

North Iowa Area  Community College

AQIP Systems Portfolio

2013


 Options



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Institutional Overview

Vision Statement - North Iowa Area Community College is our region's first choice for postsecondary education, recognized for its commitment to quality teaching and learning and dedication to seamless educational opportunities, exemplary programs and services, responsive and collaborative partnerships with business and industry, and steadfast commitment to the individuals we serve locally, regionally, and internationally.

Mission Statement - The mission of North Iowa Area Community College is to enhance the quality of life for the people of North Iowa through comprehensive educational opportunities, progressive partnerships, exemplary service, and responsive leadership.

Core Values - The values embedded in the beliefs and actions of its people demonstrate NIACC's commitment to academic excellence, integrity, and community.

Strategies - Keeping NIACC First in Education; Keeping NIACC First in Leadership; Keeping NIACC First in Partnership.

Student Profile - Over 3,700 students are enrolled in classes for college credit – of those, 53% are full-time; 95% are Iowans (90% North Iowans); 55% are women; 56% are enrolled in transfer (arts and science) programs; and 44% are enrolled in career (vocational) programs. The average age is 23.1 with 70% of students being under the age 22; 30% of students are over the age of 23. Minorities make up 9% of enrollment.

Faculty and Staff - NIACC has 227 full-time employees, including 81 faculty (67% have master's degrees and 8% have doctorate degrees). Veteran faculty members who have up to 41 years teaching experience; full-time faculty instruct 76% of the College's courses. An additional 1,000 people across the region help provide the programs and services available from the College.

Academic Offerings - Degrees offered include Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of Applied Science, Associate of Science (Business), and General Studies Diploma, and Diploma as well as certificates. The College has over 40 formal articulation agreements with 4-year colleges and universities to ensure a smooth transfer process. Nearly all of NIACC's career/vocational programs are also transferrable.

Campus and Locations - NIACC operates its main campus in Mason City, Iowa, with community education centers located in Charles City, Osage, Hampton, Garner, Lake Mills, and Forest City.

Distance Delivery Programs - Dozens of NIACC courses are available online with the potential to earn an AA or ASB degree online. Lessons presented on the Internet are supplemented by textbooks and other aids. There are also numerous non-credit Continuing Education online courses available. In addition, NIACC courses are offered via Iowa's fiber-optic interactive television network (ICN).

NIACC’s Quality Journey

North Iowa Area Community College (NIACC) is a progressive, comprehensive learning institution positioned to serve as the major cultural, educational, and economic development force for the North Iowa region. 2018 marks the 100th anniversary of the College, which began in 1918 as Mason City Junior College (the first public two-year college in Iowa) and became North Iowa Area Community College in 1966.

NIACC has been accredited by the HLC (formerly just the North Central Association) since 1919. In 2003, NIACC earned the maximum recommendation for re-accreditation of 10 years from HLC. In this review, NIACC also received approval of all degrees offered via distance education.

In 2009, NIACC applied and was approved to begin the AQIP accreditation process. Since approved, the College has formed an AQIP Quality Council to oversee and organize the quality effort. NIACC completed our first strategy forum in February 2010 and implemented the first set of action projects beginning in May 2010. The completed projects by the College include:

- Assessment of Critical Thinking General Education Objective
- Implementation of Retention Alert
- NIACC Quality Webpage Enhancement
- Process Improvement Task Force-On Campus New Student Enrollment

The current action projects that the College is involved with are:

- A Structured System for Tracking Students in the Enrollment Process
- Assessment of Critical Thinking (Phase II)
- Developing Your Portfolio for College Credit
- Smarthinking Online Tutoring

On January 7, 2013, Dr. Keith Cornille served as a facilitator for a Conversation Day featuring three conversations: What Matters Most? Where is Collaboration Thriving? And Exploring Making Significant Difference. In addition, the group identified a high number of “quick fixes.” As a result of Dr. Cornille’s recommendations, the AQIP Quality Council has communicated the actions for all of the quick fixes recommended and drafted a communication plan for AQIP work.

As a part of the 2011-2016 Strategic Plan, we created the College’s Future Picture:

<u>Keeping NIACC First in Education</u>	<u>Keeping NIACC First in Leadership</u>	<u>Keeping NIACC First in Partnership</u>
<i>Student Quality Experience</i>	<i>Innovative Educational Methods</i>	<i>New Types of Partnerships</i>
<i>Quality and Relevant Education</i>	<i>Premier Employer/Culture</i>	<i>New Educational Partnerships</i>
<i>Education Center for Excellence</i>	<i>Collaboration with Community and Regional Organizations</i>	<i>New Regional (Community Development) Partnerships to Promote Growth</i>
<i>Expand Outreach Centers</i>	<i>Advocacy</i>	
<i>Performance Metrics</i>		<i>Partner Viability</i>

Detailed priorities are available at <http://intranet.niacc.edu/pres/StrategicPlan2011-2016.pdf>

Category 1 – Helping Students Learn

Introduction

North Iowa Area Community College awards three main associate degrees: Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Applied Science along with various diplomas and certificates. Each area of study targets specific needs of the student population. The processes related to common learning and developmental outcomes are well aligned and integrated. General Education outcomes are addressed in the core of each program. The eight learning objectives are Communication and Interpersonal Skills, Quantitative Skills, Critical Thinking, Information Literacy, Technological Skills, Global Awareness, Aesthetics, and Scientific Literacy. The combined set of learning outcomes is aligned with the required outcomes for accreditation by our various specialized program accreditation agencies. Additionally, each course is required to specifically address a minimum of two and generally three of the listed outcomes. Currently, a system is in place to review two General Education outcomes each college year in all disciplines of the College. The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) provides leadership and faculty development opportunities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the student learning experience. Student Development works closely with Academic Affairs to provide activities, clubs, and organizations which enhance the learning objectives of the College.

Processes for designing new academic programming and monitoring the effectiveness of current programming are aligned. However, the need for readily retrievable data is a concern. The College is aware of the need and is investigating options for additional software and an institutional researcher to meet this need. A system of standardized surveys (CCSSE, SENSE, CCFSSE, Placement, student course/faculty evaluation, etc.) from students, faculty, staff, alumni, and area employers are used to assess current practices and needs. The College uses this data to assist in the planning and updating of all programs.

A maturing area of attention for NIACC is the first-year experience for new students. The Foundations of Excellence program was completed during the 2011-2012 year and during the spring 2013, implementation of some of the recommendations for the upcoming year have begun. A first-year strategies course will be required of students under certain academic levels and increased mastery options in math, and writing are in the planning stages. Integrating a mastery level reading into existing courses is currently being explored with the plan to be presented to Academic Affairs during the fall 2013 semester.

Through a quality conversation day held in January 2013 potential action projects were identified with a significant number related to helping students learn. Potential action projects were prioritized and include engaging students in collaborative discussions, continue progress towards a One-to-One College, and improve processes to become an even more military friendly school. These suggestions along with implementation of the Foundation of Excellence recommendations and continued participation in the HLC Assessment Academy will be the priorities for improvement to Category 1.

1P1. How do you determine which common or shared objectives for learning and development you should hold for all students pursuing degrees at a particular level? Whom do you involve in setting these objectives?

North Iowa Area Community College holds the philosophy that education is the foundation of democratic society. General education engages students in an ongoing endeavor to acquire the knowledge and tools necessary to understand their environment and contribute to their communities.

Core Component 3.B.1., 3.B.3., and 3.B.4. The general education program objectives were developed initially by faculty with discussion and approval through Academic Affairs and ultimately the Board of Directors. The general education program consists of 40 semester credits hours and is aligned with the College mission, vision and core values. In addition to course subject matter, the common or shared objectives for all associate degree programs are based on eight learning objectives:

1. Communication and Interpersonal Skills: Students will possess appropriate reading, writing, speaking, listening and interpersonal skills to interact with others and express themselves effectively through written, oral, visual, and electronic methods.
2. Quantitative Skills: Students will use quantitative skills and the concepts and methods of mathematics to solve problems across disciplines.
3. Critical Thinking: Students will demonstrate goal directed reasoning to arrive at valid conclusions, meaningful solutions, and informed evaluations.
4. Information Literacy: Students will be able to locate and use information from a variety of appropriate sources to support their judgments and arguments.
5. Technological Skills: Students will demonstrate the ability to access, understand, manage, and use technology needed to solve problems and extend human capabilities.
6. Global Awareness: Students will become familiar with the languages, history, geography, and social norms of other cultures, in order to foster cooperation, understanding, and appreciation.
7. Aesthetics: Students will create, appreciate, understand, and evaluate the nature and value of the fine arts or elements of craftsmanship.
8. Scientific Literacy: Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and process required for personal decision making and responsible participation in civic affairs.

Core Component 3.B.2. The College articulates degree and course requirements on the College's website, in printed materials, and orientations, and academic advising.

Core Component 3.B.5. The learning objectives are reviewed on a rotating basis each year through the Educational Effectiveness Committee (EEC). The EEC is made up of faculty, staff, employee groups, and students from across the college. The EEC submits the objectives for approval to Academic Affairs, President's Council and then to the Board of Directors.

All full-time faculty members in all disciplines measure two objectives each year. During academic year 2012-2013, we measured 'Critical Thinking' and 'Information Literacy,' and submitted the results to the EEC for documentation. 'Communication' and 'Aesthetics' will be reviewed during academic year 2013-2014. In addition to biannual review of individual general education objectives, EEC is piloting an undergraduate research conference which, ideally, would be held each year. At the conference, students enrolled in the second year of any Associate degree program will present a research-based poster project to faculty and community members. Each poster project will be evaluated with rubrics tied to each general education learning outcome.

1P2. How do you determine your specific program learning objectives? Whom do you involve in setting these objectives?

Initial program learning objectives are determined in collaboration with the Division Chair, relevant faculty, and the program Advisory Board. Program Competency Profiles are created for Career Technical programs which then are used to identify the learning objectives required to perform the duties, tasks, knowledge, skills, traits, and tools used in a particular career. All programs are reviewed on a rotating basis each fifth year. A team of peer reviewers evaluates the program review and then presents the

program review with comments to the Academic Affairs Council which will accept or require additional information before accepting a completed program review.

The College houses the complete review information used by both the Arts & Science Programs and the Career & Technical Programs on the common NIACC i-drive under Program Reviews.

Each occupational program at the College receives guidance from an advisory committee made up of stakeholders from the community representing businesses and agencies that are actively engaged in the occupation. Program Advisory Boards meet twice each year and annually review, revise, and approve a list of program outcomes representing the current needs and discuss future needs of regional employers for the career area.

The major objectives of NIACC's Assessment Plan review are to ensure:

1. That each division has a systematic process to evaluate quality and effectiveness and recognize opportunities for improvement.
2. That each division has reliable data to respond to public, Higher Learning Commission and Iowa Department of Education requests and to document and to promote community college programs.

The formative evaluation process includes the utilization of "Continuous Quality Improvement" (CQI) methodologies. The heart of CQI is to know where you are heading, to know how well you are doing it (gather statistical data), and to use the information to improve.

NIACC's CQI initiative is based on the voluntary involvement of faculty in the improvement process. Faculty members have developed a plan for assessing student learning in the career-technical or career option program and have participated in CQI "classroom research outcomes" projects on an on-going basis. At the conclusion of a classroom research project, faculty members document the project using the "Classroom Research Outcomes Report." Each report must provide a description of the project, describe the results and analysis of the project, and identify changes that the faculty member will be making because of the assessment.

NIACC relies heavily on a continuous quality improvement process to produce desired outcomes. This "action research" strategy is designed to help faculty use Deming's "Plan, Do, Study, Act" cycle in a pragmatic manner to foster the development of a program improvement plan. Deming's PDSA model will direct our formative processes. The goal of the PDSA cycle is to improve outcomes and thereby increase customer satisfaction.

Classroom research projects are generally referenced in the Program Assessment Plan – an annually updated comprehensive plan for the assessment of student learning outcomes in the program. This plan should have a strong, readily identifiable relationship to the institutional mission. Plans include direct and indirect measures of learning which include cognitive learning (knowledge acquisition), behavioral learning (skills acquisition), and affective learning (attitudinal development).

Data collection methods cited in the plans might include program paper and pencil tests, essays and writing samples, portfolio collections of student work, exit interviews, surveys, focused group interviews, external evaluations (national, standardized tests and discipline-specific accreditation), logs and journals, capstone projects, and behavioral observations.

Subsequent to data collection and analysis, each program uses the data as part of the continuous quality improvement process. This may include, but is not limited to, changes in pedagogy, curriculum, delivery systems,

support systems, and admission requirements. Budgetary recommendations may also be an outcome of the assessment process.

Core Component 4.B.1. Also refer to 1P1. Between July 2011 and June 2012, the Educational Effectiveness Committee (EEC) organized a subcommittee to accomplish significant work on the piloting of assessment strategies for General Education objectives. The subcommittee focused on critical thinking as its first pilot objective. This was accomplished through the use of the ETS Proficiency Profile as a standardized assessment, along with classroom assessments tailored to individual disciplines. At the same time, EEC introduced the strategies to our faculty in broad, application-focused assessment activities.

The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs worked with EEC to broaden conversations related to assessment across campus, and to create activities that would deepen faculty understanding and acceptance of assessment as a way or researching effective teaching strategies intended to improve student learning. Three professional development efforts related to these outcomes occurred during the 2011-2012 academic year.

Creation of book discussion groups relating to assessment

Several copies of the following titles were purchased to share for faculty to read in small groups, and to share thoughts in brown-bag sessions over the lunch hour or at other convenient times. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs provided funding from Academic Affairs for desserts and beverages at book discussion groups:

- Driscoll, Amy and Wood, Swarup. Developing Outcomes-Based Assessment for Learner-Centered Education: A Faculty Introduction. Stylus Publishing, 2007. ISBN: 1579221955
- Maki, Peggy. Assessing for Learning: Building a Sustainable Commitment Across the Institution. Stylus Publishing, 2010 (2nd ed.) ISBN: 1579224407
- Palloff, Rena M. and Pratt, Keith. Assessing the Online Learner: Resources and Strategies for Faculty. Jossey-Bass, 2008. ISBN: 0470283866
- Stevens, Dannelle D. and Levi, Antonia J. Intro to Rubrics: An Assessment Tool to Save Grading Time, Convey Effective Feedback, and Promote Student Learning. Stylus Publishing, 2004. ISBN: 1579221157
- Walvoord, Barbara E. and Banta, Trudy W. Assessment Clear and Simple: A Practical Guide for Institutions, Departments, and General Education. Jossey-Bass Higher Education, 2010 (2nd ed.) ISBN: 0470541199
- Williamson, Sandra. Annual Editions: Assessment and Evaluation 10/11. McGraw-Hill/Dushkin, August 6, 2009. ISBN: 0078135893

Faculty development activities tied to assessment

Two full days of staff development were earmarked in January 2012 for assessment activities. The College hosted an external consultant, Ms. H. Lynn Bradman, of the Institute for Faculty Excellence, Metropolitan Community College, Omaha, Nebraska. Ms. Bradman possesses outstanding credentials in the assessment of learning in both the Career and Technical areas as well as in the Arts and Sciences. EEC also offered several workshops for faculty to learn about and practice assessment, using various assessment types, such as rubrics, short papers, etc.

EEC shared the American Association of Colleges and Universities' Value Rubrics with the faculty as a starting point for thinking about classroom- and programmatic-level assessment. Most faculty at the College have yet to embrace the concept of assessment, or to fully appreciate assessment as a method of classroom research, separate and distinct from grading, that can serve to improve student learning and Core Component 4.B.1.

EEC and the Communications Department successfully completed a joint pilot of the Critical Thinking Rubric during the summer of 2012 in which they collected the appropriate artifacts for assessment and conducted inter-rater reliability training for those faculty who assessed artifacts. The team reported the results of their work and research to the entire College faculty during the fall 2013 faculty development week. EEC then began to work with the College Library to craft an Information Literacy Rubric that was developed as a result of work with the Critical Thinking Rubric.

The least successful aspect of this project was the initial communication of results to College faculty. In the past, different areas of the College had been individually responsible for specific general education learning outcomes. There was confusion at the Critical Thinking group's professional development week presentation about whether this would still be the case. EEC now must communicate the importance of assessing general education learning outcomes throughout College academic departments.

The capstone experience will showcase student learning through individual and/or small group research presentations (PowerPoint, poster, or other means of display). College personnel and community stakeholders will attend to support the students' experience. Rubrics will be utilized for assessment of learning outcomes per poster presentation/research project.

NIACC's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) will work with EEC to advance faculty development activities in the areas of general-education and course-level assessment throughout the 2013-2014 academic year. Planned activities in this regard include:

1. Continue to develop rubrics for all general education objectives
2. Develop rubrics for assessment of the capstone project
3. Provide information to faculty and students on capstone expectations
4. Continue with the review of all general education objectives

NIACC will continue with the assessment of student learning on the eight general education objectives already in place. The plan is to assess student learning via two objectives per academic year, as well as assessment of capstone projects on an annual basis. The means for the assessment will include the collection of artifacts related to the specific objectives and a capstone experience whereby students will showcase their learning activities with a presentation that truly engages mastery of general education learning outcomes.

Planned outcomes would be to assess student learning within the context of the general education objectives. We expect that over the course of two years, students will improve their learning as evidenced by at least 85% of the students achieving proficiency levels on the rubrics. We also expect to see at least 20% of our students achieving accomplished status. During the spring 2013 semester, we engaged a pilot group of twelve instructors and sixty students to utilize the capstone project as a means for assess student learning. Faculty participation on the capstone element will continue to increase each year. The capstone project will be a graduation requirement for all students completing AA, AS, and AAS degrees beginning in the spring 2015 semester.

The responsibility for administrative oversight of NIACC's plan for assessment of student learning rests with Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs who oversees the work of all campus groups that have responsibility for student learning activities. The Academic Affairs Council and the Educational Effectiveness Committee (EEC), made up of staff and faculty representatives, provides direct support and oversight of student learning outcomes. Regularly scheduled meetings of these groups help to ensure that the plan is moving forward.

Core Component 4.B.2. The College assesses achievement of the learning outcomes within classes each semester. Each instructor shows the learning outcomes on the course outline kept on file in the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs' office. The evaluation plan for each of the outcomes is also shown in the course outlines. Each year, instructors are required to submit artifacts showing the achievement levels of students in their courses representing two of the eight general core objectives. Each year two different core objectives are measured. For the 2012-2013 academic year, 'Critical Thinking' and 'Information Literacy' artifacts have been submitted. Faculty and staff trained within these two areas evaluate the material and provide feedback to the college and to the instructors of each artifact.

The co-curricular programs do not have a formal evaluation process. Assessment of the clubs and activities is completed in several ways. The Student Senate submits a report to the Dean of Student Development summarizing the activities of the group and how the endeavors met the intended purpose. Student Senate members are required to additionally attend at least one other club meeting each semester to discuss the intent of the group and if the goal of the organization is meeting its intended objectives. The Dean contacts group advisors each semester to gather information on the clubs and to check for participation and changes within the groups' goals. Additionally, every other year the College administers the "Community College Survey of Student Engagement" (CCSSE). This survey provides information on the use, satisfaction, and importance of the co-curricular activities to the students including a self-reported assessment of student engagement activities outside of the classroom.

Core Component 4.B.3. The College is gathering baseline data so that we can move from assessment to the improvement of student learning at the level of General Education outcomes. Currently, we use an institutional program review process to gather data and inform changes for improved student learning. Over the next few years, however, NIACC will begin to use the rubric-based model we have created for general education outcomes assessment to assess programs. Once this model is established and in place, EEC will continue to work with individual instructors to create outcomes and assessments at the course level that are grounded in rubrics, checklists, models, and clear expectations for students per assignment.

Core Component 4.B.4. During the summer of 2012, NIACC assembled a 5-member team of faculty and administration to pilot the Assessment of General Education Objectives in the area of Critical Thinking with two sets of student artifacts from NIACC's Communications Division. Each set of student writing artifacts were comprised of 16 student writing samples (total of 32 writing examples). Student writing samples were randomly selected from a larger population of 256 writing examples. A critical thinking rubric had been developed during the 2012 spring term and was used for this pilot study. The next phase of the process involved the assessment of student writing artifacts. The first goal was to ensure inter-judge reliability of the rubric. Upon completing the first round of assessment with one set of student artifacts, the inter-judge rubric reliability was determined to be "weak" with a correlation below 49%. Team members revised the critical thinking rubric and discussed how the critical thinking rubric was to be used. After lengthy discussion, and the revision of the critical thinking rubric, the 32 writing samples (2 sets of 16 samples) were assessed. The three rubric areas of 1) Analyzes information, 2) Makes informed decisions, and 3) Arrives at meaningful, practical, and/or realistic conclusions were examined utilizing a Spearman Rho Ranking Correlation statistic.

It is the intent of NIACC to assess student artifacts in two specific General Education areas each academic year until all eight General Education Objectives have been assessed over a four-year period. In addition, NIACC will triangulate the research by assessing Capstone Student Research Presentations in all eight General Education Objectives on an annual basis as an "exit assessment of student learning" during the spring term.

NIACC began participation in the HLC Assessment Academy in August 2012. The College sent its team (Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, Arts and Science Chair, Psychology Instructor and Chair of Educational Effectiveness Committee, and Exercise and Leisure Studies Instructor) attended the Academy in November. Since that time, plans have moved forward to assess the general education objectives of critical thinking, information literacy, communication, and global awareness across all curricular areas. In the fall 2012 faculty submitted their plans to improve student learning on critical thinking and information literacy. Student artifacts representative of these objectives were collected in spring 2013 and evaluated according to the locally-designed rubrics. Global awareness and communication will be introduced in the fall 2013 and will be evaluated according to the same design in the spring 2014. In subsequent years, student outcomes on the other four general objectives will be assessed using the same process.

In addition to the submission of artifacts, twelve faculty members and sixty students volunteered to participate in a pilot capstone project in spring 2013 that included presentations by students, showcasing their progress against these objectives. College and community stakeholders attended to provide feedback to students on their projects.

Along with the submission of artifacts and capstone projects, a review of all eight general education objectives will be completed by spring 2014. This review could result in the deletion of certain objectives or in the merger of two or more objectives. The adoption of new general education objectives could also be an outcome.

1P3. How do you design new programs and courses that facilitate student learning and are competitive with those offered by other organizations?

We design new programs and courses to facilitate student learning and balance educational market demands with student needs, resulting in responsive academic programming. New program development follows a standard process (Table 1.1). Required elements include demonstration of need for the program and expected demand for the graduates. The primary focus in establishing new programming is meeting regional needs.

Table 1.1 New Program Development Process

1. Assess area employer workforce needs
2. Conduct labor market research
3. Review similar programs
4. Develop a proposal with curriculum (including costs)
5. Submit to Academic Affairs for two separate readings and approval
6. Input program information in CurricUNET
7. Seek formal approval from State
8. Request approval through Board of Directors

1P4. How do you design responsive academic programming that balances and integrates learning goals, students' career needs, and the realities of the employment market?

Also see response to 1P2.

Core Component 1.C.2. The College has embedded program alignment with the mission, vision and core values for the College in the program development and review process. New program and course development ensures a balance between learning goals, and labor market needs while satisfying educational program objectives. This includes the ability to work in and appreciate a diverse society.

Core Component 1.C.1. NIACC is committed to its role in a multicultural society and has maintained the educational program core of global awareness.

Programming decisions are examined through market needs, faculty input, student responsiveness to enrolling in a program, and advisory board recommendations. If a program is declining, the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs and the Division Chair evaluate the viability of the program by reviewing program data and consulting with the program advisory committee. The Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs and the Division Chair then make an appropriate recommendation about program viability to the President.

Program offerings are typically balanced with student interest, but occasionally demand outstrips capacity. In these cases, students are waitlisted for program openings through the Student Development Office and contacted when an opening in a program becomes available. Currently waitlists are kept for industrial programs, medical-related programs, and computer technology programs.

Furthermore, a program will add availability through additional sections. For example, Welding was able to add a second group of students through a morning program and an afternoon/evening program for the fall 2013 academic term.

The College employs a full-time Special Populations Counselor to help provide accommodations for students. The College requires all new faculty members to provide evidence that they possess an understanding of diverse learning styles through experience or formal coursework. All program content is adaptable to multiple mobile devices platforms, and all program content and facilities are ADA compliant.

Core Component 4.A.1. The program review process at NIACC is a very thorough five year process. Initially the program identifies its program goals and measurement tools and documents these in an assessment plan. Throughout the year the program faculty assess at the course level, usually conducting classroom research, which then becomes the cornerstones of the assessment plans. Every year the faculty update the assessment plan, identify areas that may need attention or improvement, document this through the assessment plan, refocus the classroom research and update the assessment plan. In year 5, an extensive review of the program is conducted examining trends in enrollments, completion and graduation rates and the overall success of the program. At the conclusion of this review by the faculty the program review is presented to a peer review team who then reviews the document and provides suggestions on areas needing clarity. Once this process is completed the plan of action is then presented to Academic Affairs Council and the original document is presented to and placed on file with the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs. The following year the program again returns to the Academic Affairs Council with an updated plan of action stating how the team progressed throughout the year in addressing items of concern.

Core Component 4.A.2. The Registrar transcripts all credits. Students may earn credit for community college level learning achieved through life and work experiences. Beginning in fall 2012, the College entered in to a contractual relationship with the council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). Students complete a portfolio which is submitted to CAEL for review and final evaluation.

We evaluate military training transcripts via the American Council on Education (ACE) standards and expectations.

Core Component 4.A.3. The Registrar conducts all evaluations of reverse transfer students to ensure all documentation is on file and credit is awarded in accordance with all polices. If a student changes degree programs, we conduct a complete reevaluation, and we prepare a final degree audit in conjunction with a student's application for graduation.

Core Component 4.A.4. The faculty and division chairs make recommendations for the approval of prerequisites for courses, rigor and expectations of student learning to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs with final approval by the Academic Affairs Committee. All initial and any subsequent changes must move through this multi-level process. NIACC is accredited by the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnership (NACEP) for its dual enrollment programs. The NACEP requirements call for complete alignment with programs and courses offered on the NIACC campus.

In addition to accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission, the State of Iowa requires accreditation every seven years. NIACC holds specialized accreditation with The Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT), and the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC).

Core Component 4.A.5. In addition, the automotive program is an ASE (Automotive Service Excellence) Master Certified Associate of Applied Science Degree Program.

The College employs a number of measures to assure students are well prepared for transfer or the workplace. Career and technical related programs offer licensure or professional certification. Pass rates are collected and reported by faculty members.

NIACC participates in the National Community College Benchmark Project. Included in the survey results are comparisons of our graduate's performance at transfer institutions.

Core Component 4.A.6. Surveys to area employers and students are conducted. These surveys gather information on the employers' satisfaction with the preparation of NIACC students and if students found employment in their field of study.

NIACC had an extensive role in business development in the nine county areas it serves. Through the continuing education department, the college arranges training for area businesses and industries. This relationship helps the College gain a full understanding of area employers' needs. This, coupled with the activity of the program advisory committees, helps the College stay abreast of changes necessary to keep our programs current.

Core Component 3.A.1. North Iowa Area Community College ensures that the courses and programs are current and require levels of performance consistent with the degree or certificate awarded through yearly evaluations. All division chairs meet twice a year with other peers throughout the state to keep informed of trends and needs of the job market. Faculty are also encouraged to keep current through staff development opportunities both on campus and off to ensure the courses and programs are up-to-date.

For career programs and certificates, advisory committees meet each year to evaluate the curriculum. Changes are made as needed. A yearly survey to employers of recent graduates of the career programs is conducted to gather feedback on the readiness of the new employees. This information is also used to evaluate appropriate performance levels. Student performance on licensing exams (Table 1.6) and the GPA for students transferring to the Iowa Regent institutions (Table 1.7) additionally show that students are receiving current and appropriate levels of achievement within their degrees and certificates.

Core Component 3.A.2. Within the 2012-2013 North Iowa Area Community College (NIACC) General Catalog (pp. 6-8) are outlines of award attainment requirements for students.

The Associate in Arts degree requires 60 semester hours of work consisting of courses whose principal design is for a baccalaureate program. Up to 16 semester hours of career courses may be used as elective credit and one-half of the required semester hours must be completed under the aegis of NIACC including 15 of the last 30 semester hours. A General Education core with a minimum of 40 semester hours must be comprised of the following: 1) 8 semester hours in Communications; 2) 8 semester hours in Social Sciences; 3) 8 semester hours in Humanities; 4) 8 semester hours in Natural Sciences/Mathematics (including at least one math and at least one science course); and 5) 8 semester hours in a distributed requirement to be taken from the aforementioned divisions. A minimum overall cumulative grade point average of 2.00 (C), including a 2.00 (C) cumulative grade point average in all course work must be attained.

The General Studies Diploma is for students who may choose to follow an individualized course of study which is not specifically designed for transfer to a degree program. Career education students may wish to enroll in selected courses to reach a personal career objective. Students are required to complete at least 30 semester hours of career courses designed to meet the personal or career goals of each individual student. One-half of the required semester hours must be completed under the aegis of NIACC including 15 of the last 30 semester hours. A minimum overall cumulative grade point average of 2.00 (C), including a 2.00 (C) cumulative grade point average in all course work must be attained.

The Diploma is for students who choose to follow a course of study which specifically designed to lead to employment and will provide the student with an entry skill level appropriate to the career for which he/she has been preparing. Students are required to complete at least 30 semester hours of general education credit. A minimum overall cumulative grade point average of 2.00 (C), including a 2.00 (C) cumulative grade point average in all course work must be attained.

The Certificate requires students to satisfactorily complete a program of instruction other than those indicated previously. Certificates are usually issued to students upon completion of a short-term program of student with a cumulative 2.00 (C) grade point average.

Core Component 3.A.3. Assuring consistent program quality and learning goals across all modes of delivery is the responsibility of the Division Chairs and the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs.

1P5. How do you determine the preparation required of students for the specific curricula, programs, courses, and learning they will pursue?

The general admissions requirements include high school completion as evidenced with an official high school transcript or GED scores. The general admission placement test is the ACT or COMPASS with a test date of no more than three years prior to registration at NIACC. Faculty and ACT consultants have determined score ranges for the various preparatory levels and entry class levels in math, reading and

English composition. Faculty also use successful completion of high school courses as prerequisites in conjunction with placement test scores to determine course prerequisites.

Some individual programs may have additional specific entrance requirements. Career programs may require a physical exam, background check, minimum age or minimum skills requirement as determined by a College advisory board or a state licensure or certification board.

1P6. How do you communicate to current and prospective student the required preparation and learning and development objectives for specific programs, courses, and degrees or credentials? How do admissions, student support, and registration services aid in this process?

Core Component 2.B. NIACC presents itself clearly and transparently to its students, community, high school partners and employers. All program requirements are available on the website and in the College General Catalog (also in electronic format).

The College uses a variety of face-to-face, printed, and technology-based methods to communicate program requirements to prospective and current students. The events provide interaction with Enrollment Specialists, Student Development Counselors, and representatives from all faculty divisions. (See Table 1.2.)

Table 1.2: Communicating Program Requirements

	Face-to-Face	Printed	Technology
Prospective Students	Enrollment Specialists—walk in or by appt. Counselors-career planning assistance/course planning Career Exploration days throughout the year Open house events—NIACC After Hours, First Fridays, Explore NIACC 2013 College Fairs Information Booths at county fairs STEM events targeted to high school students	Degree, Diploma, and certificates brochures Sample Transfer Schedules Program specific printed sections of the College catalog	Program specific web pages NIACC College catalog – http://www.niacc.edu/about/publications-2/
Current Students	Counseling/Advising services required for all first time students in transfer or career programs Consultation with student using Degree Audit Career Programs orientation sessions Individual student/faculty consultation/evaluation meetings	Course syllabi Program-specific brochures Degree audits Student Academic Plans	Instructor’s web page Program specific web pages College Catalog http://www.niacc.edu/about/publications-2/ Student Portal—access to College materials including Degree audits

1P7. How do you help students elect programs of study that match their needs, interests, and abilities?

Core Component 3.D.1. North Iowa Area Community College uses a wide range of methods to help students select programs that align with their needs, interests, and abilities. Our processes include career and course selection counseling (both prior to enrollment and continuing through graduation); placement testing for math, reading, and writing; career exploration through Explore 2013 before entry into college; the MyPlan online career assessment tool; a Career Decision Making class; individual career counseling sessions; co-ops and internships; and job shadowing experiences.

