerns that were noted in the Systems Portfolio Feedback Report. As our responses indicate, the College continues to strengthen its culture of continuous improvement. The new leadership at the College works closely with the faculty and other staff to engage the institution in both statewide and national student success initiatives. The Center for Data Science was created (in 2014) to augment institutional effectiveness and research operations at the College. It also leads and supports institutional assessment, predictive analytics, and operational efficiencies. As noted earlier, the College has been recognized both statewide and nationally for its leadership in student success-oriented initiatives. Both the American Association of Community Colleges and the Association of American Colleges and Universities have invited LCC to participate in national, model-creating initiatives, and, not uncommonly, the College is called out for its outstanding work.

All of this is to say, simply, that LCC is strongly committed to continuous improvement and student success. We look forward to telling this story both during the upcoming site visit and in continued statewide and national venues in which we are invited to participate.