NIACC provides support for student learning through the Student Learning Center which provides one-on-one tutoring in transfer and developmental education courses. Additionally, the College uses Supplemental Instruction in several core courses such as Anatomy & Physiology I & II, Introductory Biology, Body Structure and Function and Developmental Psychology. We are also increasing the use of Learning Communities. CETL is providing training to instructors interested in the use of Learning Communities in their classes.

The College has the Trio Student Support Services program geared specifically for first-generation, low-income, and/or students with disabilities. NIACC provides personal counseling to the students through the Student Development Office and has a counselor specifically assigned to work with students with disabilities to assist not only with accommodations in classes but also to assist with transitioning to other colleges and the workforce.

Core Component 3.D.2. At admission into the institution, students are required to take an assessment test (mentioned later in this document). We advise students to enroll in preparatory classes and developmental courses to assist in their academic success based on these assessment test scores and other information like high school or college transcripts.

Core Component 3.D.3. All first-semester degree or diploma-seeking students must meet with a counselor through an in-person meeting or through the online registration process. The counselor then helps the student map out a course of study and a four-semester plan.

Core Component 3.D.4. The College has effective infrastructure in place to provide the resources needed for effective teaching and learning. NIACC has a proposed plan in place to update the science and math areas of the college to ensure the availability of the needed resources.

Core Component 3.D.5. We require all students completing Composition and Communication courses at the College to complete the library and mixed media components in the effective use of research and information resources. All first-time, full-time students are additionally required to complete the College Essentials course which includes the use of the library and the information resources.

1P8. How do you deal with students who are underprepared for the academic programs and courses you offer?

NIACC takes a proactive stance with all students who enroll at their institution. Part of the proactive approach concerns the student's level of academic readiness to engage in college level coursework in specific courses and programs of study. In order to assure student academic readiness, all credit courses at NIACC have course outlines that provide course competencies and prerequisites or co-requisites. Prerequisites may require completion of identified high school course(s), achievement or aptitude tests (ACT, ACT, COMPASS, Nelson Denny, etc.), or completion of specified lower level courses at NIACC. All prerequisites require predetermined levels of achievement as evidenced through specific grade or standardized score attainment. Students who meet a course's prerequisites will be given access to the course. If prerequisite grades or standardized scores are not met, students will be given the opportunity to take lower level college courses, developmental courses, supplemental instruction, tutoring opportunities, or Mastery support (one-on-one tutor support in Mathematics, Writing, and Reading) to prepare students for the designated course of interest or program requirement. An example of this scenario would involve nursing students enrolled in NIACC's Adult Nursing Degree (ADN) program. One of the requirements for entry into the program involves successful completion of two semesters of high school or college preparatory Biology courses with a minimum grade attainment of "C" or higher. Students who do not meet this program requirement would then be required to take Introductory Biology and Lab before being admitted to the AND program. If students elect to do so, they may enroll in supplemental instruction (led by a qualified NIACC student or approved adult) in weekly small-group study. NIACC's goal is to lead students to academic success by providing a variety of support services and instructional formats.

High school students who wish to take NIACC course work through the Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) program must meet proficiency as specified by the State of Iowa Senior Year Plus program rules. According to Iowa Senior Year Plus, PSEO students must demonstrate proficiency in reading, math and science. Proficiency is determined by use of the Iowa Assessment minimum National Standard Scores (NSS) in math, reading and science. High school administrators, typically the school counselor, review each student's NSS scores to determine which students are eligible for PSEO classes.

In addition, NIACC requires ACT or COMPASS assessment scores from all high school students who plan to take math or composition courses. We place students into these courses based on their ACT or COMPASS scores.

High school students who wish to enroll in career and technical education (CTE) courses must meet the same course placement guidelines as other potential NIACC CTE students. Students who plan to take career and technical math course work submit ACT Math scores or take the COMPASS Math assessment.

High school students who desire a CTE Communications class submit a writing sample to NIACC Communications faculty for evaluation. Appropriate course placement is then determined. We also assess students placed in NIACC's Communications by trained tutors on their reading skills to determine if a student needs the NIACC Power Reading course in conjunction with the Communications course.

NIACC has many resources available for students who are underprepared for academic programs and courses:

- Adult Literacy is available to those who need to complete a GED, whose first language is not English and need to improve English skills, or who need to brush-up on basic skills to enter college or a retraining program.
- Smart Start is a pre-college, non-credit program for GED graduates, under-employed, unemployed and other non-traditional adult students. This program offers reading, writing, math, computer skills, study skills and career advising.
- Enrich is a stand-alone program for those without the ability to transition to college level classes and are here for a college experience before transitioning to work.
- Developmental courses in reading, writing, and math are available; Mastery Writing, Mastery Math, and Mastery ESL are individualized and competency-based.
- College Reading, Strategies for Academic Success, Success Seminar, Career Decision Making, and Job Seeking Skills are transfer-credit courses are considered developmental in nature for the college-ready student.
- Student Support Services (SSS) is an intensive advising, tutoring, and engagement program provided through the TRIO program.
- No-cost tutoring is available to students through SSS peer tutoring, Student Learning Center professional tutoring, Writer's Workbench (computer and writing assistance).
- Advising and Counseling provides career, personal, academic, and transfer assistance.

1P9. How do you detect and address differences in students' learning styles?

There are several methods for assessing students' learning style. Students may discover their own learning styles through learning style inventories in Developmental Education classes, through career counseling sessions and course work, or through Disability Services. Faculty and staff also offer insight into a student's learning style through direct observations.

Learning styles may be addressed through tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, student disability accommodations, assistive technology, and varied course formats.

1P10. How do address the special needs of student subgroups (e.g. handicapped students, seniors, commuters)?

NIACC is committed to ensuring equal access to all programs and services to people with disabilities.

Students with disabilities:

We provide support to students with disabilities in reaching academic goals and work to ensure equal access to educational opportunities through support services, reasonable accommodations, and training in the use of assistive technology.

- A Disability Services Counselor coordinates services between students with disabilities and their interactions with the college. Working in partnership with the student, the Disability Services Counselor will develop an individual plan for services that will include accommodations in testing and instruction.
- NIACC provides various assistive technology devices that can be loaned out to students, e.g. Kurzweil readers, Android tablets, etc.
- Students registered with the NIACC Disability Services are eligible to apply for the Student Support Services program to receive intensive one-on-one services including tutoring.
- An OnTrack program is available to students who may have difficulty with executive function activities like time management.
- NIACC provides a list of campus resources for students and a list of apps for higher education that may assist them in activities of daily living and completing school requirements.
- NIACC provides various written policies to help students advocate for themselves.
- An alternate media program helps students request another version of written documents or textbooks. This may include e-text, audio, and large print.
- A Student Handbook for Student with disabilities is found online at <http://www.niacc.edu/student-life/disability-services/>
- NIACC has an ADA Coordinator and an ADA Compliance Officer to ensure students are provided with equal access to the programs and services.
- A transition workshop is offered each spring for students with disabilities that may be planning to transfer to a college from high school or work.
- A faculty page to assist faculty in working with students with disabilities is also found online: <http://www.niacc.edu/student-life/disability-services/information-for-faculty/>

Seniors:

NIACC provides a Lifelong Learning Institute. The Lifelong Learning Institutes is a community of adults who have a passion for learning for the sake of learning. Participants in the LLI are interested in various topics, but they are not interested in credits, grades, tests or long-term commitment. Benefits include:

- Student ID with use of NIACC facilities
- A NIACC email account

- Library use and orientation
- Passes to NIACC athletic events
- Lecture series and group activities at no cost
- Performance previews
- Career/retirement life coaching sessions
- College credit course audits at half tuition plus fees with space available
- Access to Disability Services
- Basic computer skill sessions
- Qualified students are welcome to take classes at any age

Commuters:

While NIACC does have a residential facility, the majority of the students attending NIACC are commuters. NIACC offers many services particularly used by commuters:

- Flexible course offerings, such as online, hybrid classes, and classes scheduled to meet less than every day.
- Clubs and organizations available to allow commuters to participate and get involved on campus.
- NIACC Alert system used to make students aware of class cancellations due to weather or other emergencies.

1P11. How do you define, document, and communicate across your organization your expectations for effective teaching and learning?

All faculty members new to NIACC must demonstrate through education or experience that they have achieved minimum competency standards. New faculty members have up to three years to meet the minimum standards in Learning Process and Diverse Learners, Instructional Planning, Instructional Strategies, Learning Environment and Classroom Management, Communication, Assessment and Evaluation of Student Learning, and the Community College.

Additionally, NIACC has established many processes and procedures that communicate the expectations for effective teaching and learning to faculty and staff:

- The College's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) provides website resources, seminars and faculty development activities throughout the year. Details can be found at <http://staff.niacc.edu/cetl/>
- Quality Faculty Plan is yearly documentation that addresses three areas: Teaching Methodology and Student Learning, Content Expertise Specific to Discipline, and College and Community Service relating to education. A specific program replicating this process is also in place for adjunct faculty.
- The College has a new faculty mentoring program to assist with new faculty development.
- New Staff Orientation is a program to help all new staff and faculty learn NIACC's the climate and procedures of the College.
- Education Effectiveness Committee Peer Review program is a procedure to review educational programs on a five-year rotation.
- NIACC has just completed a Foundations of Excellence Self Study. This was a two-year process of evaluating all aspects of the College within nine educational dimensions. The implementation phase began in the spring 2013 and will continue over the next six years.
- Many Career and Technical programs have outside accrediting agencies such as Physical Therapy Assistant (CAPTE), Nursing (NLN), Automotive Technology (ASE Certification), and Agriculture (Iowa Core Exam). A complete list may be found at: <http://www.niacc.edu/academics/career-clusters/>.

- Faculty evaluations are conducted on a three-year rotation after the two year probationary period for new faculty. Student perception surveys and peer evaluations are also conducted on this cycle.
- The College mission and vision statements found in the course catalog for 2012-2013 on page 4. <http://www.niacc.edu/about/publications-2/>
- The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (CCFSSE) are given every two years in the spring semester and are used to evaluate progress on specific goals.

Core Component 2.D. NIACC believes the true meaning of academic freedom is founded on a hospitable reception to an infinite variety of skills and viewpoints, which allows the institution to rely upon open competition among them as the assured safeguard of truth. The inherent nature of academic freedom requires investigation, criticism, and the staging of ideas in an atmosphere of freedom and mutual confidence. As a result, controversial matter and issues arise as students and faculty go about their work in the pursuit and communication of knowledge. Legal prohibitions, the rights of students, the rights and responsibilities of teachers and administrators and the appropriateness to the curriculum are involved in the proper treatment of such issues. NIACC faculty members are required by the College to meet course competency expectations in their instructional duties, but are afforded academic freedom on how course competencies are delivered and assessed in the act of student learning.

We expose faculty members to new methods and modalities in teaching and learning through the College's commitment to professional development. Faculty members have the freedom to incorporate proven innovative methods into their classrooms. All staff holds the responsibility to support the mission, vision, core values of the College. Through a Conversation Day on Quality in January 2013, we learned that overwhelmingly all employees are committed to helping students learn and providing a quality learning experience.

NIACC has assumed the stance of scaffold learning. This is a process where teaching and learning are conjoined to assist the learner in the establishment of longer term structures. It is not meant to be a definitive construction of the research process, but is aimed on providing a framework for those (students, faculty, and staff) who desire to explore the world of research. The research process at NIACC involves methods, methodology, theoretical perspective, and epistemology in conducting valid and reliable research at the institution. The aim is to guide the researcher in an ontological manner so that the nature of existence is coupled with the structure of reality in addressing a real-life issue, solving a problem, or answering a question. In doing such, the issue, problem, or question leads the investigator in designing the research model.

NIACC students involved in research are provided a number of online support services. One of these services may be found at <http://www.niacc.edu/student-life/library/research-help/> that offers assistance online facilitation of 1) how to conduct research; 2) evaluating information, and 3) citing information. A second service may be found at <http://www.niacc.edu/student-life/library/research-help/research-and-search-tools/> that provides an index (for education and government sites, web browser plug-ins, as well as internet tools) and internet search engines (Google, InfoSeek Net Search, WWW Worm, etc.). A third service provided to students at <http://www.niacc.edu/student-life/library/research-help/evaluating-referenceresearch-sources/> gives students things to consider when evaluating reference and research sources. This support service contains terminology coupled with questions and what to look for in determining a credible and scholarly source. These same services are provided to faculty and staff who engage in the research process.

Core Component 2.E.1. When research involves human subjects, NIACC has an Institutional Review Board (IRB) that oversees all research requests. This procedure is intended to ensure that College faculty, students, and staff are engaged in research that is methodically sound and does not violate Board policy, College operating procedures, or federal regulations in regards to the protection of human participants and subjects. The NIACC IRB process involves an Approval Procedure (inclusive of a research proposal form and meeting requirements of Protection of Human Subjects), Criteria for Approval (soundness of rationale and appropriateness of the sampling, methodology, instrumentation, and treatment of data), Timeline and Notification of Approval or Disapproval (exempt or expedited research), Research Misconduct (in compliance with Federal guidelines), Findings of Research Misconduct, and Evidence of Research Misconduct. Research project guidelines are provided that outline potential risks to participants and subjects; equitable selection participants and subjects; informed consent documentation; confidentiality; participant and subject compensation; knowledge to be gained; how benefits to research participants and subjects justifies incurred risks; and support services available to participants and subjects in the event of harm is evidenced.

Core Component 2.E.2. In orientation, new students are guided in the ethical use of information resources. Current and returning students are made aware of the academic honesty and integrity policies and enforcements through the Student Handbook via the portal. The responsible use of technology covered in the Student Handbook is reinforced in library orientation during face-to-face sessions and also online. A link to the Technology and Copyright Policy resides on the public web site under current students and also on the myNIACC student portal.

Core Component 2.E.3. NIACC enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity by establishing a campus wide policy defining faculty and student responsibilities. These responsibilities are highlighted under the Grade Appeal Process in the Student Handbook. The Grade Appeal Process demonstrates the College's commitment to enforce academic integrity by supporting staff and faculty in assessing the quality of a student's work in a course. This policy clearly defines the steps required for grade appeals.

NIACC requires secured student logins and password to access personal academic information, including online course access.

NIACC faculty incorporates academic honesty and integrity standards into their course syllabi.

The College provides staff development for faculty to learn about plagiarism, including different ways to reduce cheating by students.

1P12. How do you build an effective and efficient course delivery system that addresses both students' needs and your organization's requirements?

Program leadership (Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, Department Chairs) make the decisions regarding course delivery. Course schedules are developed considering options and student needs for each term. Academic Affairs approves adjustments in course structures that change content and are advised of changes in delivery systems such as traditional, online, hybrid, evening, weekend, and changes to time of class offerings. NIACC also considers the student audience when developing the delivery system whether the intent is for traditional age, non-traditional age, Career Link, or high school linked courses. Learning Communities and Supplemental Instruction options linked to courses are also considered when the course scheduling is developed.

1P13. How do you ensure that your programs and courses are up-to date and effective?

Each year all career technical programs meet at least twice with their advisory boards to discuss changes within the business and industries. Each program is reviewed by the division chair and the related faculty to discuss changes and effectiveness at the end of the spring semester.

Transfer plans related to majors both generically and specific to a transfer institution are reviewed and revised each May to assure the requirements are being met for a particular major by the Student Development Counselors. NIACC currently has 43 articulated agreements with 17 colleges and universities. A complete listing is found: <http://www.niacc.edu/academics/articulation-agreements/> .

Additionally, continuing professional education either through faculty development on campus or webinars, conferences, or workshops offered elsewhere through the year is required through the Quality Faculty Plan each year.

1P14. How do you change or discontinue programs and courses?

Currently, there is not just one set approach for discontinuing programs and courses. Program changes usually begin with a program review to identify areas which need improvement. Faculty and the related division chair will develop the plan for the upcoming college year and bring it to the Academic Affairs Council for approval and further examination. If a program has low enrollment, an analysis of marketing, needs of the area, and relevance of curriculum are conducted by the faculty in the program. Depending on the results of the evaluation, a program may be under a watch for the upcoming year. If the modifications do not result in significant improvement, a program may be discontinued under advisement from the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs and the President. The College will develop a uniform approach for the College's system of program review, complemented by data per program that has been 'cleaned' and analyzed in a consistent and uniform manner over the next three to five years.

1P15. How do you determine and address the learning support needs (tutoring, advising, placement, library, laboratories, etc.) of your students and faculty in your student learning, development, and assessment processes?

Student learning support needs are identified at enrollment through ACT or COMPASS assessment scores and throughout the student's academic career through academic counseling and advising, and through the faculty-initiated Retention Alert system. In addition, students are surveyed using SENSE (Survey of Entering Student Engagement), CCSSE (Community College Survey of Student Engagement), the Student Perception Survey of faculty, and through the library annual spring survey. The Library and the Student Learning Center also monitor usage and peak times to support the needs of the students.

Services available to assist the learning needs of the students include counseling and advising sessions each semester, tutoring through Student Learning Center and Student Support Services, placement services available through the Career and Internship Center, Supplemental Instruction for selected courses, midterm grade contacts, student academic progress plans, disability services, Mastery Math, Mastery Writing, Power Reading, flexible learning environments such as online, hybrid, one-on-one and small group, library and research orientations, and remote library access.

1P16. How do you align your co-curricular development goals with your curricular learning objectives?

Core Component 3.E.1. Student clubs and student organizations are the primary co-curricular activities at NIACC. We currently have 33 clubs and six organizational units for students. Eleven of the clubs are associated with state and/or national organizations and provide additional opportunities for learning and work-related trips, competitions, and networking with the field. For example, the Carpentry Service Association club does two week-long service trips to disaster-stricken areas of the United States each semester. The group brings supplies and materials from local businesses and works to improve the homes of someone in need in the area. The activity combines service-learning with civic responsibility.

Core Component 3.E.2. The co-curricular activities provide a mixture of cultural, occupational, social, volunteer/civic, and student leadership. The table below reflects the elements from each of the clubs and organizations.

Table 1.3: Focus activities for clubs and student organizations

Focus of group	Number	% of total*
Cultural	19	49%
Occupational	11	28%
Social	15	38%
Student Leadership	8	21%
Volunteer/Civic Responsibility	11	28%

*Reflects more than one area of focus

All co-curricular activities are aligned with the mission of the College and lend to the overall educational experience of the student.

1P17. How do you determine that students to whom you award degrees and certificates have met your learning and development expectations?

The College uses several strategies to determine that students who are awarded degrees, diplomas, and certificates have met the learning expectations. These include clinicals, portfolios, internships, capstone projects, demonstrations, licensures and certifications, and testing. Each program in its five-year review chooses the methods used to ensure students meet the set learning expectations. For example, the Tool and Die program uses demonstrations of learned competencies for the student evaluations while the Information Assurance and Security program utilizes capstone projects as their culminating assessment.

In addition to the above-listed assessments, the Career and Internship Center conducts an employer survey each year of the recent hires. The surveys of employers are used to determine employer satisfaction with the skills of the graduates hired. The College also tracks the GPA of graduates who transfer to one of the Regent institutions (University of Iowa, Iowa State University, or University of Northern Iowa).

1P18. How do you design your processes for assessing student learning?

Also refer to 1P2.

The process for assessing student learning starts with the program and curriculum development procedures. When a new program and a new course are developed, the faculty describes the assessment process to reflect the evaluation of the learning outcomes of the program or course. Included in this

process is how the curriculum reflects the general education outcomes and the other outcomes aligned with the program or course.

Each year, all programs and classes are required to evaluate the two general education outcomes selected by the Education Effectiveness Committee (EEC) for an in-depth look that academic year. This assessment information is collected and reviewed by the EEC. Additionally, the program reviews are completed every fifth year and the process is again reviewed and revised as needed.

Starting fall 2013, a curriculum committee has been formed of faculty from each division, and representatives from Student Development, Student Learning Division, and the Registrar's office. One of the functions of this committee will be to ensure that the changes to courses and programs have a workable process in place for assessing student learning.

To aid the in advancement of assessment, NIACC is currently participating in the Higher Learning Commission Assessment Academy.

1R1. What measures of your students' learning and development do you collect and analyze regularly?

The College regularly collects and analyzes student midterm and final GPA, retention data from semester to semester and fall to fall, and student goal and completion rates. The Student Development Office uses the midterm information to contact any student receiving below a C grade in any course. The financial aid office and the Registrar's office both monitor the GPA for satisfactory progress each semester and the Student Development counselors monitor the progress of students on a required academic plan. Retention and completion rates are analyzed to look for ways to improve.

Instructors regularly measure student performance through tests, papers, presentations, demonstrations, reports, internships, discussions and in some cases pre- and post-testing. Throughout the semester, instructors are encouraged to use the Retention Alert system to help provide early intervention to students who are not succeeding in their classes. Additionally, some programs like nursing, automotive, medical assistance, and information technology have industry-recognized tests or licensing in place to readily conduct the assessment. The faculty members of these programs examine the results and can take measures to refine the curriculum as needed to improve student learning.

1R2. What are your performance results for common student learning and development objectives?

The performance results for common student learning and development are tied into the general education requirements of all degree programs. Each year all full-time faculty members are to assess two of the eight general education core elements. This information is sent to the EEC committee for review.

1R3. What are your performance results for specific program learning objectives?

Table 1.4 shows the number of associate degrees, diplomas, certificates, and GEDs that have been awarded for the last three years. For the most part, the degrees, diplomas, and certificates have remained relatively steady while the GEDs have declined slightly.

Table 1.4: Number of program graduates

	Associate Degrees	Diplomas	Certificates	GEDs
2009-2010	545	154	328	80
2010-2011	586	170	300	67
2011-2012	564	148	289	62

The performance results are also found within each program review measured each year but officially reviewed every five. Examples of a career and technical program and a transfer program and are shown below:

Assessment results for Automotive Technology Program:

- Assessment/Research/Analysis for AUT-204 Automatic Transmissions and Transaxles, sophomore class of 2012-2013. Students were administered pretest and post-test (internal assessment) and also participated in the End of Program Test administered by the National Automotive Technician Education Foundation (external assessment), in the month of April 2013.
- Item analysis of the pre-test/post-test and task list summary will be used along with the end of Program Tests for final decisions.
 - Both sets of scores/data at this time indicates that the class needs extra time spent in two separate, but related, areas: Section 2-c NATEF Task List for Maintenance and Adjustments and also Section 2-d3 NATEF Task List for Off-Vehicle Transmission and Transaxle Repair (gear train, shafts and bushings).
 - These competencies are embedded in the curriculum. However, the students will be assigned an additional textbook chapter with more in depth theory. Additional laboratory hands-on opportunities will be provided to reinforce student competency.

Assessment results for Psychology Program:

The psychology program at NIACC assessed motivation and learning to better understand what students brought to the classroom. The Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ; intrinsic goal orientation and help-seeking behavior scales) and Dweck’s Self-Theory were used to collect data. The following table summarizes some of the data that were collected:

Term	Intrinsic Goal Orientation	Theory of Intelligence	Help Seeking Behavior	Use of Online Resources	Read 100% of Assigned Readings
2007-2008	Average	Not measured	Low	Low (14.4%)	16.2%
2008-2009	Average	Middle	Low	Low (24%)	21.7%
2009-2010	Average	Middle	Low	Low (22%)	22.3%
2010-2011	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Low (14.1%)	29.3%
2011-2012	Not measured	Not measured	Not measured	Low (18.5%)	18.1%

As shown from the above table, a large obstacle to student success is the students not taking advantage of online resources or not reading the textbook. Solutions include more time introducing resources and explaining the importance of the book, including more audio podcasts on specific topics, switch assessments to more on critical thinking and communications skills and less on quizzes and tests.

1R4. What is your evidence that the students completing your programs, degrees, and certificates have acquired the knowledge and skills required by your stakeholders (i.e. other educational organizations and employers)?

Evidence that NIACC graduates have acquired the knowledge and skills required are based on student performance in the workplace, on licensing exams and on transfer GPA with the regent institutions in Iowa.

Table 1.5: Job Placement of Career-Technical Graduates*

	2010	2011	2012
Total Employed	95%	98%	97%
Related Employment	83%	87%	90%

*Yearly Career Placement Report

Table 1.6: Student Performance on licensing exams*

	2010	2011	2012
Associate Degree Nursing	100%	97%	97%
Licensed Practical Nursing	100%	100%	95%
Medical Assistant	82%	84%	87%
Physical Therapist Assistant	100%	92%	100%

*Data provided by licensing agencies

Table 1.7: GPA for Students transferring to the Iowa Regents*

	Transfer GPA	1 st Term GPA	Cumulative GPA
NIACC	3.08	2.76	2.82
Iowa Community Colleges	3.07	2.61	2.74
Native university students	3.37	2.96	3.03

*Average of data from University of Iowa and Iowa State University semester reports

1R5. What are your performance results for learning support processes (advising, library and laboratory use, etc.)?

The NIACC library submits an annual report that lists the collection holdings, materials circulation and database usage, hits to website, attendance, and statistics from Ask-A-Librarian, Text-A-Librarian, and face-to-face reference interactions. The link for the information is <http://intranet.niacc.edu/library/12annualrpt.html> . New databases including Films on Demand and EBSCOhost e-book Academic Collection have been added to the library holding. Numbers in attendance at library presentations and visits to high schools for Career Link and PSEO classes are also kept.

NIACC also uses the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) to track student self-perception. This benchmark looks at the satisfaction of students with the college in terms of their success and working and social relationships among different groups on campus. In the ‘Support for Learners’ benchmark area NIACC has been relatively steady with scores since 2006, the first time the survey was given. The following table shows the three years of results for this category:

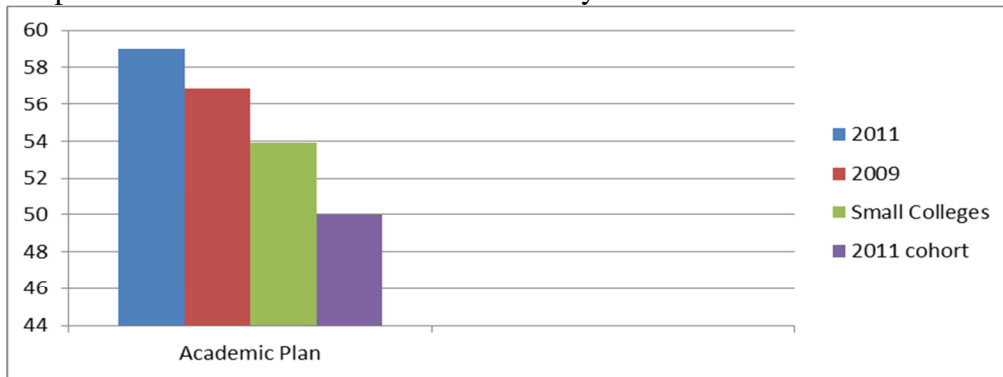
Table 1.8: Support for Learners – CCSSE

Year	Score
2006	48.2
2009	47.5
2011	47.2

1R6. How do your results for the performance of your processes in Helping Students Learn compare with the results of other higher education organizations and, where appropriate, with results of organizations outside of higher education?

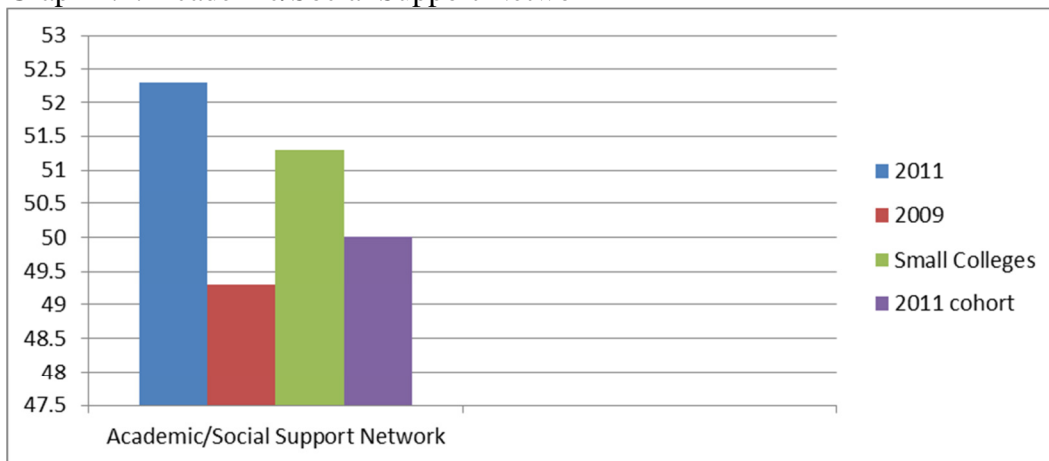
North Iowa Area Community College has given the SENSE (Survey of Entering Student Engagement) in the fall 2009 and the fall 2011. We compare this information with data from other similarly sized community colleges and other Iowa community colleges. Shown below are the benchmarks for ‘Clear Academic Plan and Pathway’ and ‘Academic/Social Support Network.’ In both cases, students show increased satisfaction and success.

Graph 1.1: Clear Academic Plan and Pathway*



*Data from SENSE 2011/2009 surveys

Graph 1.2: Academic/Social Support Network*



*Data from SENSE 2011/2009 surveys

111. What recent improvements have you made in this category? How systematic and comprehensive are your processes and performance results for Helping Students Learn?

Starting in the fall of 2011, NIACC has been working with Foundations of Excellence through the John Gardner Institute for Excellence. The College has just finished the in-depth two-year process of assessing all areas of the College and will begin implementing many of the targeted changes for improvement in many areas but specifically in the category of Helping Students Learn.

This fall, it will be required for transfer degree seeking students to enroll in Strategies for Academic Success if their GPA from high school is under a 3.00. This is one of the targeted areas for improvement to assist students with learning how to learn. Currently, the Student Development area is working with a consultant to create a student development model designed for the success of all students. This model will relate specific student-oriented objectives to the success of the students that may include a student communication plan to stress the availability and importance of tutoring services and mastery courses; a suggested schedule for the student's first semester; increased student awareness of the College's academic, personal, and social resources available; and increased focus on career planning.

Further recommendations relating to Helping Student Learn include implementing additional alternative methods of delivery to engage students in the learning process. These methods may include, but are not limited to learning communities, cohorts, online learning, courses with writing emphasis, Extra Learning Opportunities (ELOs), and competency-based learning in developmental coursework.

112. How does your culture and infrastructure help you to select specific processes to improve and to set targets for improved performance results in Helping Students Learn?

The College culture and infrastructure has a strong support for innovation and tracking outcomes. It has encouraged faculty and staff to keep current in content and practices. The College hired a grant writer to assist departments in grant applications to allow piloting of new practices for the institution. There is backing through the President's Council to support and process pilots that align with the Strategic Plan. College resources and support are provided to continue and sustain successful pilots. An additional source of development for improvement is through the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL). This faculty-run entity provides faculty development activities throughout the year to assist instructors with keeping current and innovative in teaching practices.

Category 2 – Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives

Introduction

NIACC has a long history of supporting its students and its community outside of the traditional classroom. Our mission specifically states that our primary goal is to enhance the quality of life for the people of North Iowa. We accomplish this through comprehensive educational opportunities, progressive partnerships, exemplary service, and responsive leadership.

The primary means of addressing the College's mission through other distinctive objectives is by our commitment and focus on economic development, providing support to entrepreneurship and small business development, community and lifelong learning opportunities, and the work of our foundation and grants office. NIACC is looked to for leadership and support across our district by our business and industry partners, economic development corporations, community-based organizations, and the communities we serve. Each of these objectives varies in its level of maturity related to processes followed in our continuous quality improvement initiatives. We have led the state in community and economic development. The recognized processes found in Continuing Education and Economic Development and the John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center (JPEC) have been tested and have proven successful. Our grants area is newer to the College and continues to seek to refine its process to address the needs of our students and college programs by connecting perceived needs to improvements. Our Foundation, with the 16th largest community college endowment in the nation in 2010, is a work in progress; this constant pursuit of new supporters and efficiencies helps us provide top-quality service.

NIACC's strategic planning process serves as the foundation for the priorities the College strives to achieve. The recent planning process engaged stakeholders to a greater degree than in the recent past. Tying budget and resources to the strategic plan is very new to the College. Each of our Other Distinctive Objectives is tied to our plan, and NIACC's the operational planning process now provides a means to address the continuous quality improvement cycle which in turn holds the College accountable for these institutional priorities. A weakness in this area is a clear and consistent method to collect stakeholder input and integrate it into the ongoing planning process. That is not to say we do not receive feedback; however, we need a means to capture this feedback as an institution and use it consistently. We cannot collect data simply for the sake of collecting data. It is essential for the College to systematically use this data and to determine how improvements can be made. The College frequently asks questions related to the satisfaction of a service or program. The College will move forward to ask important assessment questions that will move us to a higher level of understanding and quality related to the services and programs provided to our stakeholders and community.

Within Category 2 there exists a range of maturity from reacting to integrated dependent on the process distinctive to accomplishing other distinctive objectives. Through the planning and budgeting priority process, it has been determined the College needs to employ an Institutional Researcher. A designated Institutional Research position will help to improve the less mature processes.

2P1. How do you design and operate the key non-instructional processes through which you serve significant stakeholder groups?

NIACC has identified five primary objectives for supporting our community, students, and region. These objectives are:

Table 2.1: North Iowa Area Community College primary objectives & supporting activities or departments

Objective	Activity or Department
Provide customized training to business and corporate partners.	Customized Training Contracts
Provide community education and lifelong learning opportunities to the members of the NIACC region.	Lifelong Learning Institute and Community Education offerings throughout the district
Provide financial support to students to guarantee access and maintain student debt to a manageable level after completion.	Student scholarships, tuition assistance, and emergency grants through the NIACC Foundation
Provide resource support to move NIACC’s strategic plan forward, thereby decreasing the College’s dependency on state general aid.	Federal, state, local government grants; private foundation grants; business and industry cash and non-cash donations
Provide small business development and acceleration support through quality entrepreneurial training and mentoring.	John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center

We tie each objective to the successful implementation of NIACC’s Strategic Plan and priorities. As defined in Iowa Code, community colleges are required to address the workforce and business training needs of our districts. NIACC accomplishes this through our Continuing Education Division programs to include new jobs training contracts, customized contract training and support to small businesses, and business acceleration through the John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center.

NIACC has a strong commitment to the accessibility and affordability of the education and training it provides. The work of the College’s Institutional Advancement Office and the NIACC Foundation provide resources to support the initiatives aligning to the strategic plan.

NIACC’s Other Distinctive Objectives align directly with the College’s five-year Strategic Plan 2011-2016. Our vision to be the region’s first choice for postsecondary education requires the College to address the growing challenges of our region: an aging population; increasing poverty; the increasing dependence of small business for economic vitality; and continued training support for current employers especially in the areas of agriculture, advanced manufacturing, and health care.

By addressing Other Distinctive Objectives, NIACC also supports its mission of enhancing the quality of life for the people of north Iowa. We recognize that supporting access to higher education and training while encouraging the development of a trained and skilled workforce supports the economic vitality of our region.

Our core values of academic excellence, integrity, and community demand quality, responsiveness, and collaboration to move our mission and vision forward in a comprehensive and meaningful way.

North Iowa Area Community College's Strategic Plan will guide us to keep *NIACC First in Education, Leadership, and Partnership*. The plan addresses each of the strategic priorities that have been determined to be of the greatest importance to our stakeholders.

The Strategic Plan's priority of *Keeping NIACC First in Education* specifically addresses the need for students to have a quality experience. This priority addresses optimizing financial aid opportunities for our students and support to our faculty for creating environments where innovation and excellence in pedagogy flourish. The work of our Institutional Advancement Office and the NIACC Foundation serve to support these priorities.

Our priority that all learning will be a quality and relevant experience stretches the College to assess continually our program learning outcomes and to be certain that students and stakeholders have outstanding and state-of-the-art facilities, equipment, and financial resources to take advantage of the learning opportunities the College provides. Our training must address the needs of our local employers and partners. Our education strives to provide students with the skills and experiences to move them successfully into careers or transfer opportunities.

The Strategic Plan's priority of *Keeping NIACC First in Leadership* outlines the importance of supporting innovation used to develop and implement workforce preparedness, small business development, entrepreneurship, and engagement by our community. The work of Institutional Advancement, Continuing Education, and the John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center focuses on our strategic priorities.

Keeping NIACC First in Partnership provides a guide by which we engage and support our internal and external stakeholders. We seek to assess the contribution of each partnership to move the College forward with a focus on the economic growth and vitality of our region.

Everything NIACC engages in is tied to learning. NIACC's Other Distinctive Objectives support a learning community in north central Iowa. This culture of learning provides our community, students, and partners with the tools needed to live productive lives while supporting our community and its economy.

We identified the College's Other Distinctive Objectives through the College Strategic Planning Process. Of consideration is the College's responsibility under Iowa Code to support the economic development of the region. However, the true drivers of the five other distinctive objectives are the priorities identified through the College's Strategic Plan: Keeping NIACC First in Education, Leadership, and Partnership. Each distinct objective has a role to play in the design, implementation, and assessment of the pillars of our plan.

Once the key priorities of the plan were identified through a process that involved College and stakeholder input, the AQIP Quality Council identified key objectives to incorporate into the plan. The plan then operationalizes key objectives through the units of the College. The process of operationalizing the strategic plan provides a means of identifying key non-instructional processes in support of the Strategic Plan. It became evident through the planning process that supporting our students, faculty, and external stakeholders would require the refinement of and support through our five key other distinct objectives.

The areas of the College responsible for corporate training, continuing education, institutional advancement, and the John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center bring forward objectives, strategies, and desired outcomes through our annual operational planning process. The operational plan is reviewed each fall for progress and each spring to determine the status of outcomes. This process includes review by internal and external stakeholders to include the Foundation Board, the JPEC Advisory Board, and specific stakeholder groups. These stakeholders include business and industry partners, community-based organizations, economic development corporations, chambers of commerce, NIACC alumni and retirees, students, and employees.

Each area utilizes their annual operational plan as a guide for the year's operations. Each unit reports to a Dean or Vice President who also serves on the President's Council. The Council meets weekly and each member of the team reports on activities and progress related to their plan. Each Dean or Vice President presents a written plan update in December and a final report in April or May. This information is shared with the President's Council. Each Dean or Vice President provides their areas with updates and progress on the plan. An annual report to the Board presented by the Foundation and Institutional Advancement, Contract Training, Financial Aid, and AQIP also provides the Board the opportunity to learn about and comment on progress on each distinct objective. The President presents an annual report to the Board of Directors in June of each year on the progress of the plan.

2P2. How do you determine your institution's major non-instructional objectives for your external stakeholders, and who do you involve in setting these objectives?

North Iowa Area Community College engages external stakeholders in the planning and assessment process. These external stakeholders serve as members of advisory boards and councils and are members of the College's Business Partnership consortium, are customers of contract training, participate in focus groups, and respond to requests for feedback through other evaluation and assessment processes. The College provides structured opportunities for external stakeholders to share information and needs through multiple means. The John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center utilizes its advisory board to assist in the setting and prioritizing of annual goals. Institutional Advancement utilizes the Foundation and Alumni Boards through the operational planning process to determine the needs and expectations of these groups related to the priorities established by the College through its Strategic Plan. Continuing Education utilizes the Presidents' Club, Lifelong Learning Advisory Board, business evaluation, and engagement in the region's economic development association, chambers of commerce, and service organizations to gather priorities and set objectives.

2P3. How do you communicate your expectations regarding these objectives?

The College uses multiple methods of communicating its expectations. The audience impacted by these outcomes is varied and has special needs for communication. Consequently, the communication is achieved through multiple means. We contact stakeholders through mailed written communication, email, social media, advisory board meetings (such as the JPEC Advisory Board, the Foundation Board and the Alumni Board), community forums, the *InTouch* magazine published by the College, and the *Entrepreneurial Edge* newsletter. Each project administrator seeks feedback from those involved in an initiative. For example, after the College annual fund drive is complete, a staff member from Institutional Advancement debriefs the fund drive with the co-leaders to seek input on improving the process for the next year. Continuing Education communicates regularly with the participants in the Lifelong Learning

Institute to assess the success of individual courses and the year of activities. This information is used to improve offerings tailored to the needs and wants of its participants. The Foundation Director and the President regularly meet with members of the community to provide information and update individual stakeholders of progress on the College's distinctive objectives.

The expectations of stakeholders drive the expectations of the College. Through a communication process that includes not only communication regarding strategies, but also a process that requires assessment of progress towards a goal and associated measures, the need to share results is an important component of the continuous quality improvement process. The College checks in regularly with its stakeholders to communicate results and to determine what can be done to improve or make adjustments to the strategy to improve the expected outcome. A specific example of this process is the approach the JPEC has taken to address the needs of micro-enterprise needs in Mason City. The JPEC administers a program in support of the success of micro-enterprises. This need was identified by the City Council of Mason City. A proposal was presented to the City Council to address the needs of small business in the community through training, support, assessment, and refinement of that support. The City provided the College with parameters under which to administer the program. The College provides regular reports to the City on the progress of the program and makes suggestions for refinement of the program to better serve the needs of small business. The City examines the program's success and whether to continue funding.

2P4. How do you assess and review the appropriateness and value of these objectives and whom do you involve in these reviews?

Assessment is a crucial component of continuous quality improvement. The annual operational planning process is the backbone of the assessment process. The basic process is consistent across the College. Each year goals and objectives are established and aligned with the strategic plan. In the case of other distinctive objectives, Continuing Education, Institutional Advancement, and the John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center review the operational goals from the previous year to determine progress toward goal attainment. Each goal is reviewed for alignment to the strategic plan and stakeholder needs as identified through ongoing needs analysis. This information is then utilized through the annual operational planning process. New goals are established. Current goals are determined to be complete or in progress. These goals are shared with advisory boards (as noted in 2P3) and other external stakeholders to ascertain their ongoing needs and viability. The division goals are then prioritized and shared with the President's Council. Annual priorities are established and needed resources are assessed. These priorities are included in the budgeting process. The NIACC Board of Directors approves the College budget.

2P5. How do you determine faculty and staff needs relative to these objectives and operations?

As described in 2P4, through the strategic and operational planning process, staff members are engaged in the planning, design, implementation, and assessment of objectives in support of other distinctive objectives. This process includes the identification of the resources (human, facility, equipment, technology and the like) needed to execute the objective strategies. Faculty and staff are engaged in the planning process and provide input into their needs related to moving an initiative or continued operations of their area forward. The workload drives the need for faculty and staff. For example, if the JPEC need faculty to teach a Launch and Grow, Smart Start, or other entrepreneurial class for the JPEC's programs,

the JPEC designs a plan, determines what resources are needed, gains financial support, and moves through the operational planning process. The JPEC demonstrates value through performance metrics and community impact to explain, justify or defend the need for program continuation. The plan developed may require staff, business community volunteers, student interns or others to take advantage of Continuing Education classes delivered on programmatic or service demand. We strive to use resources creatively, but when money or people's time runs out, we highlight the demand through the planning and budgeting process.

2P6. How do you incorporate information on faculty and staff needs in readjusting these objectives or the processes that support them?

The strategic plan is a long-range look at our direction and prioritizes the needs of our community, students, and partners. The operational plan is a shorter term look at how we will achieve the long-range goals for NIACC. The operational plan serves as an annual guide. The administrators responsible for the other distinctive objectives review plan progress regularly with their staff and with the President every six weeks. Should there be a question regarding faculty or staff needs, these changes are reviewed with the President at this time. As needed, these changes are brought to President's Council for review. The administrators at the College have the flexibility and authority to make needed changes to address changing needs, and they work with the President and Vice President for Administrative Services if resource needs become an issue. Flexibility and responsiveness are essential to the success within the other distinctive objectives. Our business partners do not always anticipate their needs 18 months in advance nor do our students. Built into our planning and budgeting process is a certain level of flexibility.

2R1. What measures of accomplishing your major non-instructional objectives and activities do you collect and analyze regularly?

The measures vary somewhat depending on the goals established within each of the major non-instructional objectives and activities. These measures align with the goal. The measures present information related to the successful progress to goal attainment. Each operational plan has information related to how the goal aligns with the Strategic Plan Priority, the specific unit goal, strategy, timetable, KPI, and evaluation strategy. These measures may include:

- Enrollment targets
- Increase in course offerings aligned to stakeholder needs
- Location of offerings increased across the district
- Revenue targets
- Exemplary customer service
- Level of participation by customers, stakeholders, alumni
- Program dollar utilization maximized
- Fundraising targets
- Increase in donor base
- Grants awarded
- Improved time to fund allocation
- Number of credit programs impacted

2R2. What are your performance results in accomplishing your other distinctive objectives?

Continuing Education Results

Continuing Education Division Numbers					
	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
Unduplicated Headcount	19,941	20,004	17,605	11,670	11,996
Duplicated Headcount	79,402	71,837	92,722	19,191	20,031
Revenue	\$1,995,304	\$1,124,857	\$962,233	\$1,262,070	\$1,279,419

Iowa Industrial New Jobs Training Program (260E)			
Year	Number of Companies Impacted	Amount	New Jobs Supported
2008	8	1,575,000	250
2009	5	875,000	167
2010	7	1,915,000	292
2011	4	2,050,000	289
2012	6	2,895,000	254
2008 - 2012 Totals	30	\$9,310,000	1252

Iowa Jobs Training Program (260F)			
Year	Number of Companies Impacted	Amount State & Company Dollars	Number Trained
2008	9	225,590	192
2009	13	239,067	214
2010	10	199,145	209
2011	11	202,019	311
2012	12	218,295	226
2008 - 2012 Totals	55	\$1,084,116	1152

Institutional Advancement Results

Foundation Activities	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Total Foundation Scholarships offered	381,950	351,900	359,800	366,950
Number of Foundation Scholarships offered	413	433	476	481
Number of Alumni Donors	282	318	343	222 (partial year)

North Iowa Area Community College – May 2013 Systems Portfolio

Foundation Activities	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Lifetime Members of Alumni Association	294	302	320	320
Annual Members of Alumni Association	13	0	6	1
Total Members	307	302	326	321

Grants	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013 (as of 12/19/12)
Total grants written	18	32	20	9
Total grants funded	9	14	15	12
Dollars requested	\$176,203	\$5,425,357	\$1,656,800	\$82,197
Dollars awarded	\$104,309	\$303,681	\$80,195	\$825,504
Number of local grants	9	14	9	3
Number of state grants	5	3	1	1
Number of federal grants	0	1	1	0
Number of Corporate grants	4	14	8	4
Number of national foundation awards	0	0	1	1

Annual Fund	2009-2010	2010--2011	2011-2012	2012-2013 (as of 12/19/12)
AF Employee Campaign percent participation	63%	76%	83%	88%
AF Employee Campaign dollars raised	\$19,860 (GF, PP)	\$20,251 (GF, PP)	\$22,444 (GF,PP)	\$33,887 (GF, NP)
AF External Campaign number of appeals	10	12	16	12
AF External Campaign dollars raised	\$45,083	\$75,166	\$83,309	\$26,615

Fundraising	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Fundraising Goal	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Actual Dollars Raised	783,412	1,028,758	968,245	444,082
Noncash Gift Amounts	42,095	51,665	96,595	16,818
Total Raised	\$825,507	\$1,080,423	\$1,064,840	\$460,900

Donors	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
New Donors Goal	200	200	200	200
Actual New Donors	271	288	272	217

John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center Results

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
New business created	29	33	42	43
New jobs added	235	250.5	105	107.5
Number of e-ship participants	5346	5954	5036	4057

2R3. How do your results for the performances of these processes compare with the performance results of other higher education institutions and, if appropriate, of organizations outside of higher education?

The Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Adult, Career and Community College Education annually publish *The Annual Condition of Iowa’s Community Colleges*. This report provides NIACC with the ability to compare certain defined results with other community colleges in the state of Iowa. These comparative results include:

- Non-credit enrollments by college
- Non-credit contact hours by college
- Non-credit courses delivered by college
- Non-credit enrollment by program type by college
- Results of the Iowa New Jobs Training Program (260E)
- Results of the Iowa Jobs Training Programs (260F)

Some of the awards and recognitions the College has received show evidence of NIACC’s success in these areas:

- 2009 National Association of Community College Entrepreneurship (NACCE) Innovation Award
- 2010 the NIACC Foundation was recognized as 16th largest endowment of community colleges in the nation by the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.
- 2010 Community College Excellence Award from the MetLife Foundation – focus on community involvement
- 2011 NIACC JPEC selected one of eleven community colleges in the country to lead the development of a virtual incubation network through AACC and the MOTT Foundation.

2R4. How do your performance results of your processes for *Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives* strengthen your overall institution? How do they enhance your relationships with the communities and regions you serve?

As noted in the process section of Other Distinctive Objectives, the mission, vision, and strategic plan of the College guide the goals, strategies and hence the performance results of NIACC. These results strengthen our institution because they relate to our mission of improving the quality of life for the residents of North Iowa.

The work of our Foundation directly affects NIACC students' access to a quality education. In examining the *College Affordability and Transparency Center's College Scorecard* (collegecost.ed.gov/scorecard/), for example, the average net price to attend NIACC decreased 3 percent from 2007-2009. The cost of education on the rating scale falls in the low range for community college attendance. This occurred during a time when College tuition was increasing substantially to cover significant decreases in state funding. The decrease in overall pricing occurred at NIACC because our Foundation provided ample scholarship resources to our students and their families. Additionally, the work of Institutional Advancement has provided funding for adult basic education, instructional equipment, faculty professional development and credentialing, technology, and other resources necessary to move the College forward to attain its strategic goals.

The annual fund drive's growing success sends a strong message to the College and the community that our faculty and staff are invested in the College and the success of our students. We share this success with our community and our legislators as evidence of the College's commitment to the success of our students. Our external annual fund drive reconnects our alumni and community to the challenges the college faces and the priorities we have established through our strategic plan.

NIACC assists our stakeholders in growing their businesses and creating new jobs. We connect with our constituencies by providing resources, education, and financial support planning with the goal of positive results for their businesses and communities. Our regional economic development corporations call upon us to collaborate with them in the recruitment process for new businesses; new business development means new jobs and increased economic vitality. NIACC is an essential selling point to potential new businesses in our region.

The reputation of the award-winning John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center enhances the reputation of the College locally, regionally, and nationally. The JPEC is an important face for NIACC. It strengthens the relationship with our local communities due to its responsive, professional, and results-oriented service. By holding ourselves accountable for performance, we also build trust and confidence with our community partners.

2II. What recent improvements have you made in this category? How systematic and comprehensive are your processes and performance results for *Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives*?

As a college that embraces continuous quality improvement, we face an ongoing process to assess our internal means for encouraging improvement in our processes and performance results related to Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives. The College ties improvement in these areas to annual operational planning, implementation, assessment, and improvement. This is the second year of implementation, and we are now beginning to take a more systematic examination of our progress. The College is becoming more mindful of the need to complete the continuous quality improvement cycle.

In each of the areas supporting Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives, the operational plan is the key to examining the success of internal processes and performance. Through the ongoing review of goals, strategies, and measures the following improvements have been made:

- Annual assessment by members of the Presidents' Club to measure the success of the professional development offerings and networking opportunities. This assessment has led to changes in programming for this year. This process will be repeated in June 2013.
- A statewide assessment of the Iowa New Jobs Training program has resulted in changes to how the College will monitor the success of its training programs and the use of its resources. These changes were supported by each of the 15 community colleges and we are in the first full year of implementation. The expected results include increased accountability and increased use of administrative dollars in support of economic development.
- Continuing Education has been participating in a lean quality improvement process for the past two years. The results have indicated streamlined registration for continuing education participants and improved customer satisfaction. The area is continuing its work.
- JPEC has introduced a new assessment strategy that involves personal interviews with former clients to assess their level of satisfaction with the assistance received and to seek input into future improvements.
- JPEC is also performing a SWOT analysis of the Incubation and Acceleration services. SWOT analysis results are influencing both the operational plan and the tactical execution of performance improvement targets.
- An additional staff member has joined Institutional Advancement to assist with reaching and developing relationships with additional alumni. It is too early to judge results.
- Each year the annual fund process is reviewed and improvements are made. These changes have included the development of funds within the Foundation for staff to give to their own departments or to begin scholarships for their students.
- Improved systems are now in place now to explore external granting agencies and to apply for this funding when it becomes available by using operational planning information.

2I2. How do your culture and infrastructure help you to select specific processes to improve and to set targets for improved performance results in *Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives*?

The operational planning process provides all areas of the College with the opportunity to review goals on an annual basis and to monitor results at least twice per year. The College has established key performance indicators, but we are still working towards a more automated means to review progress easily and just-in-time. The NIACC Foundation has the ability to utilize a dashboard providing just-in-time information on the progress it is making towards annual goals. It is our hope that the entire College will have this type of monitoring tool in the near future.

The College Foundation has established clear targets for the allocation of scholarships on an annual basis. The Foundation Executive Committee will discuss additional needs when brought forward by the College President or Vice President for Institutional Advancement. The Foundation Executive Committee can review need and provide necessary additional resources for documented need.

The College Foundation and the Financial Aid Office work closely together. Over the past two years, we have identified significant improvements implemented strategies to expedite scholarship award allocation to students; this helps students make sound financial decisions related to college attendance. Additionally,

improvement goals were set and met. It also provides the Admissions staff with a tool to recruit new NIACC students.

In a community outreach capacity for the College, the areas supporting Other Distinctive Objectives serve a broad range of interests and stakeholders. It is fair to state that many of these stakeholders have a business and entrepreneurial orientation. This orientation requires us to be extremely customer focused and flexible in responding to the needs of our clientele and communities. We reach out into our communities to assist them in dealing with business and industry issues. Process improvement has included the redesign of curriculum for individuals interested in starting a business; new and strengthened partnerships internally between the Business Division and the JPEC resulting in curricular revisions supporting credited entrepreneurial education options and enhanced entrepreneurial educational opportunities in our district high schools; and a strengthened relationship with the University of Iowa, thereby providing opportunities for students to complete their Bachelor's degree with a focus in entrepreneurship without leaving North Iowa.

Category 3 – Understanding Students’ and Stakeholders’ Needs

Introduction

North Iowa Area Community College works diligently to meet the needs of stakeholders, including students and community members. The institution has employed the use of broad-based assessment tools and in-house assessment instruments to measure the changing needs of its stakeholders. Data retrieved from these measures are used to drive the decision making process for the College. In this manner, stakeholder perceptions of NIACC’s services and programs, familiarity with the institution, and perceptions of the institution are realized.

NIACC manages prospective student relationships through a close operational relationship with high school partners, career academies and programs, post-secondary enrollment options, dual credit, and TRIO services within our service area. Additionally, NIACC’s faculty and staff have a pivotal role in supporting current students and maintaining student relationships. Advising and supporting students is evidenced in classroom instruction before, during, and after class; institutional activities on and off campus; and program management within the Student Access Center and Student Learning Center. Community relationships are constructed and maintained through Iowa Works, community and workforce partnership programs, Continuing Education, John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center, Business Incubator, and Performing Arts Series.

Stakeholders’ constantly shifting needs require on-going attention and care. NIACC’s administration, faculty, and staff listen to and work with its constituents in identifying emerging trends and determine whether these trends are of significance. It can be difficult to select an appropriate course of action to meet the complex and numerous needs of communities NIACC serves and supports. All stakeholder requests are prioritized and then aligned with NIACC’s strategic plan and other key indicators to direct appropriate planning and resource allocation.

Satisfaction levels of NIACC’s stakeholder groups are substantiated through a variety of survey tools. Data from student survey instruments showed that NIACC students view institutional faculty and staff as being friendly, supportive, and created a sense of belonging. Data from school partnership surveys indicated high school partners were pleased with NIACC’s increased offerings, community support, and course rigor as well as NIACC’s ability to shape the future of high school students. Though the College administers career and technical advisory committee satisfaction surveys yearly, access to said data is not possible due to the lack of a repository for which the data would be stored.

One of the improvements earmarked for continued work regards NIACC’s developmental education program in mathematics, reading, and writing. The College is considering the viability of moving all developmental curricula into a “Mastery Model” (much like Person’s My Math Lab and My Writing Lab) where one-to-one opportunities with a trained tutor will be available to all students. Additionally, NIACC will need to address how research data will be housed so that institutional and community members may easily access desired data sets. Another improvement concerns maintenance of NIACC’s various websites so that data is current for institutional and public consumption. The College’s maturity in processes to understanding students and other stakeholder needs ranges from systematic to aligned.

3P1. How do you identify the changing needs of your student groups? How do you analyze and select a course of action regarding these needs?

Core Component 4.C.1. The College uses data retrieved from these measures to ascertain student and other stakeholder perceptions of NIACC's services and programs as well as familiarity with and perceptions of the institution. We believe the research will guide the decision-making process regarding improved student retention, persistence, and completion rates.

Core Component 4.C.2. NIACC strives to remain current with the changing needs of its students by utilizing broad-based assessment tools such as the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (CCFSSE), Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE), and Foundations of Excellence self-study (FoE). Additionally, NIACC employs other in-house assessment instruments such as:

- Student Perception Surveys
- local questions within the Educational Testing Services (ETS) Proficiency Profile exit exam
- Regional Career Readiness Council
- Community Advisory Committee Surveys
- Graduate Surveys
- Employment Needs Analysis Surveys
- Employer Surveys
- Current Practices Inventory (CPI)
- Program and Course Evaluations
- Student, community, staff, and faculty focus groups
- and one-on-one student counseling

Core Component 4.C.3. Recent institutional research at NIACC has led to the development of 20 "Immediate Actions" currently under consideration to improve student retention, persistence, and completion. Four of the twenty action items include

- 1) pilot Sirius Academics and Project Delta online courses from Florida State University as well-researched options for developmental education;
- 2) creation and implementation of the First Year Seminar;
- 3) recent GED graduates partake in the Pima Prep Academy model pilot to prepare said students for college-level work; and
- 4) during fall/spring staff development week, pilot a student Success Week involving math tutoring, writing support, college expectations, career explorations, and traditional orientation.

Core Component 4.C.4. One of the overarching challenges NIACC faces concerns how to store research data for use by administration, faculty, and staff. Currently, the College houses data in repositories accessible to select individuals. As a result, we have data, but little information available. This concern is further addressed in 3I1, paragraph 2.

3P2. How do you build and maintain a relationship with your students?

The construction and maintenance of relationships between NIACC and its students is through the provision of an assortment of student services. It is imperative these services are crafted to meet the needs of each individual student.

Relationship construction and maintenance with prospective students is seen through NIACC's close operational relationship with high school partners, Career Academies and Programs, Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO), Dual Credit, and TRIO services within our service area. As a member of the Career Readiness Council, NIACC consistently collaborates with representatives in implementing broad-based career education goals.

Faculty have a pivotal role in student support through their presence in the classroom, advising and supporting students before and after class as well as during office hours, and advising students in clubs and activities on and off campus. Staff members also assist in advising and supporting students outside of the classroom, in program management within the Student Access Center, and advising students in clubs and activities. The Student Learning Center coupled with the Student Access Center provides a myriad of student services. Such services would include (but are not limited to) Academic Placement and Support, Student Engagement/Mentoring, Learning Communities, Early Alert, Enrich Program, Disability Services, Personal Counseling, Career Counseling, Academic and Transfer Advising, Student Support Services, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Online Screenings, and Cooperative Education Internships.

NIACC supports its faculty members as they assume special projects for the College in exchange for monetary compensation or workload credit hours that assists them continuously to build relationships with their students. Additionally, NIACC's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) supports faculty in continuous development of their classroom skills by offering in-service opportunities ranging from pedagogy and andragogy to the latest advancements in classroom technology.

Community relationships are constructed and maintained through a variety of services. Such services would include Iowa Works, community and workforce partnership programs, Continuing Education, John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center, Business Incubator, and Performing Arts Series. NIACC firmly believes the developed relationships with our community are (and continues to be) an important foundation from which the College constructs and maintains relationships with prospective students.

3P3. How do you analyze the changing needs of your key stakeholder groups and select courses of action regarding these needs?

Core Competency 1.D.1. NIACC provides significant outreach services to the communities it serves to identify and keep current on the changing needs of key stakeholder groups in its commitment to the public good. NIACC currently has many outreach services:

- Beginning stages of Career and Academic Academies in communities to the west of NIACC
- Establishment of a STEM Academy in communities to the east of NIACC
- Development of a Diesel Program in response to community need
- Expansion of the Life-long Learning Program in its provision of educational opportunities to senior community members

- Construction of new student housing
- Current planning of a new Bio-Science and Health Building.

As a result, NIACC has a strong relationship with its communities and stakeholders.

Shifting stakeholder needs demand continuous attention and maintenance. NIACC administration, faculty, and staff listen closely to its constituents to identify significant emerging trends. We use focus groups, surveys, forums, and other tools to gauge the winds of change in regards to stakeholder needs and public good. Additionally, advisory committees provide continuous input for evolving industry standards and needs in career/technical programs.

Core Competency 1.D.2. and 1.D.3. It can be difficult to select an appropriate course of action to meet the complex and multifarious needs of the communities that NIACC serves and supports. Requests are offered by practically anyone and yet, all requests will be given equal consideration. The requests for services and programs generally exceed the institutional resources available. In addressing this situation, NIACC will prioritize needs through a needs assessment, strategic plan development, along with other key indicators that directs planning and resource allocation. Stakeholder requests that align with strategic initiatives are given approval by NIACC's Board of Directors resultant in funding priority.

3P4. How do you build and maintain relationships with your key stakeholders?

NIACC's President, Vice Presidents, Academic Chairs, faculty and staff meet regularly with their peers from other Iowa community colleges to share information and identify statewide as well as national trends regarding programs and services, service on community boards, participation in civic and business organizations, involvement with government and industry boards and committees, and continuous work with Iowa Works in the identification, development, and expansion of training and educational resources for business, industry, and human services initiatives. It is through these efforts that regional needs, concerns, and trends are identified, relationships with key stakeholders are built, and the public good is maintained.

3P5. How do you determine if you should target new student and stakeholder groups with your educational offerings and services?

Outreach efforts (as outlined in 3P1 through 3P4) in conjunction with student and stakeholder surveys allow the institution to determine if new student and stakeholder groups should be addressed within our educational offerings, ascertaining the relevancy of curricular needs, and meeting new student and stakeholder group needs. As with 3P3 (Changing Stakeholder Needs), a proposal to serve a new student or stakeholder group may be initiated by anyone and at any level. Such proposals will be discussed and reviewed within divisions directly affected by the addition of a new program or service. Appropriate governing bodies such as President's Council, Academic Affairs Council, or College Senate will award approval. NIACC's Board of Directors will give final approval when necessitated and is typically appraised of outreach activities at monthly Board meetings.

3P6. How do you collect complaint information from students and other stakeholders? How do you analyze this feedback and select courses of action? How do you communicate these actions to your students and stakeholders?

Institutional policies and procedures are formalized and publicized online in *NIACC's 2012-2013 Student Handbook* regarding all complaints (faculty, staff, institutional practice and policy, harassment, discrimination, etc.). The Dean of Student Development, along with other key administrators, is available for discussions with students and other stakeholders regarding all concerns and potential formal, written complaints.

In the event a student perceives a faculty member has mistreated him or her, the student is encouraged to follow the protocol outlined in the *NIACC 2012-2013 Student Handbook*. This type of complaint centers on unclear or inconsistently applied divisional/classroom policies and procedures and may involve whether the student has extenuating circumstances that may directly affect the educational process within and outside of the classroom environment. Whenever possible, however, students are encouraged to talk with faculty member first in attempting to find resolution. If the result of said conversation is unsatisfactory to the student, then the Academic Chair is brought into the discussion. If the result of said second conversation continues to be unsatisfactory to the student, then the Dean of Student Development will be consulted. The Dean of Student Development will provide confidential counsel on how to resolve the complaint, and when appropriate identify the proper steps to follow should the student choose to file a formal written complaint. The implementation process surrounding the writing of the student complaint will be handled by the Dean of Student Development.

If the student's complaint regards discrimination (including harassment based on sex, age, race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, etc.) by faculty, staff, business partner, vendor, guest, or third party member, the student is to contact the Dean of Student Development immediately. The Dean of Student Development (or appointee) will then conduct an investigation in conjunction with NIACC's Human Resources office. Records connected with the complaint are managed by the appointed investigator and are housed separately from student academic records.

3R1. How do you determine the satisfaction of your students and other stakeholders? What measures of student and other stakeholder satisfaction do you collect and analyze regularly?

NIACC utilizes a systemic approach in data gathering regarding student and stakeholder levels of satisfaction through survey tools. The College consistently utilizes course and program level surveys of student perception, graduate, employer, and advisory committee to collect data. We use data extrapolated from the specific surveys to regulate and cultivate course competency development, implementation, and instructional design. A concern that has surfaced regards the unavailability of data from the four aforementioned surveys for institutional reporting purposes in this document.

In order to provide quality service to students and stakeholders, the 2011 CCSSE survey was administered to a student sample across all disciplines throughout the College. Question 13.2 dealt with the level of student satisfaction in 11 benchmark categories. Question 11 concerned with quality of relationships in three benchmark categories.

3R2. What are your performance results for student satisfaction?

In 2011, CCSSE mean scores showed NIACC students were very satisfied with computer labs and student organizations, but not at all satisfied with childcare.

Table 3.1: NIACC CCSSE survey services results comparison

Item	NIACC	
	N	Mean
13.2 How satisfied you are with the services?		
1 = Not at all, 2 = Somewhat, 3 = Very		
Satisfaction: Academic advising/planning	431	2.23
Satisfaction: Career Counseling	321	2.11
Satisfaction: Job placement assistance	174	1.90
Satisfaction: Peer or other tutoring	234	2.12
Satisfaction: Skill labs (writing, math, etc.)	310	2.31
Satisfaction: Child care	104	1.70
Satisfaction: Financial aid advising	383	2.25
Satisfaction: Computer lab	446	2.60
Satisfaction: Student organizations	232	2.14
Satisfaction: Transfer credit assistance	249	2.16
Satisfaction: Services for people with disabilities	111	2.09

3R3. What are your performance results for building relationships with your students?

Overall, NIACC students reported their relationships with instructors and other students to be friendly, supportive, and created a sense of belonging. Though reported at a lower level (not significant), NIACC students reported their relationships with administrative personnel and offices to be friendly, supportive, and created a sense of belonging.

Table 3.2: NIACC CCSSE survey relationships results comparison

Item	NIACC	
	N	Mean
11. Mark the number that best represents the quality of your relationships with people at this college.		
1 = Unfriendly, unsupportive, sense of alienation... 7 = friendly, supportive, sense of belonging		
Other students	506	5.60
Instructors	506	5.64
Administrative personnel and offices	504	5.05

3R4. What are your performance results for stakeholder satisfaction?

Every three years, NIACC’s School Partnership Department/Career Link Program, in conjunction with the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP), requires its approved community college members to survey high school principals, counselors, and teachers who offer our College classes in their school. One particular question was qualitative in nature and allowed each individual to let their “voice” be heard. The most recent results from spring 2012 are as follows:

Question: What is the single greatest impact Career Link has had on your school?

Summary of top responses – High School Principals

- Increased offerings
- Community support

- Made *Iowa Test of Educational Development* (ITED) meaningful to students
- Better engagement during senior year
- More options
- Adds gravity to our upper level course offerings

Summary of top responses – High School Counselors

- Helps us meet the students' changing needs
- Promotes greater student effort on ITED's scores
- Improved household appreciation because of the college courses our high school offers
- Increased school exposure to students from other schools and communities
- Offers greater challenge to high-performing students
- Better job market preparation
- Curbs dropout rates
- Provides ability to earn college credit
- Helps us meet state requirements
- Improved school reputation regarding college access

Summary of top responses – High School Teachers

- Creates goals for lower-grade level students
- Provides more options for students
- Enhances the reputation and attractiveness of the community college
- Helps the school recruit students new to the district
- Provide the foundation for students' future college success
- Saves students large amounts of money
- Helps students understand college expectations
- Provides connection with other educators
- Increase school district pride regarding offering for students

Judging from the large survey return rate (nearly 90%) by area high school teachers, counselors, and principals coupled with participant responses, it is evident that NIACC's Career Link program is an integral and valued part of the high school curriculum. Almost all respondents provided written comments, and almost all comments were positive. This provided evidence that strong relationships have developed over the course of many years working collaboratively with NIACC administrators, faculty, and staff.

Though the College administers career and technical advisory committee surveys yearly, there is not a repository for the collected data. As a result, it is not currently possible to access or report the data for institutional purposes.

3R6. How do your results for the performance of your processes for Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs compare with the performance results of other higher education organizations and, if appropriate, of organizations outside of higher education?

NIACC's 2011 student satisfaction mean scores from the recent *CCSSE* survey (see Table 3.1: NIACC *CCSSE* survey services results comparison in section 3R2) were at or above small community colleges and cohort community colleges in many benchmarks:

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- academic advising/planning (+.06 small colleges, .00 cohort)
- career counseling (+.04 small colleges, +.06 cohort)
- job placement assistance (+.05 small colleges, +.09 cohort)
- skill labs (+.03 small colleges, +.04 cohort)
- financial aid advising (+.02 cohort)
- computer lab (+.09 small colleges, +.11 cohort)
- student organizations (+.11 small colleges, +.15 cohort)
- transfer credit assistance (+.06 small colleges, +.09 cohort)
- services for people with disabilities (+.04 small colleges, +.06 cohort)

The largest mean score difference with comparative institutions was evidenced in four benchmarks:

- job placement assistance (+.09 cohort)
- computer lab (+.09 small colleges, +.11 cohort)
- student organizations (+.11 small colleges, +.15 cohort)
- transfer credit assistance (+.09 cohort).

NIACC's 2011 student satisfaction mean scores were below small community colleges and cohort community colleges in some benchmarks:

- academic advising/planning (-.06 small colleges)
- peer or other tutoring (-.07 small colleges, -.06 cohort)
- child care (-.12 small colleges, -.08 cohort)
- financial aid advising (-.04 small colleges).

The largest mean score difference with comparative institutions was evidenced in the childcare benchmark.

NIACC's 2011 student relationships with institutional personnel mean scores were at or above small community colleges and cohort community colleges in three benchmarks:

- other students (.00 small colleges, +.12 cohort)
- instructors (+.03 cohort)
- administrative personnel and offices (+.08 cohort).

The largest mean score difference with comparative institutions was evidenced in the other students benchmark.

NIACC's 2011 student relationships (see Table 3.2: NIACC CCSSE survey relationships results comparison in section 3R3) with institutional personnel mean scores were below small community colleges and cohort community colleges in the instructors (-.09 small colleges) and the administrative personnel and offices (-.12 small colleges) benchmarks. The largest mean score difference with comparative institutions was evidenced in the instructors (-.09 small colleges) and the administrative personnel and offices (-.12 small colleges) benchmarks.

At this time, NIACC was not able to find comparative data with other Iowa community colleges.

3I1. What recent improvements have you made in this category? How systematic and comprehensive are your processes and performance results for Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs?

The *CCSSE* survey provided both local and national benchmark data to measure how well the College meets student needs. NIACC will need to investigate other tools (i.e. ACT survey) to measure student satisfaction in a much larger, overarching range of College functions (i.e. food services, parking, residence hall, course and instruction, faculty attitude, staff attitude, student government, admission procedures, and testing and grading system).

Additionally, NIACC will need to address how to store research data for use by administration, faculty, and staff. Currently, data are housed in repositories accessible to select individuals. As a result, we have data, but little information available. This can be evidenced in current Advisory Committee surveys that are housed by division and are not available to the public or institutional members. NIACC websites that may publicize such data is outdated and irrelevant to current stakeholder trends. Website management is another challenge NIACC faces in maintaining relevant and meaningful data for institutional extrapolation and purposes. Currently, NIACC is working with *Ellucian Colleague* (formerly *SunGard*, associated with *Datatel*) in updating and improving efficiencies of institutional websites across campus.

One of the improvements NIACC is currently addressing concerns developmental education in mathematics, reading, and writing. Data from the 2011 *CCSSE* survey indicated that students were somewhat satisfied with our current tutoring services. NIACC is in the process of moving current developmental reading courses into a Mastery Model (much like Pearson's My Math Lab and My Writing Lab) where one-to-one tutoring with a trained tutor will be available to students across all curricular areas. Additionally, Mastery Writing and Mastery Reading will be incorporated with other courses (Anatomy and Physiology, for example) as learning communities. NIACC is currently working on implementing a noncredit college readiness course to be offered during summer, winterim, and first eight-week sessions.

3I2. How do your culture and infrastructure help you to select specific processes to improve and to set targets for improved performance results in Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs?

As stated earlier in section 3P3, it is difficult to select an appropriate course of action to meet the complex and multifarious needs of constituents that NIACC serves and supports. In addressing this situation, NIACC will prioritize needs through a needs assessment, institutional strategic plan development, along with other key indicators that directs planning and resource allocation. Currently, NIACC is drafting a master academic plan in conjunction with a master (academic) business plan. Both master plans will be aligned with NIACC's institutional strategic plan. Student and stakeholder needs that align with strategic initiatives will be given approval by NIACC's Board of Directors resultant in funding priority. An example of such an alignment with strategic initiatives concerns the need for an institutional researcher. NIACC has completed and submitted a Title III Grant Application for the 2013 fall term. Part of this application regards filling the institutional researcher position that was vacated during the fall 2008 term. Due to economic restraints the institutional researcher position has not been filled. The Title III Grant will allow monies to be allocated for meeting this current institutional need.

Category 4 – Valuing People

Introduction

North Iowa Area Community College knows those who teach and assist students are their most valuable resource. The long-standing hiring processes works to ensure all hires have the appropriate background and skills required by each position. NIACC has 227 full-time and 134 part-time employees. Full-time employees include 6 Administrators, 81 Faculty, 99 Professional Salaried Staff (PSS), 31 Office Clerical, and 10 Facilities Management staff. The student-faculty ratio is 17:1. In lieu of union representation on campus, NIACC has maintained an annual negotiation process between administration and employee categories. In 2010, NIACC was recognized as one of the Great Colleges to Work For by the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

The College provides a competitive fringe benefit package that includes health insurance, choice of retirement benefits (IPERS or TIAA-CREF), on-campus training and staff development, employee tuition reimbursement from any accredited college or university, and dependent tuition reimbursement for NIACC courses. The College recognizes staff for years of service, and retirees receive special recognition upon leaving the College. At each monthly Board meeting, several staff members are recognized for making significant contributions to the College. The Wellness program continues to expand and now includes participation from full-time employees, part-time employees, adjunct instructors, and students. NIACC continues to make improvements to provide a safe and secure learning and working environment for both staff and students. The Emergency Response Plan is currently being revised using a safety consultant, and key individuals on campus recently completed NIMS (National Incident Management System) training.

All job descriptions are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they are updated and current with the needs of the College. Within the past year, all evaluation instruments have been reviewed and revised to provide a clearer process, employee input, and development of yearly goals. Reviews are conducted annually and are directly linked to strategic goals.

The College is aware that several systematic and comprehensive processes are in place at NIACC for Valuing People and are moving toward aligned approaches, but we recognize this is an area which needs attention. Most specifically, the upcoming wage study for salaried employees as well as seeking appropriate comparisons with other educational institutions and outside organizations. Additional processes and targets that align with the institution's strategic goals will be sought after to measure *Valuing People* more effectively. The AQIP process is moving us closer at identifying necessary elements needed for our students, staff, and the community we serve.

4P1. How do you identify the specific credentials, skills, and values required for faculty, staff, and administrators?

The formal hiring process begins with a review of the job description by the supervisor and selection committee to identify the job duties and the qualifications necessary to fill the position. The required and preferred credentials and skills become part of the position's job description and the job opening announcement. The pool of applicants are reviewed by the selection committee using key characteristics identified to be the most important identifiers available via the application material. Specific credentials or skills would be noted in the key characteristics and given proper weight to applicant scoring. From the pool, ratings are averaged and top scorers are brought to campus for an interview. This allows the committee to gain further knowledge of their skills and determine if there is a fit with the College's core values.

Faculty (both adjunct and full-time) are required to meet Iowa Code requirements for instructors to have earned at least a Master's degree and a minimum of 12 semester hours of graduate level courses in the field of instruction (arts and sciences division) or a Bachelor's degree or 6,000 hours of recent and relevant experience in the occupational area (career and technical area).

NIACC also holds National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) accreditation which requires the same qualifications as the Iowa Code for all instructors teaching these concurrent courses, whether they are a NIACC instructor or high school instructor. These qualifications are monitored by the appropriate division chairperson.

With current employees, advisory committees for program areas help keep the College abreast of current business happenings if new skills or credentials are necessary. The advisory committee members are comprised of business owners, workers, and community members.

Additionally, all job opening announcements and job descriptions include the statement that employees will perform in a manner that strengthens the coordination and cooperation of all organizational components of the College, thereby showing the importance and value of teamwork across campus.

4P2. How do your hiring processes make certain that the people you employ possess the credentials, skills, and values you require?

Core Component 3.C.1. NIACC continually monitors enrollment numbers within courses to insure sufficient courses are available. If additional sections or courses are in demand, alternative methods of offering are investigated as well as the possibility of employing adjuncts – or in some instances – additional full-time faculty. In conjunction with enrollment monitoring, NIACC also works hard to maintain a balanced workload for faculty to include classroom time, office availability, and non-classroom roles for faculty (for example, assessment and curriculum development).

Core Component 3.C.2. NIACC's current hiring process has been in place for several decades. The continuity of the process as well as adherence to specific guidelines insures good hires resulting in low rates of employee turnover. As a part of the application for administrative and faculty positions, a comment sheet further investigates the candidate's views on educational problems or issues today as well as the candidate's philosophy of the function of a comprehensive community college. Faculty interviewees are asked to complete a 15-minute microteaching demonstration during the interview process. Other categories may be required to complete skill-based testing or to provide project samples to determine skill level. Transcripts are required of all positions if postsecondary education is identified as a qualification, and official transcripts are necessary for faculty upon hire. We also use transcripts to determine whether faculty members meet Iowa Code requirements, and NACEP accreditation dictates the same qualifications as the Iowa Code for all instructors whether they are a NIACC instructor or a high school instructor. All faculty members new to NIACC must demonstrate through education or experience that they have achieved minimum competency standards. New faculty members have up to three years to meet the minimum standards in Learning Process and Diverse Learners, Instructional Planning, Instructional Strategies, Learning Environment and Classroom Management, Communication, Assessment and Evaluation of Student Learning, and the Community College.

Adjunct and part-time hires are interviewed and offered employment through division Chairpersons or supervisors ensuring proper credentials, skills, and values.

Presidential approval is necessary for full-time staff hires, and the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs approves and offers all full-time faculty hires. All full-time employment approvals are subject to Board of Directors approval.

Core Component 3.C.3. All NIACC faculty are required to serve the probationary period delineated in Section 279.19 of the Iowa Code. A written evaluation of an entry employee is to occur at least twice each year during the first two years of employment. Following the probationary period, the entire evaluation component is required every three years. Every year, all faculty (including adjuncts) are required to complete a Quality Faculty Plan.

Core Component 3.C.4. Currently all faculty credentials are housed within spreadsheets and are updated when changes occur. In 2013, we began the process of inputting credentials (full-time and adjunct) with the Ellucian Colleague system in order to produce reports which are linked with course offerings. In addition to professional growth, faculty have access to 13 days of on-campus development offerings. These development offerings are available to full-time and adjunct instructors as well as staff. The recent development and continued expansion of CETL (Center in Teaching and Learning) serves as a resource for all employees teaching NIACC courses in all venues across our district by providing educational support services and supporting innovative pedagogy and assessment methodology.

Core Component 3.C.5. As per the full-time faculty agreement, each instructor will schedule, post, and maintain a minimum of five (5) hours per week during which student-initiated conferences shall be given highest priority. There currently is not a requirement for office hours for adjunct instructors since the great majority do not have offices on campus. All instructors have their contact information readily available on their course syllabus.

Core Component 3.C.6. Student support services play a critical role for the institution. Professional growth and continued education from accredited institutions are encouraged. Both the Librarian and Counselors are required to complete Quality Plans annually. Coaches are required to have coaching certification and training. The Learning Services Division Chairperson is assigned the task of hiring tutors which are appropriately qualified and trained. Beyond specific conferences and trainings, the training that occurs for Admissions and Financial Aid, as well as other support service areas are primarily hands-on experience with veteran staff.

4P3. How do you recruit, hire, and retain employees?

Recruiting New Employees. Open positions are posted on NIACC's website. Dependent upon the position, openings are advertised locally, regionally, or nationally to seek the most qualified, diverse group possible. Appropriate professional organizations are also targeted.

Hiring Employees. NIACC Board-approved employees are hired through our formalized hiring process as described in Section 4P1 and 4P2. With our branding of a Perfect Fit for You for our students, the College also wants that to be true to for our employees. Our hiring process can be quite lengthy, but we believe it aids in our employee retention efforts.

Retain Employees. NIACC offers excellent benefits and competitive wages. The Wellness program actively offers a variety of monthly activities, and all employees have access to the Recreation Center and its modern equipment and personal training opportunities. Employees are offered tuition reimbursement from accredited institutions, and their dependents are able to be reimbursed for NIACC coursework upon successful completion. Three separate on-campus staff development weeks (August, January, May) help employees gain knowledge of new processes and technologies.

4P4. How do you orient all employees to your institution's history, mission, and values?

After full-time employees are hired, the College makes an extensive effort to orient them to the institution. On their first day of employment, new hires meet with Human Resources, completing

necessary paperwork and learning the policies of the College. New faculty members are brought on campus one week prior to the August Staff Development Week for orientation, which includes initial meetings with the President and Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs. These faculty members also receive monthly orientation throughout their first year. Peer mentors are also assigned to new faculty by their chairperson.

Adjuncts receive a handbook and are required to complete an online orientation assessment. Division chairs mentor new adjuncts and provide feedback guiding them in growing their teaching strategies.

Position appropriate training also takes place within the first year of employment (Harassment, Right to Know, Child Abuse Policy Compliance, etc.). In the last piece of striving to make the orientation process the stepping stone for employee success, employees celebrating one year anniversaries meet individually with the Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and Organizational Development to discuss their first year at the College.

4P5. How do you plan for changes in personnel?

At its annual retreat, President's Council members address changes in faculty and staff positions in order to keep with strategic priorities and budget realities. If a position is vacated midyear, approval to fill the position must be granted by President's Council.

4P6. How do you design your work processes and activities so they contribute both to organizational productivity and employee satisfaction?

All employees are encouraged to discuss methods of improving work processes and activities and these are incorporated into the annual evaluation process. Cross-functional teams exist across campus to ensure awareness of processes, project completion, and the creation of new ideas for greater staff and student satisfaction and engagement.

A formalized process regarding technology requests has been developed with the creation of the Enterprise Applications Committee in 2011. It is the charge of this committee to prioritize technology requests from all areas. Currently, standardized processes are being developed with the creation of the myNIACC portal for both students and staff.

The switch to AQIP by continually self-assessing processes across campus has enabled the College to have a clearer view of what needs to be changed in order for NIACC to function better for employees and for the community it serves.

4P7. How do you ensure the ethical practices of all of your employees?

The NIACC Board of Directors adopted the Strategic Plan for 2011-2016, and following the mission, it lists NIACC's Core Values, including academic excellence, integrity, and community. These are the foundations for all strategic priorities developed by the Board, the administration, the faculty, and the staff.

Core Component 2.A. NIACC ensures ethical practices of all employees through:

- An Employee Standards of Ethics policy reviewed in new employee orientation
- Financial audits occur to ensure College policies and procedures as well as program compliance
- Annual financial audit of the Foundation

- Harassment prevention training
- Child abuse policy compliance
- Criminal background
- Board of Directors Standards of Ethics are covered during new Board member orientation
- IRB process

As stated earlier, one of NIACC's core values is community. Service to our community is valued and is encouraged of NIACC employees. The purpose of NIACC's Community Service program is to support activities that enhance and serve communities in which we live and work and to support the issues that affect quality of life. The intention is to participate in giving back and supporting the community and allow the employees of NIACC to share in that effort.

Technology plays a very big role in teaching and learning. NIACC's technology policy encourages staff to make appropriate and innovative uses of electronic information resources and technologies to improve the academic programs and services to staff and students while encouraging students to make appropriate and innovative uses of such resources to further their learning. NIACC recognizes and adheres to all copyright laws, software licenses, and intellectual property rights. It is also expected that each College employee and student follow ethical and professional guidelines and abide by College policies when using College computer equipment and services to access the internet.

Core Component 2.E.1. When research involves human subjects, NIACC has an Institutional Review Board (IRB) that oversees all research requests. This procedure is intended to ensure that College faculty, students, and staff are engaged in research that is methodically sound and does not violate Board policy, College operating procedures, or federal regulations in regards to the protection of human participants and subjects. The NIACC IRB process involves an Approval Procedure (inclusive of a research proposal form and meeting requirements of Protection of Human Subjects), Criteria for Approval (soundness of rationale and appropriateness of the sampling, methodology, instrumentation, and treatment of data), Timeline and Notification of Approval or Disapproval (exempt or expedited research), Research Misconduct (in compliance with Federal guidelines), Findings of Research Misconduct, and Evidence of Research Misconduct. Research project guidelines are provided that outline potential risks to participants and subjects; equitable selection participants and subjects; informed consent documentation; confidentiality; participant and subject compensation; knowledge to be gained; how benefits to research participants and subjects justifies incurred risks; and support services available to participants and subjects in the event of harm is evidenced.

Core Component 2.E.2.and 2.E.3. In orientation, new students are guided in the ethical use of information resources as well as during library orientation. Current and returning students are made aware of the academic honesty and integrity policies and enforcements through the Student Handbook and NIACC Catalog via the portal.

Many positions have access to institutional data. We expect data users to access institutional data only in their conduct of College business; to respect confidentiality and privacy of individuals whose records they may access; to observe any ethical restrictions that may apply to data to which they have access; and to abide by applicable laws and policies with respect to access, use or disclosure of information.

4P8. How do you determine training needs? How do you align employee training with short- and long-range organizational plans, and how does it strengthen your instructional and noninstructional programs and services?

Training needs come from a variety of venues such as mandated employee training, new technology implementation, employee recommendations, and strategic priorities (as outlined below):

Keeping NIACC First in Education

NIACC's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) serves as a resource for all employees teaching NIACC courses, in all venues across our district by providing educational support services and supporting innovative pedagogy and assessment methodology. The mission of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning is to inspire and enable faculty to enhance their teaching potential and effectiveness such that students are more likely to achieve the desired learning outcomes. Sessions are offered throughout the year and during the three Staff Development Weeks.

Keeping NIACC First in Leadership

NIACC's innovation is recognized through the research, development, and application of innovative educational methods of instruction; course and program development; workforce preparation; small business development and entrepreneurship; and community engagement.

Keeping NIACC First in Partnership

NIACC's new educational partnerships take advantage of new teaching and learning strategies, partnerships with other educational institutions, community-based organizations, governmental agencies, and corporate partners in support of student learning.

4P9. How do you train and develop all faculty, staff, and administrators to contribute fully and effectively throughout their careers with your institution? How do you reinforce this training?

Being an educational institution, it is important for NIACC to support continued learning for all faculty, staff, and administrators. This training is reinforced through the offering of tuition reimbursement, sabbatical leave, and professional development leave. NIACC is also an active member of the NIACC Service Partnership that provides training to businesses and industries in North Iowa. Dr. Derr is a member of President's Club, an organization that provides meetings and speakers to CEO's in the service area. Conferences and seminars are open to staff as the budget allows.

4P10. How do you design and use your personnel evaluation system? How do you align this system with your objectives for both instructional and non-instructional programs and services?

In 2011, the College developed a new instrument for performance evaluation. We determined the new instrument and process would be used for all non-faculty employees beginning in the 2012 evaluation cycle following mandatory training for supervisors by a consultant. This new instrument evaluates employee development, performance assessment, and goal setting. It has been well received and will continue to aid the College in moving ahead with strategic priorities.

In 2012, we formed a Faculty Evaluation Study Committee and a new process and evaluation form. It will be implemented beginning in the 2013 evaluation process and incorporates the existing Continuing Professional Development Plan, Oral Competency, Student Perception Surveys, and a Peer or Division Chair Classroom Observation. Adjunct instructors are required to complete an annual Adjunct Quality Plan. As with full-time instructors, the *Oral Competency/English Proficiency* information is gathered

annually. The *Student Perception of Instruction* information is gathered during the first three years of teaching and every third year afterwards.

Administrator evaluations require the input of a 360 evaluation instrument. Input from subordinates, peers, and community members are sought on such areas as transformational leadership, building strategic alliances and relationships, commitment to excellence, and cultivating change and diversity of thought. The evaluation of the President is conducted by the Board of Directors at the June meeting.

Every even numbered year, employees evaluate their supervisor in an upward evaluation process. The results of the evaluation are confidential and are compiled and shared with the supervisor's supervisor.

The evaluation process is directly linked to all College strategic goals and provides an opportunity to review job descriptions for accuracy. It is important to not only reflect on what has been accomplished, but also to move ahead continuously and establish goals for the coming year.

4P11. How do you design your employee recognition, reward, compensation, and benefit systems to align with your objectives for both instructional and non-instructional programs and services?

Recognition and Reward –

- All new employees are recognized during a portion of the All-Staff meetings (in August, January, and May).
- During the January All-Staff meeting, two peer-nominated employees for achievement beyond their daily routine obligations in areas including student support, service to the College, leadership, and community engagement will be recognized with a \$500 Honorarium through the NIACC Foundation.
- During the August All-Staff meeting, two full-time faculty members receive Excellence in Teaching awards and one adjunct instructor during the evening meeting held during that week for both full-time and adjunct instructors. Graduating students that represent all areas of campus are invited to submit nominations for this prestigious award. Each student who completed the Proficiency Profile exam was given a chance to nominate a NIACC instructor for recognition with the Excellence in Teaching award.
- During the May All-Staff meeting, employees are recognized for their length of service.
- Additionally, several staff members are recognized at the monthly Board of Directors meeting for making significant contributions to the College.

Compensation and Benefit Systems –

- All employee categories meet with administration annually for a meet and confer process to discuss compensation and benefits and to change the separate employee agreements. In 2011, a wage and classification study for full-time hourly employees was completed by RSM McGladrey. This study provided recommendations on pay and job classification that the College is implementing. A similar wage and classification study for the salaried group is slated for the next year.

4P12. How do you determine key issues related to the motivation of your faculty, staff, and administrators? How do you analyze these issues and select courses of action?

NIACC identifies key issues related to the motivation of faculty, staff, and administrators through the bi-annual Campus Climate Survey. The results compared with previous years are shared with employees and President's Council.

Meet and confer meetings take place every year between category leadership and administration. Key issues are discussed during this process and priorities are developed.

Personnel Affairs Council (PAC) consists of leadership from Faculty, PSS, Office Clerical, Facilities Management, the Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Organizational Development, and the permanent Council Chairperson. It is the responsibility of PAC to hear all matters of staff welfare and morale brought before it by any member of the staff, and they report directly to College Senate.

4P13. How do you provide for and evaluate employee satisfaction, health and safety, and wellbeing?

NIACC evaluates employee satisfaction in a variety of formats. The Personnel Affairs Council currently evaluates the Campus Climate survey. The College's three All-Staff meetings (August, January, and May) are venues to bring staff up to date, to celebrate successes, and to recognize achievements. The President also meets twice a year with employee groups and during intermittent Cracker Barrels throughout the year. These Cracker Barrels have few set agenda items, and we use them as open forums for employees to voice concerns or questions before the President. This allows all employees to be involved in policy changes, to resolve possible conflict, and to create awareness of new processes. In addition, employees are able to evaluate their supervisors bi-annually as part of the upward evaluation process.

Employee Satisfaction. The Personnel Affairs Council seeks to offer a generous benefit package to all Board-approved employees. This benefits package includes the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), tuition and dependent tuition reimbursement, and flexes spending. Annually, staff are recognized on Administrative Professionals Day and during the Facilities Appreciation Breakfast. We conduct the employee Campus Climate survey bi-annually, during odd-numbered years.

Health and Safety. Campus safety is very important for visitors and staff. NIACC is well known for its clean and well-maintained campus. There is timely repair and upkeep of buildings and parking lots. If there would be an incident on campus, an incident report form is filed with the Business Office. There are several emergency phones on campus. A campus emergency notification system was implemented in 2008. There are automatic external defibrillators (AED) in all buildings on campus and staff can voluntarily receive annual training.

In 2012, the College contracted with Elizabeth Faber, an independent consultant, to do a thorough investigation of NIACC's emergency preparedness, and we are currently implementing Elizabeth's suggestions in different levels of phases. Employees are encouraged to have a personal and departmental safety plan. Key individuals on campus recently completed NIMS (National Incident Management System) training.

Wellbeing. NIACC was Mason City's first workplace certified Blue Zone employer in 2012. A number of staff continue to be involved with the Blue Zone project for Mason City. The Wellness program is very active on campus, and incorporates full-time employees, part-time employees, and student involvement. The Wellness program offers a range of activities, including the annual triathlon, poker walk, cooking demonstrations, and chair massages. As a branch of the Wellness program, employees began a Book Club, Garden, Club, and Quilting Club.

NIACC contracts with Mercy Medical Center – North Iowa to provide an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to employees and their dependents. Workstation ergonomics videos are available to all staff. If

the videos do not solve the problem, a professional is contracted with through United Heartland to help employees set up their workstation.

4R1. What measures of valuing people do you collect and analyze regularly?

NIACC regularly collects and analyzes measures for valuing people through the Campus Climate Survey, Upward Evaluation (staff evaluation of supervisor), wellness participation in offerings as well as a needs and interest survey for planning for upcoming sessions, and campus safety

4R2. What are your performance results in valuing people?

The following are the results of the Campus Climate Survey and the questions that are analyzed and shared.

Areas that were improved upon:

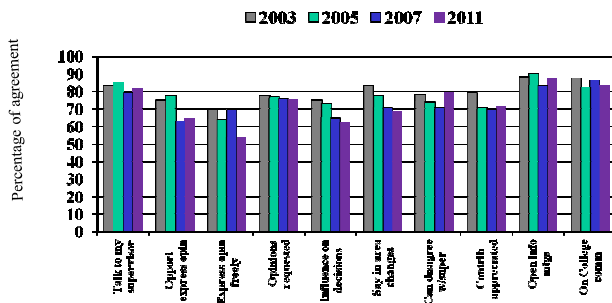
- I can talk to my supervisor about things that need to be changed
- There are sufficient opportunities to express my opinion
- I can disagree with my supervisor and not fear reprisal
- My contributions are appreciated by other staff
- Informational meetings are open to all staff

Areas that need improvement:

- Staff can express opinions freely here
- I am asked for my opinions and ideas
- I can influence the decisions which affect my job
- I have a say in changes in my schedule/assignment/work area
- I can volunteer for College committee

Table 4.1: Spring Campus Climate Survey

**Campus Climate Survey
Faculty/Staff - Spring**



2003 – 143 (63%) respondents; 2005 – 103 (45%) respondents; 2007 – 119 (51%) respondents; 2009 – another survey instrument was used; 2011 – 129 (57%) respondents

6/2012

Upon review, we discovered that the Campus Climate survey is quite long, and since we only analyze only ten questions each year, it seemed time for a change. The Personnel Affairs Council has been given the task of developing a shorter comprehensive survey to be implemented in March 2013.

4R3. What evidence indicates the productivity and effectiveness of your faculty, staff, and administrators in helping you achieve your goals?

Annual divisional and program goals are to be directly tied to the strategic plan and to identify ways in which they can be measured and evaluated for effectiveness.

4R4. How do your results for the performance of your processes for Valuing People compare with the performance results of other higher education institutions and, if appropriate, of organizations outside of higher education?

In 2010, NIACC was recognized as one of the Great Colleges to Work For by the *Chronicle of Higher Education* http://chroniclegreatcolleges.com/images/documents/09colleges_recognized_by_category_and_enrollment_size.pdf. The hourly wage and classification study has been another official comparison that has been made with other organizations for *Valuing People*. This study will be extended to salaried employees within the next year. NIACC will continue to look for appropriate comparisons for valuing people in higher education institutions and those outside of higher education.

4I1. What recent improvements have you made in this category? How systematic and comprehensive are your processes and performance results for Valuing People?

The most recent improvements in valuing people would be the offering of online harassment training to all staff. The Wellness program has expanded this past year to include part-time staff as well as adjuncts. While few systematic and comprehensive processes are in place at NIACC for *Valuing People*, this is an area which could be improved upon.

4I2. How do your culture and infrastructure help you to select specific processes to improve and to set targets for improved performance results in Valuing People?

College Senate has been given an expanded role in order to increase the participation of the staff in the governance of the institution, to provide for reliable channels of communication between all segments of the College community, and to constitute a structure through which the College might better implement its objectives while adapting its programs and activities to the changing demands of higher education.

The Personnel Affairs Council (PAC) has the responsibility of hearing all matters of staff welfare and morale brought before it by any member of staff. Their current agenda and minutes are found at <https://sites.google.com/site/personnelaffairscouncil/>. PAC is a reporting body to College Senate.

Every year, administration meets with employee groups in a meet and confer process to discuss changes and improvements in benefits with the employee agreements. This process allows open discussions with employee groups regarding compensation, benefits, and other terms of employment.

NIACC will seek additional processes and targets that align with the institution's strategic goals to measure *Valuing People* more effectively.

Category 5 – Leading and Communicating

Introduction

Over last five years, the College has progressed from reacting to situations to aligning a process for leading and communicating. We have aligned leading at all levels of the College through a system of department goals, action strategies, and budget. Initiatives are purposeful and linked to the College's overall vision and strategic priorities.

The shared governance of the College provides many opportunities for employees to engage in setting the direction of the College and seeking future opportunities. Our multi-faceted approach to employee engagement in decision making processes aids in communicating decisions and actions.

Meetings at the College are open for employees to attend. We live the open door policy from posting agenda and meeting minutes from governance committees to providing the budget scenario to each of our four employee groups.

Employees are concerned with intercollege communication. Although several modes of communication currently exist, there is room to improve in order to provide more meaningful and timely information. The College is heavily engaged in many projects currently (some are formal Action Projects, but many are not) to advance the strategies from Foundations of Excellence, the Technology Plan and the Student Success and Completion Plan. The AQIP Quality Council (AQC) gleaned the importance of improving communications from feedback from employees during a recent (January 2013) All-Staff activity. Developing a communication plan has been slated as a future action project.

The focus of this category in the future is to focus on communication strategies. The College would benefit from feedback from the reviewers on successful communication strategies and plans.

5P1. How are your institution's mission and values defined and reviewed? When and by whom?

Core Component 1.A.1. Ultimately, as a College with local governance, the mission, vision, and values are approved by the Board of Directors. The College operates on a five-year strategic plan cycle. With each plan cycle the mission is reviewed. While meeting the statutory obligations, the mission is tailored to meet the needs of the people of north Iowa. Through a series of community and internal focus group meetings, the AQIP Quality Council (AQC) led the information gathering effort. The College used the information gathered to validate the existing mission statement and to define for the first time a formal vision statement and defined core values. Once the draft of the vision statement and core values was developed, it was sent back out to all employees for review and comment. Then, all were ultimately approved by College Senate.

Vision: North Iowa Area Community College is our region's first choice for postsecondary education, recognized for its commitment to quality teaching and learning and dedication to seamless educational opportunities, exemplary programs and services, responsive and collaborative partnerships with business

and industry, and steadfast commitment to the individuals we serve locally, regionally, and internationally.

Mission:

The mission of North Iowa Area Community College is to enhance the quality of life for the people of North Iowa through comprehensive educational opportunities, progressive partnerships, exemplary service, and responsive leadership.

Core Values:

- Academic Excellence
- Integrity
- Community Vision

Core Component 1.A.2. The primary purpose of the College is to advance the quality of life for the people of north Iowa. This is accomplished through our variety of programs and offerings. The Continuing Education department offers 1,700 courses and serves approximately 20,200 persons annually. Noncredit offerings throughout our service area range from programs of interest, membership in our Lifelong Learning program to Emergency Medical Services (EMS) update training. We offer a number of career-based programs and associate of arts and science degrees for transfer options. The student population is split between career and transfer with 35 percent in career programs and 65 percent indicate transfer. The majority of our students are first generation college students (78 percent) with 53 percent testing at the need for remedial courses and 59 percent eligible for full Pell grant. Nearly one-third of our student population is also current high school students. Category 1 contains additional information.

Core Component 1.A.3. The new vision statement and core values are now included in the strategic plan. The College derives all institutional, academic programs, or departmental planning from the strategic plan. The formalized planning is then linked to the budget and prioritized by President's Council with steady focus on the mission and student impact. NIACC is relatively new (in our third year) to the process of linking the strategic planning to budget planning. Over the last three years, the College has made significant progress at operationalizing the budget.

In Figure 5.1 is a sample of department goals tied directly to the strategic plan. This sample is from the Technology Services Department.

Figure 5.1: Tech Services strategic plan working document

Strategic Plan Working Document Goals 2013-2016											
Education											
Department	Related to NIACC Strategic Priority					Strategy	How and Timetable	kpi	Tech Services Priority	Budget Comments	Evaluation Strategies
Technology Services Department goal	Student Quality Experience	Quality and Relevant Education	Educational Center for Excellence	Expand outreach centers	Performance Metrics						
Improving Student Access & Functionality	X					Develop a mobile application for students for campus information and Webadvisor and other service access.	Enterprise applications team will implement Ellucian Mobile during Summer 2013. The Ellucian Mobile solution was recently launched and has slightly changed the timelines of this project.	Successful launch of mobile app for students.	1	FY13 operational budget including some consulting dollars which may not be needed with new implementation methodology.	Number of installs and student feedback.
	X	X				Create a plan which will update all lab and classroom instructor station computers within 3 years.	Using current inventory specifications a plan will be developed for an accelerated 3 year replacement cycle based on highest need and utilization. Approximately 1/3 replacement for FY13, FY14, FY15. Will also need budget for potential extra help to install.	By end of FY15, all computers in labs and classrooms will be 4 years old or less.	1	\$124,150 in FY14 equipment budget for 191 machines.	Evaluate performance and utilization of new computers. Student perception surveys may also reflect changes.
	X	X				Upgrade ICN classrooms (review the number needed) to the new H.323 standard that will be required.	Update node controllers in FY13 \$48,000. Additional upgrades assessed in FY14 and FY15 to costs of \$35,000 each year.	Utilization of room; required equipment upgraded.	3	FY14- Equipment budget for \$35,000 to continue the proces of upgrading rooms to H.323	User feedback.

5P2. How do your leaders set directions in alignment with your mission, vision, values, and commitment to high performance?

Core Component 2.C.1. NIACC is governed by nine Board members representing each of the College’s nine service areas. Board members are elected by the residents of their respective district typically along with local school board elections. The Board adheres to the responsibilities as delineated by the Code of Iowa which include approval of conferral of degrees, annual budget, quarterly investment reports, facility renovations and expansions, adoption of new academic programs, strategic plan, and supervision of the President.

Core Component 2.C.2. The nine NIACC Board of Trustees are elected officials and represent the communities served by North Iowa Area Community College. As elected officials, it is each trustee’s responsibility to listen to the needs and concerns of the district residents, business and industry partners, K-12 collaborators, local governments and community-based organizations. The strategic planning process NIACC engages in involves the Board of Trustees who bring their experience and knowledge to the table which includes the needs of the areas they represent. For example, a special session was held for the NIACC Board of Trustees, the Foundation and Alumni boards to bring their ideas forward and engage in the five-year strategic planning process. The Board uses the strategic plan and priorities as a guide for the decisions it makes. The annual operational planning process engages internal stakeholder in determining strategic initiatives and priorities. These are prioritized by areas and divisions of the College and then by President’s Council. These priorities are incorporated into the annual budgeting review and approval process. The NIACC Board governs through policy governance hence uses information of internal and external stakeholders always with an eye to the College’s strategic direction and priorities.

Core Component 2.C.3. While the Board does operate with independence from other governing bodies there are requirements to send annual reports to the Iowa Department of Education. The State of Iowa maintains its own accreditation along with that of the Higher Learning Commission. Board members are

elected by the residents of their respective areas and therefore vote for candidates who uphold strong ethical standards. The Board has adopted a Code of Ethics policy which includes a legal and moral commitment, conflict of interest, and as directed by the Code of Iowa 68B2A will not use their elected position for personal gain.

Core Component 2.C.4. The President functions as the Chief Executive Officer of the College and as such is charged with the day-to-day management responsibilities and administration. The President supervises and controls the daily functioning of the College.

Core Component 5.C.1. The strategic direction is set by the Board of Directors and approved on a five-year cycle. The Board monitors the College's progress towards these goals, holding the President accountable. Operationally, President's Council members construct strategies aligned with keeping NIACC First in Education, Leadership, and Partnership, the pillars of the strategic plan. This includes the process for academic planning and assessment initiatives. We build the strategies to connect our planning process to our strategic plan, and the goals that set by each of the areas must align with one of the pillars on the strategic plan. For the first year, last year, budget priorities were also operationalized to that plan that connects to the mission, vision, value of the institution. We conduct an annual review of plan progress to reestablish priorities. New initiatives are vetted through the working committees of College Senate and Academic Affairs to assure that through our governance process Staff continued to remain involved to insure initiatives align with the strategic plan. The process circles back with the annual report on our key performance indicators to the Board of Directors. These indicators hold established benchmarks determine by study of a longitudinal view and environmental scan.

Core Component 5.C.2. The College planning process for assessment also demonstrates a level of high performance and continuous improvement. Our Educational Effectiveness Committee (EEC) monitors assessment initiatives and our alignment and participation in the HLC assessment academy. EEC has held the laborious task of establishing and working the process to review general education assessment and outcomes.

The College budget is developed through a process of scenario planning. It is based on a three-year cycle and takes into consideration actual costs to operate the College and the impact of change in revenue primarily through state funding allocations and enrollment. We share the scenario planning during Cracker Barrel meetings where all employees have the opportunity to observe and to ask questions as we run various scenarios through the financial modeling. The model is developed on an excel spreadsheet and is shared with the leadership of each of the four employee groups. Employee groups can then manipulate the model independently to explore various scenarios.

Core Component 5.C.3. The NIACC Strategic Plan is on a five-year cycle. Fundamental pieces of the planning process include reviewing and revising as necessary the vision, mission, and core values. This review process includes soliciting the views and opinions of our staff, students, and stakeholders while conducting environmental scans and institutional research. The process works like a funnel to bring a broad set of information to a concise plan which can be understood by all internal and external constituents.

The overarching planning process for NIACC has been our strategic planning. By design, the nine AQIP categories are incorporated into the plan and this plan is used as the driver for all departmental planning. The strategic planning process was multifaceted with the inclusion of:

- NIACC Board of Directors, faculty and staff presentations and exercises to gather input and gain feedback
- Community focus group meetings
- Collection and analysis of qualitative data
- Further discussions on process updates, input on findings, open forum for input
- Self-study work conducted through NIACC's preparation for transition from PEAQ to AQIP

Internal and external constituents from all levels and across the College participate in nearly all aspects of going strategic planning processes and activities.

Core Component 5.C.4. The information gathering process for the development of the new strategic plan include a SWOT analysis. Internal and external constituents were asked to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges. The results were incorporated into the development of the strategic plan.

The College has implemented a three-year budget scenario for financial and new initiative development purposes. This model incorporates anticipated revenue from state support and enrollment. In 2011, the College hired a consultant to create an enrollment prediction model based on seven variables to create an econometric regression model. The budget scenario also takes into consideration estimated expenditures. The results of this budgetary work allow the College to create improvement planning strategies in a fiscally responsible fashion.

Core Component 5.C.5. The breadth of the reach of the College creates an environment of near constant environmental scanning. Demographic changes along with shifts and new developments in technology, area stakeholder needs for programs and services, student profiles, market demand and competition, economy, sustainability, and new regulatory and accreditation requirements are all evident and serve as the basis for a wide array of projects and committees on campus.

5P3. How do these directions take into account the needs and expectations of current and potential students and key stakeholder groups?

Core Component 1.B.1. The mission, vision, and values, along with institutional purposes are posted in several venues including the College catalog, student handbook, employee handbook, website, and in a wide variety of electronic and print materials. The strategic plan can be located on the website and in print.

Core Component 1.B.2. and 1.B.3. How we chose to include all staff and outside stakeholders in the development of the mission, vision, and values demonstrates a true entrenchment of these shared beliefs. Prior to this strategic planning cycle (2011-2016), the College did not hold a formal vision and value statement. In the development of the vision and value statements and review of the mission statement, several internal and community forums were held. Data was gathered at each of these meetings and process using qualitative analysis techniques and used to formulate the vision and values. Using the AQIP Quality Council as the action team, the group developed three pillars – Education, Leadership, and Partnership. If you were to back to our old strategic plan and it had the mission and it had our goals and

purpose, not many people could go through and really connect to those purposes. Now we talk about it and plan by it. Our strategic plan is clean, and we continue to consistently communicate it that way.

Vision Statement - North Iowa Area Community College is our region's first choice for postsecondary education, recognized for its commitment to quality teaching and learning and dedication to seamless educational opportunities, exemplary programs and services, responsive and collaborative partnerships with business and industry, and steadfast commitment to the individuals we serve locally, regionally, and internationally.

Mission Statement - The mission of North Iowa Area Community College is to enhance the quality of life for the people of North Iowa through comprehensive educational opportunities, progressive partnerships, exemplary service, and responsive leadership.

Core Values - Academic Excellence, Integrity, and Community

Strategic Priorities:

Keeping NIACC First in Education

Student Quality Experience

NIACC students will have a superior learning experience as evidenced by the College collaborating to increase organizational efficiencies, delivering top-quality service, practice learning college principles, optimizing financial aid opportunities, and increasing academic quality and student completion and success.

Quality and Relevant Education

NIACC embraces assessment as a critical and essential strategy for the continuous improvement of its programs, courses, and 21st century student learning outcomes.

Educational Center for Excellence

NIACC's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning serves as a resource for all employees teaching NIACC courses, in all venues across our district by providing educational support services and supporting innovative pedagogy and assessment methodology.

Expand Outreach Centers

NIACC has a strong and enhanced presence in its regional centers as evidenced by the innovative utilization of technology, expanded educational and cultural offerings, and strong public school partnerships.

Performance Metrics

NIACC has useful and meaningful key performance indicators that measure and communicate the effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies, student engagement, and administrative processes that support the educational process.

Keeping NIACC First in Leadership

Innovative Educational Methods

NIACC's innovation is recognized through the research, development and application of innovative educational methods of instruction, course and program development, workforce preparation, small business development and entrepreneurship, and community engagement.

Premier Employer/Culture

NIACC is an exemplary workplace that serves as a model for other institutions across Iowa and the nation.

Collaboration with Community and Regional Organizations

NIACC promotes economic growth in North Iowa as evidenced through its facilitation of economic and workforce development strategies, which engage and collaborate with the region's economic development corporations, business and industry partners, regional and state organizations, and national initiatives.

Advocacy

NIACC advocates for education, economic vitality and the social welfare of the residents of North Iowa by engaging actively in the legislative process, economic and business development, and community service, and cultural efforts.

Keeping NIACC First in Partnership

New Types of Partnerships

NIACC's new partnerships reflect best practices, leveraging technology, facilities, and emerging innovative educational and economic strategies.

New Educational Partnerships

NIACC's new educational partnerships take advantage of new teaching and learning strategies, partnerships with other educational institutions, community-based organizations, governmental agencies, and corporate partners in support of student learning.

New Regional (Community Development) Partnerships to Promote Growth

NIACC's expanded regional partnerships provide benefit to North Iowa communities evidenced by economic growth and opportunities traced back to NIACC's direct involvement.

Partner Viability

Each NIACC partnership provides relevant and effective use of partner resources resulting in mutual benefit to partners, the community, and students.

Accounting for the needs and expectations of our students and stakeholders is paramount to the success of the College, is the operating foundation of all planning, and is driven directly from the mission. To gather input for the development of the strategic plan, several focus groups were conducted. The NIACC Board of Directors was one of the few community college boards in Iowa that actually endorsed the National Community College Completion Agenda. The Student Success and Completion Plan was constructed on the basis of the national completion agenda.

A number of research and action initiatives are used to determine the needs of students and stakeholders including our extensive business partnerships, exploring a new student development model, Foundations of Excellence, CCSSE, and the development of a Technology Plan which used student feedback. New this year to measure student learning outcomes is a research day. We piloted this new mode of assessment spring semester in poster presentations with assessment by faculty using a standardized rubric.

5P4. How do your leaders guide your institution in seeking future opportunities while enhancing a strong focus on students and learning?

The College operates in an environment of innovation and entrepreneurial spirit. New opportunities emerge through various ports. We have members of the Board who represent their communities and bring forward issues and concerns from their respective communities. Within the College, there exist a number of board partnerships, including the strong level of engagement with our K-12 partners.

Employees from across the College connect with local, state and national committees. The ideas gleaned from these various inlets are researched for viability for NIACC. The College has historically demonstrated a strong commitment to professional and instructional development. This is evidenced by our participation in the HLC Assessment Academy, new program development, and Foundations of Excellence. Additionally, we explore new opportunities for our students through Student Senate and Phi Theta Kappa, which both hold a strong and engaged student leadership. Our Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning explores new teaching methodologies and provide professional development for faculty and staff.

5P5. How do you make decisions in your institution? How do you use teams, task forces, groups, or committees to recommend or make decisions, and to carry them out?

The College has a long standing tradition and application of operating under a shared governance model. Although not unionized, the College has four employee groups who represent themselves through a process of meet and confer. This process demonstrates at our core the College’s commitment to a shared decision making process.

Core Component 5.B.1. and 5.B.3. NIACC uses an integrated system of committees and task forces for decision making. The College vets new policies and initiatives through various task forces and ad hoc committees before bringing these policies and initiatives to the appropriate administrative and governance committee for further discussion and approval. College Senate and Academic Affairs include designated seats for students who have full discussion and voting rights. All committee meetings are open for all employees to attend. Agendas and meeting minutes are made available to all employees.

Standing Committees

Table 5.1: Standing committees at NIACC

Administrative and Governance	Curriculum and Instruction	Information Technology	Student Affairs	Steering Committees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President’s Council • College Senate • AQIP Quality Council • Personnel Affairs Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Affairs • Educational Effectiveness Council • Curriculum Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Technology Committee • Information Technology Council • Enterprise Applications Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero Week Task Force • Late Registration Summer Session Task Force • STEM Hub • Charles City STEM Academy • CAEL/Prior Learning Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing Steering Committee • Web Redesign • Foundations of Excellence • Continuing Education Council • Diversity Plan Committee

Core Component 5.B.2. The NIACC Board of Directors derives their duties and responsibilities from the Code of Iowa. They are not involved in the day-to-day operational decisions of the College. However, they are the final decision makers on all financial matters. The Board approves the preliminary and working budgets and conducts a monthly independent review of the bills. All new academic programs and institutional policies (strategic plan, academic plans, and diversity plan) require Board approval.

5P6. How do you use data, information, and your own performance results in your decision making processes?

The leadership of the College use data, information and performance results from a number of sources to make decisions. There exists a wide array of examples from tracking the effectiveness of employment recruiting strategies to decisions to open and close academic programs.

The performance review process for all employees includes goal development for personal and department growth. The performance evaluation and review of goals is conducted annually. Upward evaluations (employee of supervisor) are conducted every other year. Members of the President's Council also receive a 360 evaluation every other year. The upward and 360 feedback is used to create personal and department goals. Progress and report on goals occurs annually.

Enrollment reports are prepared each fall and spring. This information is used to analyze the effectiveness of recruitment and retention strategies. Based on the information, strategies are adjusted to maximize the enrollment and success of our students. This same enrollment report includes enrollment by program. The College uses this information to allocate human and financial resources to academic programs, including decisions to close or expand programs.

The College has originated three AQIP Action Projects (one of which is still active) aimed at looking at the review of critical thinking across the general education learning objectives. Through this process a rubric was developed that would be used by all faculty to assess critical thinking. The rubric was piloted, tested and revised. This process is being replicated to review the remaining seven general education learning objectives.

Program review and evaluation process is reviewed each year. The following excerpt from the 2012-2013 Program Review and Evaluation System for Career and Technical Education Programs explains the evaluation process:

Evaluation Process

The Program Review and Evaluation System include the following components and processes:

Program Review Team

The Program Review Team is comprised of program faculty members and the appropriate Division Chair. The Division Chair may select program faculty to serve as program review team members and will serve as review team chair. This team will be responsible for addressing each element of the PRES and preparing the PRES Report. The Program Review Team will develop an "Action and Program Improvement Plan" which is designed to

overcome program weaknesses and strengthen the quality of programs. It will include an area for improvement (concern), an implementation timeline, an identification of members responsible for follow through, and an estimate of resources required (financial, human, and physical). The Program Review Team will submit its report to the "Peer Review Team" at least one month before the Plan of Action and Signature Sheet are submitted to the Academic Affairs Council for review and action. The Peer Review Team will be comprised of faculty and staff members from throughout the campus. This Team will be responsible for validating and reviewing the prepared PRES Report. The Peer Review Team will work with the Program Review Team to review and make recommendations concerning the Report and the "Plan of Action." By signing the Signature Sheet, Peer Team members validate the program's review and recommend the program's Plan of Action to the Academic Affairs Council, the College's chief curriculum approval and review council.

Academic Affairs Council

As the primary curriculum approval and review committee, the Academic Affairs Council will

- 1) Notify Division Chairs as to when their programs are to be reviewed.
- 2) Receive notification from the Division Chair of the composition of the Program Review Team.
- 3) Collaborate with the Division Chair in the selection and appointment of the Peer Review Team and a Chair.
- 4) Establish a time schedule for receiving and acting on each PRES Report.
- 5) Receive and act on the recommendations for each PRES Report from the Peer Review Team (as validated by the Signature Page), including the "Action and Program Improvement Plan."
- 6) Establish a schedule for review of the previous year's "Action Plans" and to assess follow-up for continuous quality improvement.

The College is in its early development of formally defined and measured key performance indicators. Our first attempt to establish benchmarks occurred in June 2012.

A near constant environmental scan occurs from tracking remarks on twitter to using demographic and unemployment data and feedback from our outside stakeholders through our school partnership activities and program advisory groups.

5P7. How does communication occur between and among the levels and units of your institution?

The College has several formal structures of communicating between and among level and departments. The structured system includes two meetings per year of the President with each of the four employee groups, three All-Staff meetings where attendance is required, and four Cracker Barrel meetings (generally held twice within the week) that are open to all employees to attend. All of these meetings

provide the opportunity for the President to update the College community on the latest happenings and gain feedback on new programs, policies and initiatives.

The President's Council comprised of the nine executive leaders of the College meets as a group with the President each Tuesday morning. Discussions include concerns and opportunities facing the College and area updates. The agendas and the meeting minutes are published online and in the College Senate meeting packet for employees to read. College Senate meets once per month where the minutes are shared and employees are given the opportunity to pose questions.

There are standing committees which also report to College Senate where again meeting minutes are shared and employees are provided the opportunity to question and discuss: AQIP, Diversity, Sustainability, Technology, Student Senate, President's Council, and Personnel Affairs. College Senate membership is comprised of a cross section of employees and student representation who are elected by their peers to serve.

The Academic Division Chairs meet weekly with the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs to address programs and policies. The information is then shared with academic divisions through regular meetings with staff.

NIACC is a nonunion community college, but it has employee groups who represent themselves in the meet and confer process. Annually, a mutual formal agreement is reached, binding for both administration and staff. The administration meets monthly with NIACEA (North Iowa Area Community Educators Association) executive team who represents the faculty group. This provides the opportunity to address any concerns or emerging issues.

We conduct electronic communications using NIACC-L (an all employee e-mail system), the College intranet page, and a portal system new this year.

All of the career programs have advisory groups who hold regular meetings with the division chair and faculty. The members of the advisory groups are community members from business and industry.

The President provides a weekly Friday update letter to the Board sharing updates of projects, actions, issues of concern and celebrations.

Each month, we conduct a workshop one hour prior to the Board meeting to provide the Board the opportunity to look at information and projects. This workshop gives them the opportunity to ask questions in an informal environment.

5P8. How do your leaders communicate a shared mission, vision, and values that deepen and reinforce the characteristics of high performance organizations?

As addressed in 5P3, the mission was reviewed during the most recent strategic planning cycle and vision and value statements developed.

Each new employee during orientation is read and shown where in the handbook the mission, vision and values reside. The mission, vision, and values along with the strategic plan are posted in several venues. They are displayed in the Board Room, exist on the College's webpage, and appear in the employee and student handbooks.

How we chose to include all staff and outside stakeholders in the development of the mission, vision and values demonstrates a true entrenchment of these shared beliefs. Prior to this strategic planning cycle (2011-2016), the College did not hold a formal vision and value statement. In the development of the vision and value statements and review of the mission statement several internal and community forums were held. We gathered data at each of these meetings, processed the data using qualitative analysis techniques, and used the data to formulate the vision and values. Using the AQIP Quality Council as the action team, the group developed the three pillars—Education, Leadership, Partnership. Previously, few people could go connect to those purposes to our old strategic plan; now we talk about it and plan by it. Our strategic plan is clean and we continue to consistently communicate it that way.

The mission drives the College in a common direction and is aligned with a common set of values shared by employees. It is lived daily by the dedicated employees who believe in what we do. Strategies and initiatives which cannot be tied back to the mission are not supported.

5P9. How are leadership abilities encouraged, developed and strengthened among your faculty, staff, and administrators? How do you communicate and share leadership knowledge, skills, and best practices throughout your institution?

At the most operational level, our employee groups and shared governance structures provide opportunity for leadership development. With four employee groups representing themselves, each group must select internal leaders. The primary governing bodies, College Senate and Academic Affairs, are chaired by faculty and staff. This allows for further leadership development opportunities within the College. In addition, a plethora of other committees, work groups, and task forces are led by faculty and staff volunteers.

The College has a strong history of supporting formal leadership development through conferences, workshops and formal education. Each year staff or faculty members are selected to participate in CLIC and LINC, a yearlong leadership program offered by Iowa State University.

Furthermore, the College offers support for professional development activities including full tuition reimbursement at the Iowa Board of Regents rate. There are no caps or limits to the amount of tuition reimbursement an employee may use. Courses may fall outside of the employees current job responsibilities, providing additional opportunity for leadership development and growth.

With our new system of performance evaluation, every employee has a professional growth plan. Goals are identified and resources are secured to support the growth plan.

5P10. How do your leaders and board members ensure that your institution maintains and preserves its mission, vision, values, and commitment to high performance during leadership succession? How do you develop and implement your leadership succession plans?

The use of cross-functional membership teams assures that the success of any one program or initiative does not rest with one individual, even during times of leadership transition. The shared governance process assures the commitment to the mission, vision and values is spread across the institution.

Leadership succession happens quite informally. The College recognizes this is an area that could use some improvement.

5R1. What performance measures of Leading and Communicating do you collect and analyze regularly?

Performance measures of leading and communicating are collected and analyzed regularly.

Performance measures of leading include setting goals each year for which we are accountable. We have set measures to determine if we have successfully completed those performance goals. The President replicates this process with the Board. President's Council works with each of their areas to set performance measures and goals. Personal goals are also set. President's Council members review those goals at the end of the year to determine what has been accomplished.

Key Performance Indicators were developed in June 2012 and endorsed by the Board of Directors. Benchmarks connected to each KPI will be reported to the Board annually.

During a *Quality Conversation Day* held in January 2012, employees participated in an activity in which they indicated what mattered most to them and quick fixes to move the institution forward. These responses have been acted on and communicated to all employees at Cracker Barrel meetings and electronically over the NIACC-L.

The evaluation process has changed to make it more engaging and relevant to employees. We aggregate, review, and incorporate bi-annual upward evaluations results into the supervisors' performance plan. The executive team also unitizes a 360° evaluation process.

Every other year opposite the upward evaluation cycle a College Climate survey is distributed to all employees. This provides the opportunity for all employees to have a voice in the measurement of the leading and communicating.

5R2. What are your results for leading and communicating processes and systems?

The process to lead the College in a strategic fashion has improved over the last five years. There now exists a strategic plan which was developed with a great deal of faculty, staff and community involvement. The foundation of the plan is built with the three pillars of Education, Leadership and Partnership. Each pillar has strategic priorities from which goals and strategies are derived. Each department of the College has crafted strategies and activities based on the strategic priorities. The results

of progress towards these goals are reviewed at mid and end of the year for results. The results are then discussed at the President's Council retreat and placed on a common network drive for all employees to view. In addition to the electronic posting, the information shared and the priorities established at the President's Council retreat are shared with division leaders and directors throughout the College.

The key performance indicators will be updated annually with the results reported to the Board of Directors.

The result of our open governance system has led to more people engaged in the important work of the College than in previous years. This occurs through ad hoc and formal committees and task forces like our two governance bodies of College Senate and Academic Affairs.

The College recognizes the measuring of results internally for communicating processes and systems could be improved.

5R3. How do your results for the performance of your processes for Leading and Communicating compare with the performance results of other higher education institutions and, if appropriate, of organizations outside of higher education?

While acknowledging that internal measures could be improved, we use a number of completion benchmarks through our annual KPI report, by review of the Iowa Condition of Community Colleges, and Community College Benchmark information.

During the annual fund drive, 89 percent of employees participated by making contributions to the NIACC Foundation.

NIACC is a Foundations of Excellence college. One hundred ten employees participated in the process of developing FoE goals and strategies. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* reports that NIACC is one of the top 20 in the nation in 2010 for Foundation endowments.

We believe in the benefit of continued education and provide full tuition reimbursement for employees with no caps or limits. As long as the credits can be used for an advanced degree, they are approved. The courses do not need to be related to current job duties. The program promotes the betterment of self. NIACC has the most generous tuition reimbursement program of all of the community colleges in Iowa.

The College also leads the state compared to the community colleges in Iowa in its support of professional development. We support attendance in professional development activities on and off campus. The faculty contracts have 13 days per contact year built in for professional development. These days are when faculty is on contract and students not on campus. On campus professional development activities are designed during these days. Outside of the 13 designated days, the faculty led Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (new in 2011) offers professional development sessions monthly. Their work can be viewed at <http://staff.niacc.edu/cetl/>. The College further encourages professional develop through supporting employee attendance at local and national conferences, workshops, and seminars. We have a number of employees who sit on national committees, organizations and boards. NIACC consistently has participants in CLIC and LINC, two leadership programs offered by Iowa State University.

The Chronicle of Higher Education named NIACC as one of the "Great Colleges to Work For" in 2010.

The College is proud of our NIACC Board trustee, Jean Torgeson, who is serving as the President of ACCT for this year. This demonstrates confidence in leadership on a national front.

NIACC was a finalist in 2011 for the ASPEN award. Nomination for this award is based on external criteria.

The College is ranked number 14 in the nation for student success in CNNMoney. NIACC is rated at a 72 percent success rate, meaning that 72 percent of all students either graduate or have a successful transfer to a four year college within three years. <http://money.cnn.com/pf/college/community-colleges/?iid=el>

5I1. What recent improvements have you made in this category? How systematic and comprehensive are your processes and performance results for *Leading and Communicating*?

The improvements to this category have been extensive over the last five years.

With the development of the Strategic Plan in 2011, through an inclusionary process, the priorities of the College were established. This new plan guides the direction of the institution. All supporting department plans have action strategies tied directly to the strategic plan. The Strategic Plan, Foundations of Excellence work, and the Student Success and Completion plan were all constructed based on the Board of Directors commitment to student success and completion. The NIACC Board was the only one in Iowa to sign the AACC statement of commitment to the completion and success of our students.

The process for leading the College at all levels is systematic and comprehensive. All department goals, plan and strategic activities line directly with the College strategic plan and AQIP. Progress towards these goals is conducted at mid and end of the year. Results are reported during the President's Council retreat. Notice of this work is announced in College Senate with the documents being stored on a common drive so that all employees have access to view.

The communication processes at NIACC are systematic. Programs, initiatives, actions affecting the College are discussed in various venues: employee group meetings, Cracker Barrel meetings, President's Council, Academic Affairs, College Senate, department and division meetings, and committee meetings. Decisions made based on these discussions are shared by the President to the Board in her weekly Friday letter. They are communicated to employees via Academic Affairs, College Senate and electronically through the NIACC-L and portal. All agendas and minutes for governance committees are published with all employees having access.

After discussion with academic program advisory groups changes in programs are addressed and voted on in Academic Affairs. Faculty instructing in the program area are directly involved in the discussion process and therefore involved in the final decision.

512. How do your culture and infrastructure help you to select specific processes to improve and to set targets for improved performance results in *Leading and Communicating*?

The College enjoys a long history of supporting learning, creativity, and innovation. With focus on a common communicated vision, it allows employees latitude to concentrate on the processes and systems to improve results.

The shared governance structure provides the avenue for faculty and staff to be involved in the selecting specific processes to improve. Most recently a formal process for the development of and approval of action projects was developed. Based on feedback from the Conversation Day activities, strategic plan, Foundations of Excellence final report and the Student Success and Completion Plan using qualitative research methods, a list of activities and process to be improved was created. The College prioritized and aligned the resulting document with the AQIP categories. Through the AQIP Quality Council, a number of projects in each area were selected and presented to College Senate for discussion and endorsement. The systems demonstrate the leadership of the College is disseminated through all levels.

The College has learned from its employees that communication could be improved. There are a great number of initiatives taking place simultaneously, and that employees have a difficult time knowing the status of all projects. In response to this, the President led discussions at Cracker Barrel meetings on ways the College could improve communication. All of the ideas gathered are currently being transcribed and will be gleaned for reoccurring themes. This work will then be brought to President's Council to prioritize between what we can do immediately, what will take time and what is not viable. The prioritized list will then be taken College Senate for discussion with implementation of new ideas in the fall.

Category 6 – Supporting Institutional Operations

Introduction

The strategic planning and financial allocation process is crafted to support key goals which align with the vision, mission, and values. Current and emerging conditions, operational objectives, and resource development drive the priorities of supporting institutional operations.

Shifts and trends in technology, programs and services, student and stakeholder profiles and preferences, markets and market segments, competition (within and outside the industry), economy, sustainability, and the regulatory environment are evident in and are the basis of multiple initiatives.

A thriving total learning environment encompasses many components. A review of buildings and infrastructure is conducted to assure the development of progressive classrooms and provide resources to students and the public. A review of the services provided and the quality of those services is continually assessed. We consider all of these ways we interact with individuals that have some contact with our institution (internally and externally), and how we measure this interaction. We depend on these measures and their evaluation and interpretation to help us improve. These measures can be surveys, meetings, advisory councils, or other communications we generate to update any number of constituencies.

Some of the surveys mentioned in this section have been used more than one year. We have used some periodically, i.e. bi-annually (CCSSE) or annually (IPEDS), to continue to capture new students' data and compare it to our past performance or results. We research what we have done, what we currently do, and what may we need to do differently. Though some results are favorable, we can still improve.

The process of strategic planning, resource allocation and operationalizing departmental key goals is aligned. A systematic process is in place to continue to develop the alignment of institutional and department goals.

Supporting processes, primarily that of communication is approaching systematic. Through quality conversations, improving communication has emerged as an area in need of focus. Developing a structure system for tracking students in the enrollment process is a current action project. One proposed action project for next year is to explore the development of a student one-stop center.

6P1. How do you identify the support service needs of your students and other key stakeholder groups (e.g., oversight board, alumni, etc.)?

We identify our students' needs through several resources. In addition to our formal data gathering processes through our Student Development office where counseling is available, we have informal processes through student contact points, such as Admissions, Career Link, or the NIACC Bookzone. Additionally, the Financial Aid Office and the Business Office receive feedback about funding or financing, Registration and Academic Advising when students add new classes, Food Service from dining patrons or students, and Housing as part of the living arrangements while students live on campus or

parent of a student on campus. Additionally, a student satisfaction survey helps us gauge how students and patrons perceive our departments' customer service.

Our institution has been involved in the process of reviewing our intake processes that model the 'one-stop shop.' We had front-line workers and current students involved in mapping the processes that we asked our students to do; they then mapped the ideal process of how a student would be asked to complete the intake process.

As part of preparing our students for the future, we engage our regional business partners in several advisory committees. These take several forms. The Performing Arts and Leadership advisory committee gives us ideas on shows that patrons have appreciated. We ask for input about offering other events prior to a show or speakers for interaction with the performers or speakers. Additionally, business leaders from the Ag community serve on a farm or agriculture advisory committee to ensure we are aware of current trends and products in agriculture. Our Industrial programs, such as Tool & Die or Welding, receive local and regional business input to ensure NIACC trains our students for entering into the future workforce by sharing with us the current industry needs. We have other advisory committees to get current needs assessment so our offerings fill the needs of the communities and businesses in the region.

Outside student stakeholders are represented by guidance counselors for area high schools. We offer a day-long meeting twice a year that focuses on NIACC and the programs and services we provide. These meetings include professional development for these individuals and networking opportunities between NIACC staff and the guidance counselors to facilitate communication and collaboration to offer appropriate educational opportunities for students still in high school or graduating from high school in the near future.

Internal communication between mid-level managers is held monthly. This meeting includes all directors in all aspects of student services and administrative support. This opportunity allows sharing of what is happening in different areas of the College. This interaction gives our staff another avenue to create cross-functional teams and opportunities. Some of these meetings generate collaboration between departments to serve a common goal without duplicating efforts.

6P2. How do you identify the administrative support service needs of your faculty, staff, and administrators?

There are many levels of communication in our institution. Through these various meetings or councils, needs of the institution are developed or made known. We have identified that some of these meetings or councils have been excellent resources for collecting information about how we are doing or how we could do better.

NIACC's administrative staff holds regular meetings. Our President's Council brings together the different areas of the College to a regular weekly meeting to disseminate information to each other and to discuss topics that are important to the whole institution. These topics can range from legislative issues and what we might be asked to contribute to educating our legislators to activities that will be happening on campus, i.e. first day of school locations for greeting our students or retention efforts. This Council is

our top administrative staff. Each member has a significant role in the institution. Some of our efforts are for internal communication. Other efforts are to bring forward challenges (like recruitment and retention) in our departments that others may be able to assist in resolving. Other efforts are to strike the path of where the College is going and where it needs to go. This planning is done collaboratively by this administrative team so we move the college forward with the same vision and plan. We can use this planning strategy so that all areas of the college are working together to reach the common goal. By having all of the administrators around the table, we can share what is happening in our area of the College so we are aware of the other activities that are on our campus and areas that might be of concern.

We also hold semi-annual individual employee group meetings. Four times a year we have Cracker Barrel meetings: open meetings where staff and faculty that are available at the stated time can meet with the President to learn about current happenings around campus. These Cracker Barrel meetings are generally held twice within the week to meet with as many staff and faculty as possible. The initial topics of the meetings are the same for both meetings. One of the outcomes for both of these group meetings is to be available for questions that staff may want to ask about processes, activities, or areas of concern on a regular basis outside an office environment.

Table 6.1: STAFF MEETINGS 2012 - 2013

Date	Time	Room	Faculty	PSS	Office Clerical	Facilities Mgmt.	All-Staff	Cracker Barrel
Aug. 20	8:00	NC180					x	
Oct. 2	3:00	AC101						x
Oct. 5	12:15	RC112						x
Nov. 5	11:00	PC224				x		
Nov. 5	2:00	AC101			x			
Nov. 16	2:00	MH104G		x				
Nov. 19	3:00	BC200	x					
Dec. 13	12:15	RC112						x
Jan. 7	8:00	NC180					x	
Feb. 5	3:00	AC101						x
Feb. 8	12:15	AC101						x
March 1	2:00	MH104G		x				
March 4	11:00	PC224				x		
March 4	1:00	AC101			x			
March 5	3:00	BC200	x					
April 2	3:00	BC200						x
April 5	12:15	AC101						x
May 6	11:00/12:00	AC100					x Spring Grill	

Our Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs has weekly meetings with the Division Chairs (Arts and Science, Health, Ag and Industrial, Student Development and Business). These meetings are to keep the academic communications open between all divisions and administration.

Our Continuing Education department has monthly staff meetings that include staff members whose offices are off-campus to give an update in an open forum to keep other area education coordinators aware of educational and training services they have been providing to area businesses. These include services requested by our corporate partners. Our coordinators can share contacts for businesses and training so businesses have access to many different types of opportunities.

One of our Governance groups is College Senate. This has representation from each employee group, our standing committees (Personnel Affairs Council, Sustainability Committee, AQIP Quality Council, Technology Committee, Student Senate, President’s Council, and Global Diversity) and At-Large representation from the institution. College Senate meets monthly, except July, to facilitate communication and governance. Items brought to this group for action will address policy and practice as well as College updates. Most recently the College is going through the process of building new student housing. New housing was an agenda item for updating the College Senate about the design development and financing process and why we have engaged in this activity.

6P3. How do you design, maintain, and communicate the key support processes that contribute to everyone’s physical safety and security?

With recent weather (Wadena Community College in Minnesota was damaged by a tornado in 2010) and safety (2007 shooting at Virginia Tech and a stabbing spree at Lone Star Community College in April 2013) concerns around higher education facilities, our College has been taking steps to address student, staff and faculty protection.

We started with a tabletop discussion about systems we had in place or could easily put in place in case of either of these types of emergencies. Discussion evolved around a command center, Public Information Officer, engaging our emergency services of police, fire and ambulance, and our general procedures.

We engaged the services of a tactical planning officer to identify campus areas that might need attention to make safer or to make egress easier. This project culminated with active shooter training that involved our local law enforcement community, our institution’s faculty and staff to play the roles of students and staff in a shooting scenario in two of our buildings, and a debriefing session on what went well and what could be improved.

We have an instructor that instructs a personal safety course. This enables students to practice what they would or should do if attacked.

Our campus facilities staff has gradually been changing door locks in classrooms, offices, and buildings. The classroom latches can now easily be locked, without a key, and the door closed to lock-out a room or building. Offices have been retrofitted with these same types of locks for the same quick lock-out capability. Most recently our campus exterior doors have been outfitted with a proximity sensor that, when fully implemented, will allow us to do a full lock-down from one computer command station. Though these are not all complete, these are some of the steps we are taking to protect our students and staff in an emergency.

We most recently engaged the services of a consultant to help us update our emergency plan. This plan is to be a high level guide to help us in most emergencies. Building coordinators were identified to assist us with communication in each building. Concerns like where to find emergency exits, where to find defibrillators and fire extinguishers, and how to identify egress routes are all part of this plan. As a result, we have a map in each room that has these items listed for emergencies. The next stage of this plan is to

practice, and a fire drill and tornado drill are in our future. We will create and update a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) to put these in place and to keep us current as staff and protocols change.

One of the first implementations we had on our campus was a notification system for our staff and students. This system, NIACC Alerts, delivers in a text and an email notification a message sent by an administrator who has determined an emergency or safety situation exists. We have used this system for weather related events (snow and school closings or delays) or for utility events (electricity or gas problems in a building or across campus). This is an 'opt-in' system, so we encourage our students and staff to participate.

Our students get information about our College from mandatory Cleary Act reporting in our student handbook and other required student reporting. This includes reportable incidents on campus and in our student housing. We can use these statistics to understand training opportunities for our students. We can use these statistics for training for our staff. These statistics provide opportunities for students and staff to work together.

Staff have been kept up-to-date on these plans and processes (active shooter training during Staff Development Week and Cracker Barrel and category staff meetings). We are continuing to listen to the dialog from our staff regarding how we might change or improve the processes.

6P4. How do you manage your key student, administrative and institutional support service processes on a day-to-day basis to ensure that they are addressing the needs you intended them to meet?

Our institution has many communications between departments to gauge what is happening on our campus from many different areas. Our Directors from all of the departments on campus meet monthly to review what is happening in their areas and if there are collaborations to be made in providing services to staff and students. Any concerns that cannot be addressed by this group are referred to the area Vice President or to the President's Council.

The area Vice Presidents, President, CIO, Associate CIO, Dean of Continuing Education, Regional Director of Workforce Development, Marketing Director, and Executive Assistant to the President meet weekly to review different topics involving the institution. These can be anything from budgeting and enrollment to agenda topics for the Board or Cracker Barrel meetings.

Our Dean of Student Development, Athletic Director, Housing Director and Criminal Justice Instructor meet weekly to review student concerns that may have come up. This is a result of other schools safety concerns (Virginia Tech, Lone Star) in an attempt to 'connect the dots' between all areas of the College and extreme behavior of students. This is a support service to our students and our institution as a whole.

Our Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs and Dean of Arts and Science meet regularly with all discipline areas of the College. This gives each department an opportunity for one-on-one conversation with the administration about areas of concern or accolades. These happen throughout the academic year.

As part of our initiatives in the budgeting process, we encourage our staff and administration to be forward thinking. What areas need attention, what areas need additional resources, what initiatives need to be acted on in the coming year and what may need to wait or be redesigned all are encouraged to be brought forward. These ideas and initiatives come from all areas of the College. We collect input through the Academic Affairs meetings, through the College Senate meetings and from our individual employee group meetings. Students are part of College Senate and have a Student Senate group. They are included in these discussions and opportunities for adding to the conversation about how we move forward.

6P5. How do you document your support processes to encourage knowledge sharing, innovation, and empowerment?

NIACC has many ways to communicate to campus. Governance Committees and ad-hoc committees have their agendas and minutes available online on the College intranet site. These include the NIACC Board of Directors. Minutes are kept and made available from our Cracker Barrel sessions and from our Staff Development sessions. As part of these committees, groups report on their activities, and these reports become part of the minutes of the larger group, i.e. Sustainability Committee reports out at College Senate.

Staff Development time is used in many ways to encourage sharing and empowerment. Each division can schedule meetings during this period, and our Human Resources office schedule professional development opportunities for our faculty, staff, and cross-functional teams or groups. The College also provides wellness programs. These activities all provide engagement from all disciplines and areas of the College to collect input from many sources. These observations and conversations all help us work better together. These activities have been captured by minutes, hard-copy outcomes (quality improvement and strategic planning exercises), and presentations by our staff.

We had a recent observation from our community that wanted us to find additional ways to communicate to our faculty and staff. We solicited input from all attendees at an open meeting to identify if there were ways to improve on what we did. This list generated some interesting possibilities. This is still a work in progress.

At a more micro-level, the College has written procedures for many administrative processes. Enrolling a student, receiving payment, processing payroll, processing financial aid, taking applications for employment all have documented processes. Financial processes are audited annually. Other processes are documented for continuity if cross training is necessary.

6R1. What measures of student, administrative, and institutional support service processes do you collect and analyze regularly?

We have been working on determining the most important measures of student success that we should collect. Some of these items have been enrollment rates, graduation rates, retention rates and total students served. We have formatted some of these measures into KPI's (Key Performance Indicators) that we plan to track from year to year. We have been engaging in collecting information through the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE) to determine student satisfaction, engagement, and success. These tools can provide us insight about who our students are, what their needs may be, and how well the College meets those needs.

As part of this decision making process, we are looking at various tools we have used during our last Title III project. The outcomes to be generated were an increase in graduation rates, other completion rates, and stop-gap processes for Supplemental Instruction and Early Alert. These processes were implemented and then institutionalized over the five-year period. We continue to have these in place to help our students. We did have success in increasing our overall graduation rates. This took efforts to keep our students engaged and find ways to assist them in being successful in and out of the classroom.

Other measures we collect are from student satisfaction surveys and employment rates. There are opportunities for our students to comment on their satisfaction levels regarding faculty and engagement in non-classroom activities. These reports of our students' experiences help evaluate programs, our deliveries, our clubs and organizations. Our statistics regarding NIACC graduate employment rates help us determine if we are offering skills and degrees that our area and area employers need.

NIACC has an annual audit performed by a local CPA firm following state guidelines. This required financial review is a report to the federal government on our financial aid revenue and expenditures, a report to the state Department of Education on the sources and uses of funds, and a report to the Board of Directors concerning the financial health of the institution. Our report has been an unqualified audit, a 'clean' audit, for over 10 years.

We conduct a bi-annual climate survey of all full-time staff to measure our staff participation in committees and their perceptions of their ability to participate or give input toward the governance of our institution. We use these results to address potential concerns.

During year between climate surveys, our institution gathers information in an upward evaluation. This survey asks our employees to share thoughts and perceptions about their supervisor(s). This information is aggregated so that individual employees are not singled out, but gives our supervisory staff an insight into how their methods and skills are viewed by their staff. This is another tool that can be used for individual staff development opportunities, training opportunities or just an opportunity to dialog with peers and their supervisors for mentorship.

The College participates in several other data collecting surveys for a larger study. These include the national IPEDS and the Community College Benchmark Study. The IPEDS survey has very similar

questions from year to year, and the college compares its results to prior years' results, along with comparisons to our peers and regional equivalents. We can use this data to compare areas like financials, salaries, enrollments, and staffing. The Community College Benchmark Study can be used in a similar fashion, but only compared to other community colleges. IPEDS gathers data for all types of schools. The data gathered from the Benchmark Study is similar in that we can compare ourselves to other community colleges in the region, other community colleges of our size no matter the region, or other Community Colleges with similar results. These both have data that are viewed by other agencies (Aspen Prize for one) that reviews this data as a third-party.

We have been tracking several web metrics. One of these most recent implementations is a web portal. This functionality had given students the opportunity to view many items about their bill or financial aid and staff the ability to view paystubs and vacation availability. This is a growing communication tool. There are parts of the page that only show up for faculty and staff; likewise, there are parts of the page that show up for students. We can send messages directly to individualized student accounts so the message is only sent to those as needed or interested like clubs and organizations or students that have a financial aid refund. There many ways to gauge success with this project. The metrics of 'hits' to the page, the success of message delivery and appropriate student response, and the ability to share information with an individualized audience are measures of this implementations success.

6R2. What are your performance results for student support service processes?

Our Title III project ended in September 2011. This five-year project had four primary objectives:

1. Improved student success within classes
2. Increased student academic progress
3. Higher student retention from year to year
4. Higher student graduation rates

Our final reporting snapshot of those objectives is included below. The College has institutionalized these items, so we continue to measure and evaluate these results. Engagement or intervention as part of our student experience plays into these measures.

Title III Major Objectives

Our four primary objectives within the Title III Program are the overall reflection of the series of pilot projects that were active due to Title III funding. The objectives and the results for the past five years are reflected below.

Objective 1: Student Success within classes:

The percent of students earning a C or higher grade in Gateway courses will increase 3% each grant year from a starting level of 50% in fall 2006.

Year 1—2006-2007: Goal – 53%	Reached – 52%
Year 2—2007-2008: Goal – 56%	Reached – 54%
Year 3—2008-2009: Goal – 59%	Reached – 60%
Year 4—2009-2010: Goal – 62%	Reached – 62%
Year 5—2010-2011: Goal – 65%	Reached – 61%

Objective 2: Student Academic Progress:

The percent of students placed on academic probation will decrease 2% each grant year from a starting level of 26% in the fall 2006.

Year 1—2006-2007: Goal – 24%	Decreased to – 25%
Year 2—2007-2008: Goal – 22%	Decreased to – 18%
Year 3—2008-2009: Goal – 20%	Decreased to – 16%
Year 4—2009-2010: Goal – 18%	Decreased to – 15%
Year 5—2010-2011: Goal – 16%	Decreased to – 13%

Objective 3: Student Retention from year to year:

The retention rate from fall semester to fall semester of first time, full-time degree and certificate seeking students will increase 2% each grant year from a starting level of 52% in the fall 2006.

Year 1—2006-2007: Goal – 54%	Reached – 59%
Year 2—2007-2008: Goal – 56%	Reached – 57%
Year 3—2008-2009: Goal – 58%	Reached – 57%
Year 4—2009-2010: Goal – 60%	Reached – 64%
Year 5—2010-2011: Goal – 62%	Reached – 57.5%

Objective 4: Student Graduation rate:

The percentage of first time, full-time degree-seeking students who graduate within three years will increase 2% each grant year from a starting level of 39% in spring 2006.

Year 1—2006-2007: Goal – 41%	Reached – 41%
Year 2—2007-2008: Goal – 43%	Reached – 42%
Year 3—2008-2009: Goal – 45%	Reached – 41%
Year 4—2009-2010: Goal – 47%	Reached – 41%
Year 5—2010-2011: Goal—49%	Reached – 42.4%

Other measures that are related are CCSSE (Community College Survey of Student Engagement) and SENSE (Survey of Entering Student Engagement). We administer these surveys to students in randomly selected credit classes and collect demographic data for comparison purposes from year to year. The five benchmarks collected from the CCSSE are Active and Collaborative Learning, Student Effort, Academic Challenge, Student-Faculty Interactions and Support for Learners. The benchmarks in SENSE are Early Connections, High Expectations and Aspirations, Clear Academic Plan and Pathway, Effective Track to College Readiness, Engaged Learning and Academic and Social Support Network. We administer these surveys to gauge our students' perceptions and to give the institution valuable data in what we might need to enhance or change to meet our students' needs.

Our SENSE data compares NIACC to the survey cohort and to the top-performing colleges. Our results compared to the cohort for the 2012 survey were better than the cohort with the exception of the High Expectation and Aspirations section. Some of these questions related to our students contributing in class or related to assignments not being turned in or being prepared for class discussions. These items give us information that we can use to consider options on how to improve our student's perceived value in these classroom efforts, or to find out if there are other factors in our student's lives that may contribute to these challenges. The other benchmarks show we are very much in line with the cohort schools also completing this survey for the 2012 year.

We participate in the Community College Benchmark Study that compares our data to that of other community colleges that participate. There are some responses that we know the comparisons will show, for instance, our minority participation rates are low. We know we have a low minority population and this study reflects that same data. Other measures include average credit section size (18.69), market penetration by our community (4.51%), percent of high school graduates enrolling (33.31%), and student attainment of educational objective (97%). We compare these rates each year we do the study to the previous results. Though these results show some numbers we can be proud of, we do need to consider persistence. This study does not capture those results.

This past year we implemented the NIACC Portal. This is a single sign-on to our system for our students and staff. The students can find their schedule, their on-line LMS (Learning Management System), announcements or alerts, as well as group information if they have an organized participation group such as Phi Theta Kappa (Community College Honor Society). We can track usage of the portal, students' engagement through their use of particular sections of the web tool, or we can send messages to a particular group rather than to the entire student body.

6R3. What are your performance results for administrative support service processes?

We send our campus climate survey to all Board-approved staff bi-annually to gauge the participation of in governance and engagement in committees. The survey results are shared with the college groups in meetings. We have conversation about what it shows, in aggregated responses, to ensure results accuracy and to collect feedback. From this survey, we have been making changes to how we fill committees, how we ask the survey questions, and which survey questions we ask. We continue to have a core group of questions we ask, but value input from the staff on what other attributes of our culture need to be measured.

Our upward evaluations, which run bi-annually on years between the campus climate surveys are tools for working with supervisory staff. The College asks supervised staff to complete a survey on their perceptions and satisfaction of their supervisor. These results are aggregated and shared with the supervisor. Areas of improvement that are identified are considered for the supervisor's evaluation and goals for the coming year.

Our financial audit is performed annually. Any comments or 'findings' are made a part of this audit. The college identifies how, if any, findings will be resolved and how to prevent recurrence. NIACC has worked to minimize any findings. Our audit has been issued as unqualified for over 10 years. This is a result of documented procedures, consistency in application of accounting principles, and consistent work of following federal regulations.

We are fortunate to have a strong Foundation. Their role is support the institution as the fundraising arm of the College. We have had several successful campaigns and have an endowment of over \$17 million dollars. Most of these endowments have been identified to support scholarships for our students. This is a significant assistance to our student population in a time when funding for college can be challenging for our students.

With the implementation of the portal, we have a central location to view what is happening at the College. Though this is a relatively new implementation, we have been moving many of our announcements, alerts, and college activity listings to this web-driven page. This also provides users a single sign-on to our e-mail and our MIS system (Colleague). Our staff can access financial information, personnel information and access to the grading system through the portal.

We use the Community College Benchmark Study to compare data provided by NIACC to data provided by other community colleges. There are results for staffing and student measures. For the staffing collection, our results for grievances and harassment are -0-, 76% of the sections taught are taught by full-time faculty, and again we know our minority staffing rates are very low. These results indicate our administrative and academic culture is to rely on our full-time faculty as much as possible for educating our students. We continually seek to fill vacant positions with diversity, knowing the challenges in north central Iowa of recruiting diversity in our faculty and administrative positions.

6R4. How do your key student, administrative, and institutional support areas use information and results to improve their services? Any processes changed based on these measures?

We have been including students along with faculty and staff when we are working on ad hoc committee work. The workflow including students and how they are enrolled at NIACC gave us the student perspective. This is an important lens to ensure we meet expectations or consider how we complete processes. Other student surveys allow us to collect information from our students (see CCSSE and SENSE above). We use the results from these surveys to determine how we might either change processes or change communication to our constituents for delivering success. Our climate survey is a tool to measure our staff involvement in our institution. As we communicated these results this past year, the College decided to change the number of questions and the delivery methods of this survey. We used individual employee group presentations of these results to gather this feedback.

We had not developed a facilities master planning document since the latter 1960's. It was necessary to develop a current plan to help prioritize projects. The committee involved architects, students and staff from many areas of campus, and administration. From the final document [see here on our website: http://www.niacc.edu/wp-content/uploads/PDFFiles/AQIP/niacc_final_book_08_16_2011.pdf (takes a while to load, so please be patient), we determined student housing needed to be updated as a first priority. This project has begun with expectations that it will be available for students the fall 2014 semester.

We value input from many constituencies, and we evaluate how we either do or do not make changes based on the data we have been gathering as an institution or data gathered in specific instances. Financially and academically, we have been planning for the future to keep up with technology, students' needs, and our constituents or stakeholders needs.

6R5. How do your results for the performance of your processes for Supporting Institutional Operations compare with the performance results of other higher education institutions and, if appropriate, of organizations outside of higher education?

We often find ourselves compared to other institutions and comparing ourselves to other institutions. This gives us perspective in how we are doing in our region, in comparable sized colleges, programming offerings, and other financial comparisons. Though this might indicate how well we are doing or where we might need to make changes, we also need to compare ourselves to ourselves from year to year. We need to see if we have grown, made necessary changes to meet the needs of our constituents and stakeholders, or considered what changes might need to be made to meet their needs.

Our market share of graduating seniors is quite high compared to other schools. We have had a high percentage of our region's high school graduates choose 'NIACC First' immediately completing high school. Though this is a measure of success, it is also where we find concerns since the demographics are changing and high school populations are declining in our region.

As mentioned above, we use IPEDS on a national and regional level to make comparisons on items from staffing, salaries, and enrollment, to audited financials. We have the perception that we are usually doing well in comparison to many institutions. We have a strong financial history, we have strong Foundation support (our fundraising arm of the institution) for scholarships for our students, and we have good cohesion (#7 under Observations in the Facilitators Observation Report) between employee groups; however, there is always room for improvement. We are continually looking for ways to leverage dollars to keep our technology and our staff's skills related to technology current. We are continually working with our advisory groups to ensure our programming is current and relevant by evaluating if we need to add or revise programs, if we need to modify or enhance types of delivery of programs and services, and if there are additional efficiencies we can garner to make us more financially prudent.

One of our challenges is ethnic diversity. We do make efforts to welcome diversity to the institution. International students share their customs and practices; the College places flags of our international students in our common area in the Activity Center; we designed our Women in STEM programming to encourage young women to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and math; and a diversity statement and policy was created.

As far as outside education comparisons go, we have been compared to the local hospital (diversity, wages, benefits), local business and industry (wages, benefits, hours), and the local K-12 districts. We partner with many of these for continuing education, advisory committees, legislative support, and employment opportunities for our graduates.

For wages, which quite often get compared to industries outside education, we have been engaging a consultant to do a study and offer recommendations. A study was completed for hourly staff and implemented changes to the base pay and to those with longevity. Evaluation instruments were also reviewed to provide a clearer process, employee input, and development of yearly goals. The plan will continue this study to include Professional Salaried Staff (PSS) in the upcoming fiscal year.

6I1. What recent improvements have you made in this category? How systematic and comprehensive are your processes and performance results for *Supporting Institutional Operations*?

We have recently finished an update of our Strategic Plan, Student Success and Completion Plan, and Facilities Master Plan. All of these plans reflect our commitment to our students, our stakeholders, and our institution. As an immediate result of our facilities master plan, we engaged our community in creating a plan for new student housing. We have an aggressive timeline to have these available by August 2014.

Another result of our facilities master planning activities made us realize we needed a better tool for using our rooms, reporting on the usage, and finding ways to gain efficiency in our facility usage. Our technology staff facilitated an RFP to find a new reservation system. We are currently in the early stages of implementing this system. We desire to be able to use our buildings most efficiently and to create better services for our staff and external constituents that use our facilities.

With the engagement of a consultant to help us with safety and security, we are moving forward with a plan to maintain our documentation. We have identified what our needs may be in continuing to practice safety protocols, backup systems, and continuity of operations for administration and services to our students. Though this is not complete, we have made great strides in developing a more complete set of operations for our administrative staff to follow.

As each of these items is moving forward, we are finding ways to keep these processes current. The need to define systematic and continuous review of these practices will be part of the next steps. The facilities master plan helped us define priorities. After housing, we move on to the landscaping and feasibility of a health and bioscience center. After the consultant provides the first draft of our emergency plan and other documents related to continuity of operations, we move on to practice and drills along with determining the College position to champion this process and keeping it current.

6I2. How do your culture and infrastructure help you to select specific processes to improve and to set targets for improved performance results in *Supporting Institutional Operations*?

Our culture has embraced the employee meeting and participatory governance that our institution has been creating. Our governance bodies bring items forward for consideration. Our employee groups and meetings bring up concerns and ideas for consideration at regular meetings. Our administrative team has regular weekly meetings. Our written plans (Facilities Master Plan, Strategic Plan, Student Success and Completion Plan, etc.) focus on our students' and stakeholders' needs and success; our conversations on values seek to improve our performance and our institution as a whole.

One of the best complements we received on our building infrastructure was from the architects that led the facilities master planning process. *We already had 'good bones' to build on.* That was a huge complement to our past administration for careful future planning, and we are now taking that history and continuing to build on it in both in physical and academic infrastructures.

Category 7 – Measuring Effectiveness

In the past five years the College has made significant strides to improve measuring effectiveness. The College leaders have worked to develop a systematic approach to measuring and reporting information. Linked now to the strategic plan are AQIP, Foundations of Excellence, and the Student Success and Completion Plan. In the last year for the first time, Key Performance Indicators and performance benchmarks were developed.

The College has entered into a contractual relationship with Ellucian Colleague to advance technology and the usability of our data information system. A common complaint about information systems and Ellucian Colleague in particular is it is data rich and information poor. The contractual relationship with Ellucian Colleague has benefited the College to improve the usefulness of the data system.

The College has paid particular attention to improvements in this area; however, that work needs to continue. When comparing reporting measures of effectiveness to other colleges, NIACC falls short. The development of the KPI's is a start, but that work must continue to be built upon. In the future it would be of value to employees of the College to have ready access to performance measurements. Currently, reports must be called up to be run, when a system of automatic daily, weekly or monthly updates is feasible with the data system in place. Those measures will automatically be judged against benchmarks. This practice is common in higher education.

7P1. How do you select, manage, and distribute data and performance information to support your instructional and non-instructional programs and services?

NIACC utilizes a robust management information system (Ellucian Colleague) to manage all quantitative data. A data mining team is dispersed across campus in specialty areas with Programmer Analysts and Web System Administrators housed in technology services. Data requests from administration, faculty and staff will come to any of the data miners or Programmers. The data will be collected either via an existing query or a new query will be built. The data results are then distributed electronically to the requestor.

The management of centralized data at NIACC is provided by the enterprise applications team who manages the Ellucian Colleague system for student information, human resources, and finance. The data within this system represents the core data for the college in reporting and distributing performance information. The Colleague system has been in place since 2005 at NIACC with data converted from previous systems back to 1985. The system provides secure access based on user types and responsibilities.

In order to further the data driven decision making within the College, the Colleague data is presented in a nightly updated reporting database. This nightly data repository is then used for reporting by users in key areas that service others in the College. Technology Services provides flattened and enhanced data to make reporting easier by these power users. The College is also currently making the transition to the Entrinsik Informer reporting system which will improve reporting capabilities, allow integration from other data sources, and provide dash boarding capabilities to the College. The distribution of reports via

Informer will also allow scheduled and triggered reports to be delivered on demand according to department need.

Data is regularly provided to the AQIP Quality Council, President's Council, College Senate, Board of Trustees and other administrative staff. Data is shared during all staff meetings held several times throughout the year and presented on the College's intranet. Results may be disseminated to the individual requestor, committees and council meetings, and the entire campus. We often use these results to complete state and federal reports.

NIACC is moving forward to improve their use of data in decision making and has identified the need for a full-time Institutional Researcher as a strategic priority. We are seeking grant funding for this position and have prioritized it in the college budget planning process. This position will help move the college forward in improving data analysis and presentation to all stakeholders.

7P2. How do you select, manage, and distribute data and performance information to support your planning and improvement efforts?

The process for collecting institutional quantitative data is outlined in 7P1.

Core Component 5.D.1. For planning and improvement purposes, the data to conduct quantitative analysis are used by a number of individuals across the College as comparative pieces with information provided by outside sources, i.e. The Iowa Community College Condition of Education Report, Integrated Postsecondary Enrollment Data System (IPEDS), the National Community College Benchmark Survey, Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (CCFSSE), Community College Survey of Student Engagement, and Survey of Entering Student Engagement.

The President's Council uses data to identify important issues, to set goals, to develop strategies for data-driven improvements, to ensure compliance with the strategic plan, and to establish progress measures.

Reports are made to the appropriate councils and committees where discussions and action plans are developed to address any areas of comparative deficiency.

The institutional benchmark data is compiled and reported in the annual KPI report. This report is presented to President's Council and College Senate, and it serves as a standing annual report to the Board of Directors.

Core Component 5.D.2. The research to develop and construct the current strategic plan, the Foundations of Excellence, and the Student Success and Completion Plan included a mix of quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data was gathered following the processes outlined above and qualitative research followed standard practices. The College gathered volumes of comments and input from the community, committee focus groups, faculty and staff, and student groups. Working in the constant state of environmental scan, coupled with review of the academic literature, resulted in a wealth of information that we ultimately funneled into the concise documents. These plans have been widely discussed

throughout the College via standing committee meetings, focused work groups, and all College communication meetings.

Methods of collecting and analysis of assessment of general education, college-wide core competencies strategies fall under the responsibility of the Educational Effectiveness Committee. This year the college piloted a new assessment strategy by having graduating students prepare poster board presentations. Standardized rubrics were developed for trained faculty and staff members to assess student learning against the core competencies.

Annual classroom assessment is also conducted by faculty members. Those assessment plans are submitted to the division chair for review. When the results indicate areas for growth the division chair works with the faculty member on instructional strategies to improve student learning outcomes.

Program reviews are conducted at least every five years. The program review is conducted by a trained team from the Educational Effectiveness Committee. The program reviewers prepare written reports which include strengths and recommendations for improvement. The final review report is shared with the faculty members in the program and the division chair. The division chair and the faculty members use the report to make improvements to the program.

7P3. How do you determine the needs of your departments and units related to the collection, storage, and accessibility of data and performance information?

Data needs are driven at the department, President’s Council and Board levels based on the information necessary for plans, required reports and institutional measures for performance assessment.

The College does not maintain a centralized department of institutional research, but rather utilizes a number of content experts to collect and analyze data. Various departments across the College are assigned the responsibility for completing required reports such as Integrated Postsecondary Enrollment Data System, Iowa Department of Education and the Iowa College Student Aid Commission.

Department and division data needs are determined, in part, to the connection to the goals, strategies and activities developed for each specific area.

Administrative departmental needs for data are brought forward via the enterprise applications governance committee which is used to prioritize and work on these solutions. Most administrative departments have a power user with access to the reporting database from the Colleague system and can run the reports they need on demand. As we transition to the Informer product, enhanced reporting will be available to these departments.

Working with the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs and Division Chairs, academic data needs are frequently provided via these same power users or working with Technology Services as needed.

Technology Services will be adding a new employee position in May 2013 that will focus on reporting for the College. This position will perform needs analysis, construct database views and tables, and support users on the new Informer product. Our plans are to expand the use of reporting with the new, easier to use toolset, and to address more readily the data needs for all departments on campus.

7P4. How, at the institutional level, do you analyze data and information regarding overall performance? How are these analyses shared throughout the institution?

At the institutional level, data analysis and overall performance measurement takes place during weekly President's Council and during the annual retreat. The President reports discussions to College Senate during their monthly meeting.

We utilize comparative data pieces from outside entities as benchmarks on the College's performance. The College prepares an annual KPI report to measure and benchmark institutional effectiveness. We share these performance results in department, division, and College meetings as relevance and necessity dictate. An annual report of the institutional measures is share with the Board of Directors.

The process of financial review is open and participative. The College has developed three-year scenario planning using predicted revenues and expenditures to determine impact on the reserve balance. The financial predictive model is shared with the four employees groups so they too can work with the model. The Vice President of Administrative Services presents this model and the resulting financial impact to employees during President's Council, Cracker Barrel meetings and at College Senate.

7P5. How do you determine the needs and priorities for comparative data and information? What are your criteria and methods for selecting sources of comparative data and information within and outside the higher education community?

Data priorities and needs are driven by some extent to meet regulatory requirements. Mandated reports such as Integrated Postsecondary Educations Database System (IPEDS), Iowa Department of Education, National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP), and Iowa College Student Aid Commission generate data priority needs.

The College has also participated in a number of additional benchmark pieces that result in the need for data: the National Community College Benchmark Project, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement, and the Survey of Entering Student Engagement.

The comparative pieces are selected based on commonly known benchmarked bases and peer institutions in Iowa. The community colleges in Iowa support each other by sharing information with each other during meetings and in response to e-mail and supported list serves data requests.

The College regularly monitors the needs for academic programming through labor market trend analysis using program advisory committees and relationships with our community and K-12 partners to assess the need for new program development.

The College specifically compares enrollment, retention, student demographics, completion rates, persistence rates, graduation rates, occupational outlook data, and placement rates from reports prepared by the Iowa Department of Education.

7P6. How do you ensure department and unit analysis of data and information aligns with your institutional goals for instructional and non-instructional programs and services? How is this analysis shared?

To ensure an integrated and embedded approach, the institutional Strategic Plan is the driver for all subsequent department and division plans. All functional areas must align goals, strategies, and their measures of success with the institutional strategic plan.

Operationally, President's Council members construct strategies aligned with keeping NIACC First in Education, Leadership, and Partnership—the pillars of the strategic plan. This includes the process for academic planning and assessment initiatives. The strategies are built to connect our planning process to our strategic plan and the goals that are set by each of the areas must align with one of the pillars on the strategic plan. For the first year, Academic Year 2012-2013, the College operationalized budget priorities to that plan that connects to the mission, vision, value of the institution. An annual review of plan progress is conducted and priorities reestablished. We vet new initiatives through the working committees of College Senate and Academic Affairs to assure that through our governance process Staff continued to remain involved to ensure initiatives align with the strategic plan. The process circles back with the annual report on our key performance indicators to the Board of Directors. These indicators hold established benchmarks determined by study of a longitudinal view and environmental scan.

All plans are required to provide an annual update and are discussed at the President's Council annual retreat. The updates are noted in the meeting minutes, shared at College Senate and posted on a common drive so all employees may have access.

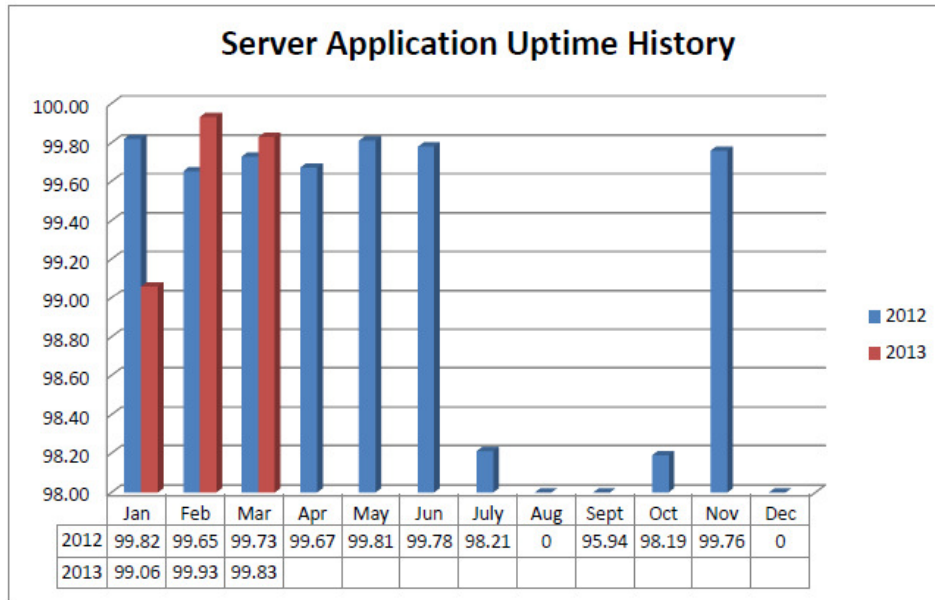
7P7. How do you ensure the timeliness, accuracy, reliability, and security of your information system(s) and related processes?

The institution ensures the timeliness, accuracy, reliability, and security of the College's information system(s) and related processes through a number of structured and on-going processes. NIACC's Technology Services department coordinates, oversees and/or performs these processes.

A monthly vulnerability scan and penetration test is performed on the College's server and network infrastructure. The reports generated by this scan are regularly reviewed by the Technology Services Infrastructure team, with actionable items identified and tracked. The scans and tests are completed utilizing a Rapid7 appliance.

Essential network servers and communication systems are monitored continually through a remote emergency operations center (EOC) utilizing a SolarWinds appliance. A failure of any of these critical devices triggers an email alert followed by a calling tree to local Technology Services staff.

Table 7.1: Comparison of server application uptime



The College has integrated a number of devices into the network infrastructure to provide secure and reliable access to information and information services. The College utilizes a network firewall with a ‘DMZ’ zone to insulate the College’s internal network and data stores from external access. To prevent unwanted and potentially harmful email, an email ‘SPAM’ filter is in place.

The College has implemented processes to regularly replace and improve essential technology devices to enhance reliability, security, and access. Examples of these processes include (a) the College implemented server virtualization for all new servers and existing servers upgrades, (b) The College is in year three of a four year data network refresh, (c) the College is embarking on a wireless network upgrade project, and (d) the College has begun a computer technology replacement cycle; year two of a four-year replacement cycle for instructional computer technology and beginning the first year of a four-year replacement cycle for faculty and staff computer technology.

Regularly scheduled maintenance windows provide opportunities for NIACC Technology Services staff to apply software patches and updates to network servers, appliances, and enterprise applications that provide user access to information.

Technical support for students, faculty and staff is provided through a combination of local technical support staff and a ‘24x7’ remote central help desk (CHD). The remote CHD provides support services including user account support (network account unlocks and password resets), technical support for services and functions as identified and scripted by the College, and ‘urgent/class in session’ technical support which may result in a calling tree to the local technicians. The College utilizes a sophisticated, web-based tool to track and manage support requests and incidents. Students, faculty, and staff can also access the system to receive updates and review activities related to their calls. Automatic communications occur when a call is updated, and regular reporting on a number of variables allows management staff to identify any issues that might exist. Satisfaction surveys related to the support calls

are provided to the originating student or staff after the call has been resolved, and these surveys are reviewed periodically.

Table 7.2: Call center statistics

ACD Statistics	Mar	CTD
Total calls to the CHD	122	109
Total calls answered	122	109
Total calls unanswered	0	0
Average speed to answer (ASA)	39	37
Total Call Time	23h 11m	22h 45m
Avg Handle Time (AHT)	8m 26sec	8m 11sec

NIACC is in its third year of a technology partnership with Ellucian Colleague Technology Managed Services to provide access to a number of services. The Ellucian Colleague Information Security Management team manages the vulnerability scans, assists local staff in resolving vulnerabilities, and provides forensic and remediation services when needed. The EOC team monitors the College’s server and network performance. The CHD team provides the remote 24x7 service.

7R1. What measures of the performance and effectiveness of your system for information and knowledge management do you collect and analyze regularly?

The College is currently working to improve the system for information management. The College has successfully collected data, but at times requires a lengthy turnaround time and manual quality data checks. Partnering with Ellucian Colleague in 2010 has resulted in improvements in this area, with continued growth planned.

Power users that access data through the College’s reporting services have various processes in place to check data and work with technology staff on questions and revisions to the data collection and analysis process as needed. We compare data to historical trends and to data from peer institutions to determine reliability and accuracy. As reporting functionality is increased, we regularly review and discuss the integrity of data.

Within Technology Services, the enterprise applications team and governance group regularly discuss data needs and gather informal feedback regarding the functionality of the reporting systems in use on campus. In response to this feedback, the College has approved the addition of a full-time reporting specialist on the team and funded the use of a new reporting tool. Formal review of the effectiveness of our data information will need to be addressed as these initiatives move forward and is a part of the plans for the College’s future.

Technology Services has also worked with their partner, Ellucian Colleague Technology Managed Services, to undertake both faculty and student surveys related to technology and assessments on the College’s readiness for online learning and the creation of an Academic Technology Vision.

The College’s Technology Services team relies on a sophisticated help desk ticket system which ensures that technical issues and requests are tracked. Communication to the user is initiated when updates are made to a ticket and regular reporting on outstanding and closed tickets allows management staff to identify any issues that might exist. After each ticket, users are sent a satisfaction survey that they complete regarding their support experience. These surveys indicate a high level of satisfaction with the service received.

7R2. What is the evidence that your system for Measuring Effectiveness meets your institution’s needs in accomplishing its mission and goals?

To determine how well the College is accomplishing its mission and goals, we conduct an annual review of progress towards the department goals and objectives. We measure this review institutionally by the Key Performance Indicator (KPI’s) results report. This key performance indicator report is designed to provide timely and accurate information to aid in decision making. The College developed the indicators included to support our strategic initiatives with a priority eye toward student success and completion. Although the College has held a long tradition of embracing quality improvement beginning with data collection, our first attempt to establish formal KPI’s and set benchmark goals was in June 2012.

Within Technology Services, the regular surveys from the help desk system help us understand our success in accomplishing our mission and goals. Table 7.3 indicates the average response (on a 5.0 scale) since October 2010 when this system was introduced.

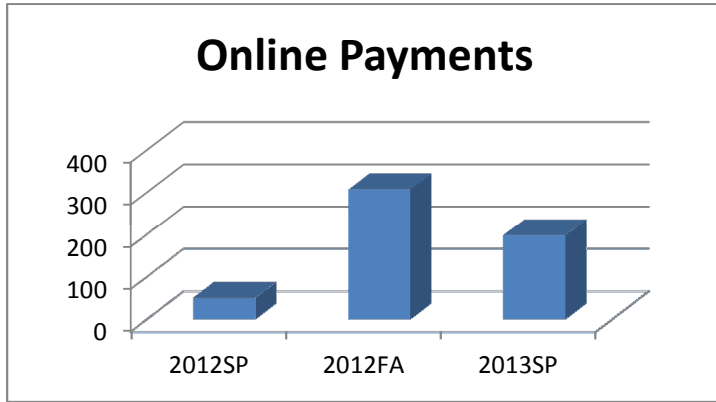
Table 7.3: Help desk survey responses

User Survey Question	Average Response
How satisfied were you with the competency of the technician	4.67
How satisfied were you with the customer service of the technician	4.49
How satisfied were you with the timeliness of the resolution	4.64
What was your overall satisfaction level with this issue	4.60

Formal satisfaction review of the reporting system has not been conducted at NIACC and is recognized as an area for growth. With the introduction of new full-time staff and tools in this area, NIACC should be able to conduct future satisfaction evaluations with the reporting and measurement systems. Indirect evidence of system satisfaction exists in the usage of new areas of system functionality.

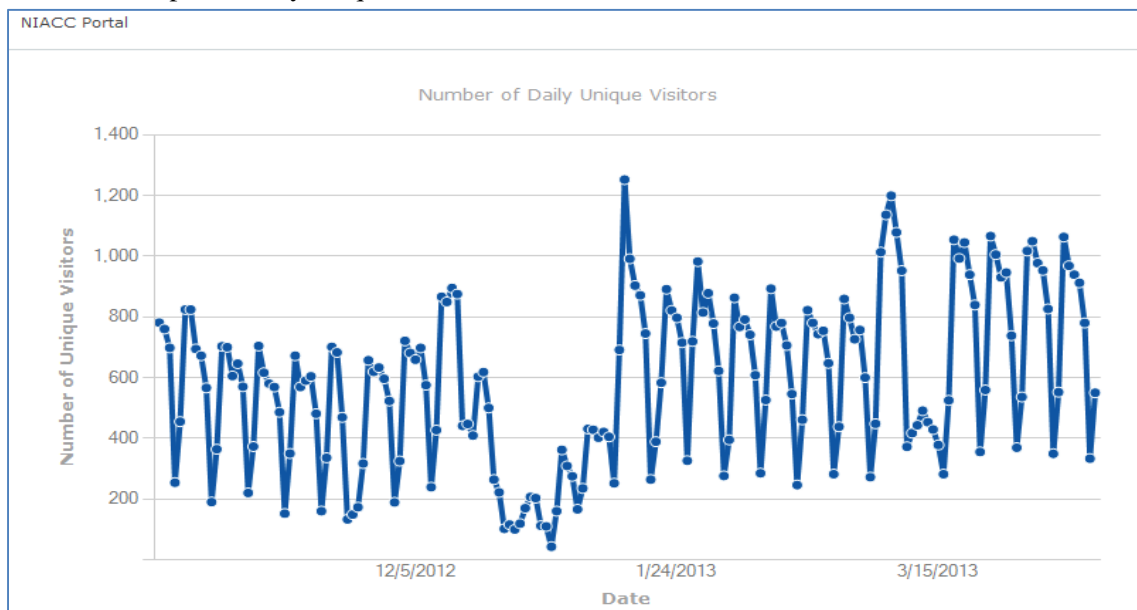
Online payment use improved in April 2012 and online payments increased 600% the following term. We have planned additional improvements during fall 2013 as the College still manually processes the majority of payments.

Table 7.4: Semester comparison of online payments



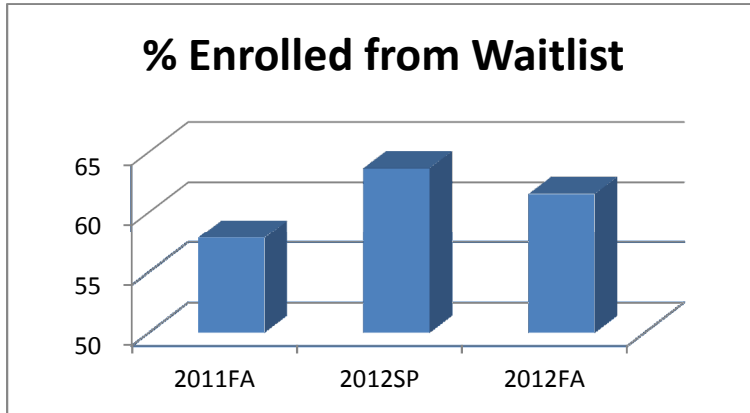
In the fall 2012, the College launched a new portal system for employees and staff. Student use of the portal has continued to increase from a daily average of 700 students during fall 2012 to over 900 students during spring 2013. Faculty portal access became available November 2012. Average daily faculty-staff use has increased 300% during spring 2013. The number of students, faculty, and staff who are using the portal on a regular basis has steadily increased since launch. The portal averages over 1000 unique daily visitors (see Table 7.5).

Table 7.5: NIACC portal daily unique visitor count



Section wait listing was implemented beginning fall 2011. Students placed on a waitlist for a section average getting into that class 61% of the time.

Table 7.6: Percentage of students enrolled from course waitlists



In August of 2011 we implemented processes to begin importing bookstore charges. Now we are importing approximately 4,000 bookstore charge records per year into student accounts.

Since July 1, 2012, there are 1,128 students reported through Retention Alert. Since this involves different semesters, it is not an unduplicated account. For fall 2012 – Retention Alert had 495 contacts with 357 being unduplicated. 50% of this number returned for spring. Besides just the category of ‘Early Alert,’ some coaches use this system to gather information about athletes, and there have been 57 student athletes through this section. The other section of Early Alert is Student Life Issues which is used by the Student Development Office to track student who have received a disciplinary action from the Dean’s office.

There are 111 students issued formal disciplinary actions thus far this year.

A lot of effort has gone into improving the Degree Audit module. Counselors and students have the ability to monitor closely a student’s progress toward his or her intended degree. What-if analysis is also available if the student is considering changing programs.

For the last two years, Technology Services has participated in the annual EDUCAUSE Core Data Survey process to better analyze other aspects of our services and programs. Additionally in August of 2010, the college began a partnership with Ellucian Colleague Technology Managed Services which provides an on-site Chief Information Officer and Applications Director to work with the internal technology team. Remote resources are also engaged for special projects and issues as needed in this partnership. Ellucian Colleague provides best practices for Technology Services and the team is actively implementing new practices and solutions for the College. The College can also tap into other Ellucian Colleague institutions’ knowledge and practices for assistance.

7R3. How do your results for the performance of your processes for Measuring Effectiveness compare with the results of other higher education institutions and, if appropriate, of organizations outside of higher education?

Over the last five years, the College has made significant progress in measuring effectiveness in a comprehensive manner. The College enjoys a long history of measuring effectiveness through qualitative methods; however, we have conducted much of that work in silos. To eliminate that independent work and to build a cohesive plan for organizational development, we assigned responsibilities to one

individual. The College now has a position charged with oversight of strategic and operational plan development. To build synchronicity, this same individual is also charged with AQIP responsibilities.

While we have made progress, there is still room for growth when NIACC holds itself in comparison to other higher education institutions. The College has developed KPI's and established benchmarks; now we will review them annually and compare them with data collected from outside sources. The College will establish additional institutional measures of effectiveness will use the information system automatically to update those measures.

Within Technology Services, standard comparative measures do not exist for all aspects of our operations. However, in the last two years we have participated in the EDUCAUSE Core Data Survey which will now allow us to begin comparisons to similar institutions on the aspects measured within this national survey. We will begin this in 2013.

Technology Services works closely with other Iowa Community Colleges utilizing the Ellucian Colleague system, participates in regional and national user groups and conferences, and is active on various list serves in order to learn and compare through the sharing of experiences with other institutions. The College also has a partnership with Ellucian Colleague Technology Managed Services which brings best practices and comparative information for all aspects of technology services to the College.

7II. What recent improvements have you made in this category? How systematic and comprehensive are your processes and performance results for *Measuring Effectiveness*?

The College recognizes its need to make advancements information systems and technology advancements. As such in August of 2011, we entered into a contract with Ellucian Colleague. Ellucian Colleague provides contract services for higher education advanced technology solutions.

During the past several years, the College has increased its ability to provide data to decision makers. Employees have experienced improved access to those Programmer Analysts who can run complex reports; consequently, this creates the ability to provide better and timelier services to our students.

NIACC constantly strives to improve its systems and processes in all areas including the use of data. The college recently created a set of Key Performance Indicators which were approved by the Board of Trustees and will be regularly reported through a variety of means. The College has begun to create a culture of data driven decision making and recently underwent enrollment planning following a traditional business plan model which incorporated data and return on investment calculations. In support of this strategic direction, the College has identified the need for a full-time Institutional Researcher and made this a priority. NIACC is currently seeking Title III funding for the position and evaluating other funding should it be needed to fill this priority need.

Within Technology Services there has been considerable effort to improve data and other systems. The college has approved a full-time position (slated to begin in May 2013) to focus on reporting. NIACC has purchased and begun the use of a new reporting tool called Entrisik Informer to make data

reporting easier and more accessible for end-users and to introduce dashboards for constituents. In addition, the team has worked with business intelligence consultants to improve the reporting database structure and to begin looking at data warehousing structures for improved reporting. The use of Microsoft SQL Integration Services has been expanded to better build appropriate structures for reporting.

Technology Services continues to regularly upgrade server and networking equipment to ensure reliability and effectiveness and has created replacement cycles for all such equipment. Data backups are done regularly and a new backup system was recently acquired to improve backup capabilities. Complete off-site backup is expected to be completed within the next 12 months. The Colleague systems will be updated in the 2013-2014 year to new virtualized servers and upgraded databases for improved performance.

7I2. How do your culture and infrastructure help you to select specific processes to improve and to set targets for improved performance results in *Measuring Effectiveness*?

The open process and shared governance model aid in the process of dissemination of information of specific processes. This culture and infrastructure lend itself to open conversations of areas of improvement.

The move to AQIP has formalized our work for identifying and prioritizing specific process to improve.

Within Technology Services, a growing governance process is used to help identify needed improvements and review plans and policies with the college. The governance includes the Enterprise Applications Core team, Academic Technology Committee and an overarching Information Technology Council. Governance for the NIACC web site was moved into an overall Marketing Steering Committee at the college. These governance organizations help prioritize work within their respective areas of influence as well as bring new ideas and issues to the table for technology. Each year a technology strategic and operational plan is updated to reflect the priorities of the department, and shared with campus in a variety of ways.

The College continually develops and refines its processes seeking better methods for gathering and obtaining the most useful information to be used for improvements.

Category 8 – Planning Continuous Improvement

Introduction

Over its history, the College has immersed itself in continuous quality improvement. Our move to AQIP was a natural progression.

Prior to AQIP improvement efforts operated in a reactive fashion. Benchmark reports would be reviewed and a task force would be assembled to design and implement strategies to react. While the scope was limited, the College never was satisfied with the status quo.

Since its acceptance to AQIP, the College has progressed to a maturity level of aligning improvement initiatives with the strategic plan and AQIP Categories. The AQIP Quality Council (AQC) — a new committee focused on quality improvement—has facilitated this work. This group focuses on the work of AQIP and the development and construction of the strategic plan. Now the College takes a much more integrated view by using a systems approach to plan continuous improvement.

The charge of the College, facilitated by the AQC, next will be to integrate CQI at all levels of the College. In January 2013 the College hosted a Quality Conversation Day by Dr. Keith Cornille with all employees participating. In his final report Dr. Cornille provided recommendations for advancing quality thought throughout the College. The AQC has reviewed these recommendations and will begin work in the fall to advance those ideas. One priority is to provide training for front line staff on CQI and to provide them tools that might aid them in improving outcomes in their own work areas. The College has focused on an institutional level; now it is appropriate to funnel this work down to day-to-day operations.

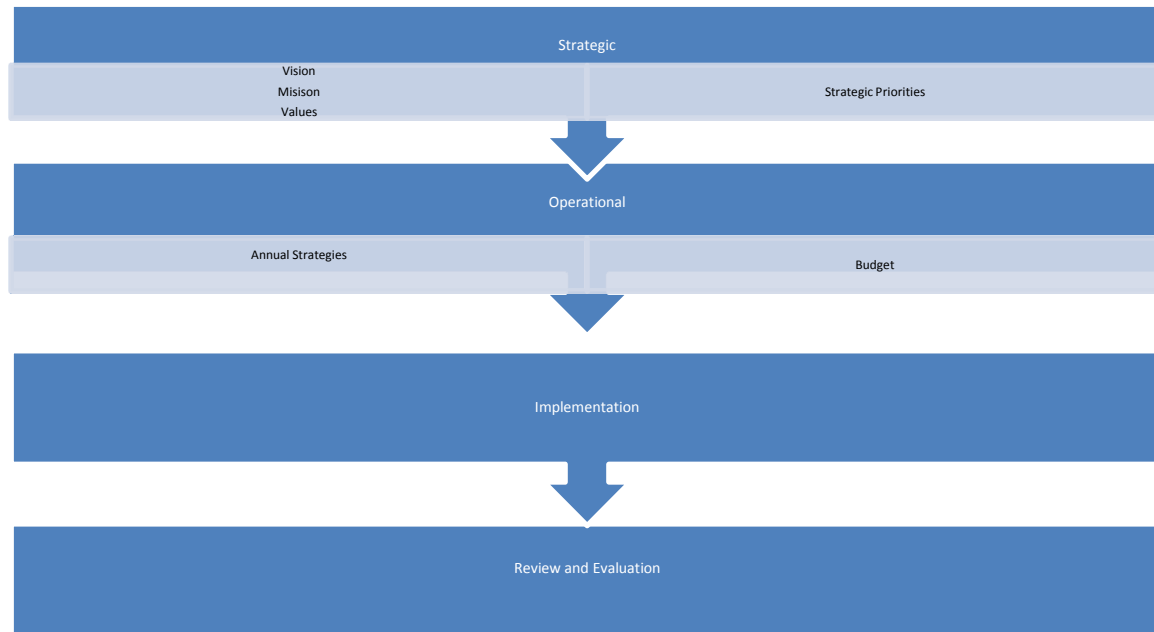
The College has outlined a system that led to prioritized action projects. The AQC will now work to move those action project ideas forward. Interest group discussions will begin in the fall, from here a champion will be identified to facilitate the project.

A challenge in this area is the number and magnitude of projects occurring simultaneously. All projects have been deemed worthy and aligned with the strategic plan and AQIP. The challenge with so much happening at the College is determining how we track and communicate projects' status to employees. By far the majority of improvement work being undertaken by the College has not been designated as an AQIP Action Project. The AQC has considered using the Action Project Directory as a means for tracking all projects. This will help define and formalize projects into one system. However, this could become so momentous that the true work of the AQC gets lost in procedural obligations. We welcome feedback and suggestions on how to manage all of the improvement projects occurring at the College in a systematic way.

8P1. What are your key planning processes?

The planning process aligns itself with the principles of continuous quality improvement following the model of plan, do, check, and act. The process is depicted in Figure 8.1 as follows:

Figure 8.1 Strategic Planning Processes



NIACC Strategic Plan

The NIACC Strategic Plan is on a five-year cycle. Fundamental pieces of the planning process include reviewing and revising as necessary the vision, mission and core values. This review process includes soliciting the views and opinions of our staff, students, and stakeholders while conducting environmental scans and institutional research. The process works like a funnel to bring a broad set of information to a concise plan which can be understood by all constituents. The final approval comes from a recommendation made to the Board of Directors for plan adoption.

The overarching planning process for NIACC has been our strategic planning. By design, the College incorporated the nine AQIP categories into the plan and uses this plan as the driver for all departmental planning. The strategic planning process was multi-faceted:

- NIACC Board of Directors, faculty and staff presentations and exercises to gather input and gain feedback
- Community focus group meetings
- Collection and analysis of qualitative data
- Further discussions on process updates, input on findings, open forum for input
- Self-study work conducted through NIACC’s preparation for transition from PEAQ to AQIP

Through the development of the strategic plan, three basic themes emerged that establish the core and focus of our five-year plan: Education, Leadership, and Partnership. The Plan addresses each of these areas separately to identify specific areas that have been determined to be of the greatest importance to all our stakeholders.

Within each main area of the plan, the NIACC strategic plan has identified strategic goals. These strategic goals originate from vision exercises, focus group meetings, and faculty & staff feedback. By linking these goals to specific AQIP Categories, the NIACC Plan is directly supported by our accreditation.

Division and Departmental Planning

Division objectives are developed using the three main areas of the Strategic Plan as guidelines. They are then evaluated to determine which strategic goal(s) they best support. The key point is that the division objectives are the main driver.

Each division objective has specific strategies aimed to meet the objective. The structure and effectiveness of these objectives include timelines, the specific activities involved, key performance indicators to measure progress, and an evaluation of outcomes of these strategies. A visual is provided in Figure 8.2.

Figure 8.2 Academic Affairs Strategic Planning Document

Strategic Plan Working Document Goals 2011-2016									
Keeping NIACC First In...			Education						
Related to Strategic Goal									
Academic and Student Affairs Goals	Student Quality Experience	Quality and Relevant Education Center for Excellence	Expand outreach centers	Performance Metrics	Strategy	How and Timetable	kpi	Evaluation Strategies	Strategies FY 2014
Develop Charles City STEM Academy			x		Give release time to Kathy Rogotzke to focus on development of the Charles City Center/STEM Academy beginning in Fall 2012	Work with Centers and Careerlink to create offerings that serve high school students and community college students in our service area. Particular focus on the Charles City Center/STEM Academy; continue efforts 2011-2016.	Academy offerings and enrollments in individual concurrent enrollment sections	Enrollment numbers; work with Careerlink, high schools, and Centers to assess quality of offerings.	Work with Careerlink, Charles City High School, the community, and model institutions throughout the area is underway. Dr. Rogotzke will continue to work toward creation of a STEM Academy throughout the upcoming academic year (FY 2014).
Become a Foundations of Excellence Institution	x				Ask Gardner Institute for additional time to complete process; issue final self-study report to Gardner Institute in January 2013. Begin implementation of FoE recommendations in spring 2013	Complete Foundations of Excellence (FoE) Committee processes and inputs through Academic Year 2011-2012; issue final reports to Gardner Institute in May/June 2012.	FoE Committees, Program Inventory, and Processes will result in a plan of interventions, programming, and activities that will constitute NIACC's approach to the first-year experience. Implementation scheduled for Academic Year 2012-2013.	Evaluation strategies will be built around the results of FoE Committee work, Program Inventory, and Processes. It is likely that the initial evaluation will be constructed in rubrics for faculty use. Students may be asked to take surveys, participate in focus groups, etc., as part of the evaluation process.	Self-study report submitted to Gardner Institute in January 2013. Began implementation of FoE recommendations in spring 2013; this work will continue throughout FY 2014. All recommendations have been organized according to high, medium, or low priority. Work toward high-priority recommendations is underway. Will plan for implementation of First-Year Seminar through FY 2014, with implementation targeted for FY 2015.

Multiple division objectives may support the same strategic goal; likewise, a single division objective may support multiple strategic goals.

President's Council

Under the auspices of the Strategic Plan, the President's Council assesses, supports, approves, and monitors the design and implementation of district strategies related to student success and preparedness, economic and workforce development, institutional financial stewardship, effectiveness and accountability, resource management, and advancement.

The Council explores, on an ongoing basis, the connectivity each functional member brings to the Council to providing insights and informed decisions corporately to support the strategic plan, vision, and mission of the College and the communities it serves.

Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM)

The Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) team plans to keep NIACC First by ensuring Student Success and Completion through six objectives:

- Marketing & Recruiting
- Student Pricing
- Enrolling
- Retention
- Teaching & Learning
- Total Experience

These objectives were developed through the extensive study of Area II through an enrollment modeling project by Computer-Aided Planning (a consulting firm) and the SEM team. The results of this study are reflected in the objectives that will best provide student success and completion during the upcoming years.

The objectives included in the Student Success and Completion (SSC) plan are directly support the three tiers of the NIACC Strategic Plan through strategies addressing the NIACC goals within each tier.

Each of these SSC strategies includes activities, timelines, key performance indicators, and evaluation plans to help manage our success.

AQIP Quality Council (AQC)

The basic function of the AQIP Quality Council (AQC) is to provide ongoing vision, guidance, and support related to issues of quality and continuous improvement. Reporting to College Senate, the AQC coordinates the College's accreditation process as outlined by the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) of the Higher Learning Commission. AQC manages the Systems Portfolio and oversees the selection and review of all Action Projects and the integration of quality principles throughout the

organization. Additionally, the Council had a significant role in the development of the strategic plan and continues to oversee its implementation through the selection and management of action projects.

Academic Affairs Council

The Academic Affairs Council Develops and interprets the policies pertaining to academic affairs of the institution and make recommendations to the President through the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs. It provides opportunities for the expression of new ideas for constructive action, review of existing policies, development of new courses and programs, and plans for future academic growth.

The stated specific purpose of Academic Affairs is to establish a policy or curricular recommending body whose purposes are to

1. Develop and interpret the policies pertaining to academic affairs of the institution and make recommendations to the President through the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs concerning such policy;
2. Provide opportunities for the expression of new ideas for constructive action and review of existing policies as well as for new courses and programs;
3. Plan for future academic growth and policies.

College Senate

The purpose of College Senate is to increase the participation of employees in the governance of the institution, to provide for reliable channels of communication between all segments of the College community, and to constitute a structure through which the College might better implement its objectives while adapting its programs and activities to the changing demands of higher education. Members of College Senate are elected from the four employees groups, At-Large, and Chairs of each category group. All new employee policies and AQIP Action Projects must gain the endorsement of College Senate before they can proceed.

A sample agenda from College Senate is as follows:

COLLEGE SENATE AGENDA

Tuesday, March 19, 2013

3 p.m. – NC-180ABC

Determination of Quorum

Minutes of College Senate Meeting – February 12, 2013

Minutes of College Senate Executive Meeting – March 5, 2013

Old Business

- Diversity Committee – College Philosophy and Commitment Statement - Second Reading
- Evaluation Policy (for Employee Handbook) - Second Reading

New Business

- 2013 College Senate Election – April 2, 2013
- Legislative Update
- Facilities Master Plan Update

Reports from Councils and Committees

AQIP Quality Council/Strategic Planning Council (Schmit)

Global Diversity Committee (Rogotzke)

Personnel Affairs Council (Dirksen)

President's Council (Derr)

Student Senate (John Carden)

Sustainability Council (Pappas)

Technology Committee (Greenwood, Ward)

Adjournment

Senate Members: Molly Anderegg, Bill Backlin, John Carden, Wendy Demaray, Deb Derr, Mike Dirksen, Ann Fisher, Kathy Foster, Patrick Galliard, Mark Greenwood, Rob Heimbuch, Dan Hicok, Deb Kolb-Jackson, BJ Krull, Rachel Lamp, Kacy Larson, Greg Lauer, Dan Mason, Rachel McGuire, Suzanne Murphy, Tony Pappas, Jennifer Patterson, Borden Plunkett, Tracy Purchase, Tim Putnam, Kathy Rogotzke, Jennifer Rosauer, Shelly Schmit, DebThrone

8P2. How do you select short- and long-term strategies?

Our strategies start with our mission and vision and are selected after input from multiple internal and external constituencies.

We root all strategy efforts in research through an environmental scan and take into consideration student success, employer needs, local economic conditions, technology innovations, employee satisfaction, and financial resources.

We develop a balance of short-term and long-term strategies directly from department strategic plans developed under the umbrella of the College strategic plan. The ownership of a strategy selection process may reside within the department directly. Institutional strategies are selected by the President's Council with the President holding ultimate authority.

The selection of strategies is generally dependent on weighing the urgency of implementation against the benefit and the available capital, time and human resources.

8P3. How do you develop key action plans to support your organizational strategies?

Action plans are driven by our NIACC Strategic plan. Further development takes place at the department level through a variety of venues that include

- Environmental scans
- Task force and focus group discussions
- Standing committees such as President’s Council, Enrollment Management, Academic Affairs, College Senate, AQIP Quality Council, Global Diversity Committee, Technology Committees, Sustainability Council, CETL, and others.

We gathered information and evaluate plans against the strategic initiatives of the College; then we identify and prioritize resources based on some of the same criteria as stated in 8P2. The College also solicits action plans at annual All-Staff meetings where all employees can bring forward their ideas in a format that allows brainstorming sessions in small groups.

8P4. How do you coordinate and align your planning processes, organizational strategies, and action plans across your institution’s various levels?

All processes, strategies and action plans originate from the Strategic Plan. Drawing from the Strategic Plan, we develop cluster plans and include the Student Success and Completion Plan, Facilities Master Plan, Technology Plan, Diversity Plan, and Sustainability Plan. We then develop and align strategies with the plan at the department level.

The composition of the President’s Council is cross-functional by design to ensure that the integrity and continuity of planning processes and strategies are intact across all levels of the institution. As plans are developed and presented, the charge of the Council is to discuss these plans with their respective departments to elicit feedback relevant to the decisions and execution of these plans. Coordination of these plans will take place at relevant levels and within departments or groups deemed appropriate based on the nature of the plan. Further information and feedback may be garnered from standing committees such as Academic Affairs, College Senate, the NIACC Board of Directors, the Academic Quality Council and other groups depending upon the impact these plans have on the institution.

Communication via regular meetings, e-mail and other events help coordinate and align processes.

8P5. How you define objectives, select measures, and set performance targets for your organizational strategies and action plans?

The process for defining objectives, measures, and performance targets happens at the department or division level under the auspices of the strategic plan. Time is spent reviewing and reflecting so all organizational levels are aware and engaged.

Within each main area—Education, Leadership, and Partnership—the NIACC strategic plan has identified Strategic Goals. These Strategic Goals originate from an orchestrated process of engagement

that include vision exercises, focus group meetings, and faculty and staff feedback. We then link goals to specific AQIP Categories and; therefore, our accreditation directly supports the NIACC Plan.

We develop division objectives using the three main areas of the Strategic Plan as guidelines. They are then evaluated to determine which strategic goal(s) they best support. The key point is that the Division objectives are the main driver. Each department or division chair owns the process of development. Assistance is provided by the Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and Organizational Development to any who request.

All department and division objectives and strategies are crafted in common format. The structure and effectiveness of these strategies include timelines, the specific activities involved, key performance indicators to measure progress, and an evaluation of outcomes of these strategies. Once complete, all are housed electronically in a common drive assessable to all employees.

8P6. How do you link strategy selection and action plans, taking into account levels of current resources and future needs?

By design, action plans, AQIP-sanctioned or otherwise, are linked directly to one or more of the three areas of the NIACC strategic plan: Education, Leadership, and Partnership. More detail about this is found in question 8P5. Each year, the operational budgets are developed and revised based upon the progress of these plans. Additionally, input is garnered from advisory boards, the local economic development commissions (EDC's) and other community and industry groups to provide indicators of trends for future needs. Additional demographic trends are tracked and used in consideration to modifications and other adjustments to department plans.

Core Competency 5.A.1. As noted in 6R3, the College demonstrates sound fiscal management and strong foundation. NIACC employs the necessary human resources or consultant services to support and to advance current educational programs and to advance the strategic plan. In 2011, the College engaged in a widely participatory facility master planning process. This process evaluated our physical infrastructure and laid out a prioritized plan for improvements. Contracted services with Ellucian Colleague to provide software and technology support assures the College is growing the quality of educational programs and support services.

Core Competency 5.A.2. The resource allocation process as described previously is one of open participation and discussion by the President's Council. The College operates on a three-year budget prediction cycle. This information is shared widely across the College and discussed openly in meetings. Budget allocations are tied directly to strategic goals. The priority of the disbursement of funds to support strategic priorities is vetted out during the annual President's Council retreat. The Board of Directors approves the strategic plan and working budget.

Core Competency 5.A.3. NIACC offers a wide array of programs and services. Committee work plans, and goals are diverse. The common driver is the connection to the mission. All work begins with and is supported by the mission. The College does not support goals which are not appropriate for our mission or prior to developing a resource model to support.

Core Competency 5.A.4. Category 4 provides a comprehensive overview of the formal processes in place to assure the College employs persons who are appropriately qualified and trained. NIACC has 239 full-time employees, including 81 faculty (67 percent have master's degrees and 8 percent have doctorate degrees). Veteran faculty members who have 41 years teaching experience; full-time faculty instruct 76 percent of the College's courses. To assure employees maintain current in their field and have the opportunity for their own professional development growth the College offers full tuition reimbursement at the Iowa Board of Regents rate. Continued training is offered through the Continuing Education department. Memberships in professional association are supported.

Core Competency 5.A.5. In 2011, the College began a new process for budget allocation and monitoring. This process now provides for a more comprehensive look at budget prioritization and allocations. Mentioned throughout the portfolio and specifically in Category 5, budget of resources is tied directly to strategic initiatives. The planning process includes budget preparation, development, communication to employees, approval, and continued reporting. The Board approves all monthly expenditures.

8P7. How do you assess and address risk in your planning processes?

The College operates in a constant state of environmental scanning to assess threats to our success and to identify and minimize risks.

At the highest level of the institution, the NIACC Board of Directors monitors and assesses all risks for the institution, including planning processes.

Advisory committees and Boards comprised of community professional practitioners, executives and educators apprise College leaders of needs and risk assessments.

This happens in a formal capacity through work contracted with an outside consultant to develop our strategic enrollment management plan, which created a predictive enrollment modeling plan. This plan models the effect on enrollment based on environmental factors and institutional initiatives.

The College has the benefit of housing the John Pappajohn Business and Entrepreneurial Center. The direction of their work falls to the Vice President of Institutional Advancement and Pappajohn Center. This individual is a member of President's Council and serves as a steady resource for business decision making. Under the guidance of the Vice President of Institutional Advancement and Pappajohn Center, formal business plans were developed to grow the success of students in online, adult, traditional, athletic, and international markets.

During the last five years, the College has moved to a three-year budget scenario planning process that includes close investigation of various assumptions to assure our long-term financial and financial sustainability.

Through these methods, risks are identified and evaluated on severity and impact and determinations are made regarding planning that would best mitigate these risks yet still meet our goals.

8P8. How do you ensure that you will develop and nurture faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities to address changing requirements demanded by your organizational strategies and action plans?

The benefit of our truly all-engaging planning processes is the knowledge it provides our employees. Due to the employees' front-line involvement in plan development, there is an increased understanding of the allocation of financial and human resources.

The College has demonstrated a long-standing commitment to the development of our faculty and staff. We evaluate employees' abilities and skill sets as new initiatives and ideas emerge. Where skill gaps arise opportunities for development are made available to specific individuals and to the College body as a whole. Travel to workshops, conferences, and seminars are encouraged and supported. The College holds strong to the view that professional development is a strategic initiative and is therefore incorporated in the planning process.

NIACC is a leader among the community colleges in Iowa in the amount of time allocated for professional growth and development. The College provides 13 days per year added to the faculty contract to devote to professional development. These are days faculty are on contract without obligations to serve students. The days hold special opportunity for faculty to engage in professional development activities orchestrated by the College.

Through the course of the year, administration and our Center for Excellent in Teaching and Learning (CETL) provide multiple training opportunities. The span of opportunities and resources provided by CETL are listed at <http://staff.niacc.edu/cetl/>

8R1. What measures of the effectiveness of your planning processes and systems do you collect and analyze regularly?

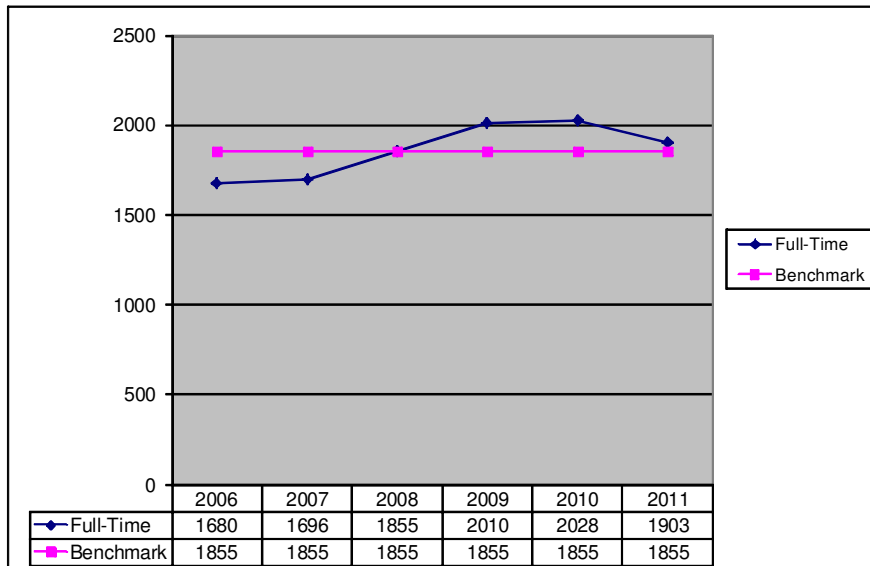
On the institutional level, we measure planning processes and systems' effectiveness with the Key Performance Indicator (KPI's) results report. This key performance indicator report is designed to provide timely and accurate information to aid decision making. We developed the indicators to support the College's strategic initiatives with a priority toward student success and completion. Although the College has held a long tradition of embracing quality improvement beginning with data collection, our first attempt to establish formal KPI's and set benchmark goals was in June 2012. The sample in Figure 8.3 constitutes only one of fifteen measures. The full report is available at <http://www.niacc.edu/about/accreditation-aqip/action-projects/action-projects-archive/>

Figure 8.3 Key Performance Indicator Sample

Full-Time Fall Credit Enrollment (Students)

The data source for these indicators is published in The Annual Condition of Iowa’s Community Colleges reports as prepared by the Iowa Department of Education.

The benchmark is set at the 2008 enrollment numbers. Through review of enrollment trends and conditions it was determined this year is best reflective of our most likely enrollment.



The President’s Council annually reviews the strategies and budget planning during their annual retreat to set priorities.

All department and division goals are updated annually and require a mid-year progress report. All reports are located on a common drive to assure access by all employees.

8R2. What are your performance results for accomplishing your organizational strategies and action plans?

NIACC has a strong record for data collection across many departments; however, analysis and evaluation in a formal fashion is in its infancy. Again, the College’s first attempt to develop formal KPI’s occurred in June 2012.

Our new strategic plan has incorporated performance metrics to help the College be more disciplined in our approach to data-driven decision making.

8R3. What are your projections or targets for performance of your strategies and action plans over the next 1-3 years?

Measured institutional targets for KPI's are benchmarked at 2008 results which we believe a realistic measure of performance. Those projections for fifteen key indicators are held in the annual KPI report.

Departmental strategies, which again filter down from the institution Strategic Plan, are formalized in the written plans that outline action strategies over the life of the Strategic Plan. These separate plans include: Foundations of Excellence final report, Student Success and Completion, Technology, Facilities Master, Diversity, and Sustainability.

8R4. How do your results for the performance of your processes for Planning Continuous Improvement compare with the performance results of other higher education institutions and, if appropriate, of organizations outside of higher education?

NIACC builds its process of performance planning based on successful strategies implemented by other higher education institutions. Knowledge of other practices is gained through the experiences of employees, during annual meetings in Iowa of AQIP community colleges, scholarly readings, and at the Higher Learning Commission Annual Meeting. The Iowa Community College system holds groups of closely networked professionals. These groups meet face to face at least annually and communicate via professional group list serves.

The College compares performance results using the CCSSE, National Community College Benchmark Study, other Iowa community college strategic plans, and Iowa Condition of Community College Report. The Iowa Department of Education (Iowa requires State accreditation) website holds volumes of comparative data.

http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2758&Itemid=4621

8R5. What is the evidence that your system for Planning Continuous Improvement is effective? How do you measure and evaluate your planning processes and activities?

During the annual retreat of the President's Council, time is spent to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategic and operational planning processes. The key measures of performance are reviewed annually to assure they are the best fit to measure what we intend to measure.

In January 2013 the College hired an outside consultant, Dr. Keith Cornille, to conduct an All Staff AQIP *Acting on What Matters* Conversation Day.

While the College has conceptually lived the tenants of quality improvement, the purpose of this AQIP conversation day was to immerse the College in AQIP in a formalized fashion. The presentation portion of the convocation consisted of:

- Overview of the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) process along with the programs nine criteria and principles.
- Review of NIACC's involvement with AQIP

- Three conversations of consequence, built upon the “Vital Focus” program developed by the Higher Learning Commission/NCA (HLC), and adapted from the work of Monica Manning, Ph.D. Executive Officer, with The Nova Group. Materials used for the conversations were used with permission of the HLC, Chicago, IL.
 - The first conversation explored what matters most to the campus community with regard to their work. Asking the primary guiding questions: What makes it possible for you to do your best work? What work matters most? And what’s most important about the ways you think and work together?
 - In the second conversation, faculty and staff reflected on what they have accomplished in collaboration with others, both internally and externally that as an institution should be celebrated.
 - The third and final conversation for the day had the staff focus on what, if accomplished, would make a significant difference at NIACC, leading to recommendations for action.
- Throughout the conversations, individuals were asked to identify “quick fixes,” low to moderate cost items that college personal could be directed to “just do” and would have a positive impact on the college environment and experience.

In his facilitator’s final report, Dr. Keith Cornille was complementary to the College on the progress made at implementing AQIP.

From Dr. Cornille’s final report:

Recommended Actions

The facilitator poses the following observations and questions to the institution based on data from the results from discussions, its appendices.

Observations:

1. The college’s internal accreditation team (Quality Council) appears to be very well organized and committed to the full implementation of the AQIP process. In a meeting with the team following Conversation Day, it was apparent that they have a method and process for prioritizing the information collected from the conversations and with other data points to select action projects.
2. The college is aligning their AQIP action projects and process with other significant college initiatives, such as the First Year Experience and student success completion plan, in order to create alignment among all work of the college with the strategic objectives of the institution.
3. A review of the college’s strategic plan appears to have direct relationship to the AQIP criteria. When I asked about my observation, it was pointed out that in fact the strategic priorities were developed with the AQIP criteria in mind.

8I1. What recent improvements have you made in this category? How systematic and comprehensive are your processes and performance results for *Planning Continuous Improvement*?

During the last five years, the College has made significant progress to formalizing Planning Continuous Improvement. While the College has always operated in an environment of continuous improvement, the process had not been formalized.

During the last five years the College has

- Moved to three year budget scenario planning
- Held an inclusive process for strategic planning development including students, staff, the Board and stakeholders
- Aligned the new strategic plan with the AQIP categories
- Developed formal departmental plans around institutional strategic priorities rooted in keeping NIACC first in Education, Leadership and Partnership
- Aligned operational budgets with strategic plans
- Developed and linked specialized plans (Student Success and Completion, Facilities Master Plan, Diversity Plan, Technology Plan, Sustainability Plan) to the institutional Strategic Plan
- Established the AQIP Quality Council (AQC)
- Implemented Action Projects

8I2. How do your culture and infrastructure help you to select specific processes to improve and to set targets for improved performance results in *Planning Continuous Improvement*?

The culture of the College is one of openness and a shared sense of governance. While some processes slated for improvement are driven at the administrative level, the majority and all which filter through our AQIP process have an infrastructure of support.

The College maintains an AQC whose responsibility is to drive quality initiatives throughout the organization. Recommendations for process improvements come to the AQC from a variety of channels. A suggestion box is maintained on our Quality Website and may be viewed at <http://www.niacc.edu/about/accreditation-aqip/action-projects/project-suggestion-box/>. A significant number of process improvement ideas were developed as a result of the conversation day activities on *What Matters Most*. The results of that work were compared to the strategies priorities of the institution, Foundations of Excellence final report and the Student Success and Completion Plan. The processes were then prioritized based on the frequency of reference and aligned with the AQIP Categories. This assures a balanced cross section of projects while maintaining a focus on Helping Students Learn. This proposed list was brought before College Senate for endorsement. All past and proposed action Projects must be endorsed by College Senate before they can proceed to assure informed discussion and buy in from a cross section of the employee and student body representation. This process also provides a venue to vet performance results prior to project development. A small sample of the can be viewed in Figure 8.4.

Figure 8.4 Action Project Priorities

Acting on What Matters (1/11/13) Updated 2/5/13											
Idea	Idea	Helping students Learn	Accomplishing other Distinctive Objectives	Understanding Students' and other Stakeholders' needs	Valuing People	Leading and Communicating	Supporting Institutional Operations	Measuring Effectiveness	Planning Continuous Improvement	Building Collaborative Relationships	NIACC Strategic Priorities
Collaborative Discussions – Frequent debriefing and collaborative discussions between stakeholders (what works, what doesn't, proposed actions)		x									E1
One-to-One College – NIACC become a one-to-one institution that provides and utilizes the same (or nearly the same) type of computer device (iPad/tablet) for all staff, faculty, and students at NIACC.	1-1 Ratio – NIACC become a 1-1 institution.	x									E3, L1
Student Involvement in Committees – To incorporate 2nd year student in helping to make decisions on new institutional improvement pertaining to them.				x							E1, P1
Communication Improvement through Technology – Messages to students (sent by e-mail) are routed to phones (as per a text).							x				E1
Improve Academic Technology/Equipment Environment – We recommend that the College employ the most state-of-the art academic technology, facilities, and equipment, compiled with an immersive online experience to promote student satisfaction, engagement, and retention.							x				E2, L1
Increase Scholarships/Flexible Deadlines – Increase scholarship amounts and be flexible on deadlines.							x				E1

Category 9 – Building Collaborative Relationships

Introduction

North Iowa Area Community College's commitment to building collaborative relationships has long been at the core of what makes NIACC great. So important are the building of collaborative relationships (partnerships) that it has become codified as a part of the College's mission statement: The mission of the North Iowa Area Community College is to enhance the quality of life for people of North Iowa through comprehensive educational opportunities, progressive *partnerships*, exemplary service, and responsive leadership. Further evidence of this is that the theme of NIACC's strategic plan is Keeping NIACC First in Education, Leadership, and *Partnership*.

Further driving the need for collaborative relationships is NIACC's knowledge that we cannot independently provide the best educational experience to our students, partners and communities. As a rural, relatively small community college with limited resources, building progressive partnerships is one of the only ways NIACC can meet the ever changing and growing needs of the College's constituents. NIACC firmly believes that by partner engagement NIACC becomes stronger, our partners become stronger, and our service region becomes stronger. Whether it is NIACC students, business and industry, K-12, transfer institutions, or workforce and economic development partners, NIACC does (and always will) collaborate relationships as an irreplaceable key to fulfilling the mission of the College.

The College has a long history of building collaborative relationships. Over this period of time maturing processes to an integrated level. Recognizing the vital important of relationships the commitment to partnerships became a pillar of the strategic plan. While there are not currently any planned Action Projects in relation to building collaborative relationships there are several related department strategies.

Over the life of the current strategic plan collaborates priorities are to develop New Types of Partnerships, New Educational Partnerships, New Regional (Community Development) Partnerships to Promote Growth, and examine each partnership to assure each NIACC partnership provides relevant and effective use of partner resources resulting in mutual benefit to partners, the community and students.

9P1. How do you create, prioritize, and build relationships with the educational institutions and other organizations from which you receive your students?

NIACC takes a multifaceted approach to create, to prioritize and to build relationships with educational institutions and organizations from which we receive our students. NIACC works with a variety of institutions and organizations when reaching out to students and potential students across all parts of the educational spectrum.

Pre-High School:

NIACC's first significant outreach to educational institutions from which we receive our students begins in our elementary schools with NIACC's Entrepreneur for a Day (E4D) program. E4D is dedicated to teaching 5th grade students the fundamental principles of entrepreneurship. Students learn the distinct differences between becoming an entrepreneur and being an employee. Participants experience business planning, financial literacy, marketing concepts, workplace concepts, social responsibility, and team-building skills. The goal of the program is to encourage students to think about entrepreneurship as a

viable career pathway. Key unit components are wants vs. needs, budget, banking, supply and demand, and marketing and advertising. The program includes a half-day session in the elementary school and concludes with a full-day educational event on the NIACC campus. The visit to campus includes a campus tour and information on the different careers student can pursue at NIACC. Since 2006, the program reached 6,944 5th grade students in the NIACC service area.

Further, NIACC engages middle school aged students with campus visits and presentations in their classrooms by NIACC admissions staff. Most notably with this age group NIACC serves as host for area 8th graders to visit NIACC as they complete their state of Iowa required “I Have A Plan” education pathway plan.

High School:

As with most colleges, NIACC largest push to engage prospective students comes in the high school years. During this timeframe, NIACC does this through:

- NIACC admission staff visits at high schools in Iowa and Minnesota
- High school student tours of campus and departments
- NIACC-coordinated Guidance Counselor Network Meetings held twice a year with area guidance counselors
- a variety of NIACC-hosted events to engage high school students on campus like Career Day and College Fair, High School Visit Days, Agricultural & Industrial Division Open House, Be Your Own Boss, and Wired Differently.

High school juniors and seniors are eligible for the Youth Entrepreneurial Academy (YEA). This is an opportunity for participants to be exposed to entrepreneurship, to be challenged to apply their skills and creativity, to be encouraged to develop critical thinking skills, and to be exposed to another career option of being a “job creator.” The goal of this academy is to help students reach their dreams by exposing interested and qualified North Iowa students to entrepreneurial training and opportunities and to create a “spirit of the possible” for bright young minds. Participants are eligible for an automatic \$500 Youth Entrepreneurial Academy Scholarship if they choose to attend NIACC following their high school graduation. Since 1998, over 300 area high school students have attend from the nine surrounding counties and beyond.

NIACC’s School Partnerships Department, Career Link, has staff dedicated to relationships with the area’s 22 high school partners. Schools are assigned to each staff member with responsibilities clearly delineated. NIACC staff works with liaisons at each high school. NIACC hosts yearly superintendent meetings, yearly new administrators luncheons, and Counselor Network meetings once each semester. Also held each semester are separate network meetings for high school Agriculture, Business, Family and Consumer Science, and Industrial Technology teachers.

The NIACC School Partnerships staff serves in a consulting role to the North Iowa Career Readiness Council. Staff members work in partnership with the Secondary Perkins Grant Consultant who facilitates council meetings.

Workforce Service Providers:

NIACC receives many students through our strong relationship with our local, integrated workforce development system. The integrated model includes Iowa Workforce Development, Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and PROMISE Jobs (PJ) Programs, veteran's services, traditional Wagner Peyser services, Vocational Rehabilitation, and a variety of other services designed to serve the needs of the unemployed or underemployed. The Regional *IowaWorks* office houses all of these programs and is managed by a NIACC-employed Regional Director. NIACC also serves as the administrative agency and employer of record for both the WIA and PJ Program staffs and has a representative on the local Regional Workforce Investment Board (RWIB).

9P2. How do you create, prioritize, and build relationships with the educational institutions and employers that depend on the supply of your students and graduates that meet those organizations' requirements?

As a comprehensive community college, NIACC works tirelessly to build relationships with employers and educational institutions that depend on us for a supply of students.

Work with Employers:

NIACC hosts myriad of employers to campus each year to collect feedback from them on what curriculum components we need to include in our programs and what things the College needs to do to best meet their needs. Hosting area employers on campus also gives NIACC the opportunity to showcase our facilities, equipment and students. NIACC has employers to campus over the course of the year in a number of ways. For example, employers exhibit company information and current job openings at the annual Career & Internship Fair, serve as presenters at the Career Exploration event, and participate in the Agricultural & Industrial Division Open House.

Another relationship building tool used with employers is their involvement in career program advisory committees. Each NIACC career program has an employer-based advisory committee to provide program feedback to the instructors so they are incorporating the correct curriculum, teaching techniques, and equipment into their programs to ensure graduating students are receiving the education and skills needed to be successful in their field upon graduation.

In recent years, NIACC has utilized the State of Iowa Accelerated Career Education (ACE) Program to provide funding for new or expanded programs in fields with high demand position openings and high wages. NIACC works with local employers when designing and implementing ACE supported programs to ensure they meet the needs of local business that will be employing the graduates upon graduation. NIACC has utilized ACE funding to start or expand programs in Industrial Welding, Information Technology, Nursing, Industrial Maintenance, and Hospitality and Food Service Management.

The NIACC Career & Internship Center prepares students to connect with area employers so employers can meet their workforce needs. This happens in a variety of ways, including offering job seeking skills classes and advice, coordinating the annual NIACC Job and Internship Fair on campus each March, providing an on-line job posting board, and utilizing a Career Mail system where students and recent graduates can be made aware of job openings in their field.

NIACC's School Partnership staff coordinates a Career and Technical Education Teacher Network to facilitate tours of business and industries for the high school career and technical education teachers.

The recently launched Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) hub in Charles City (Iowa) involved much outreach and work on the part of NIACC to work with Charles City High School and Charles City area businesses. NIACC provides administrative and faculty leadership for the STEM initiative in Charles City.

Transfer and Articulation:

NIACC builds and nurtures relationships with other educational institutions that rely on our students primarily through the transfer process and articulation agreements. Currently NIACC has 43 articulation agreements with 17 colleges and universities. NIACC knows that students who transfer credits and/or articulate a diploma or degree have a much higher probability of success and completion at their next school.

9P3. How do you create, prioritize, and build relationships with the organizations that provide services to your students?

Coordinating Service Providers – IWD, NIACC and DHS:

NIACC coordinates quarterly meetings between NIACC, IWD, and Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) leadership to keep open the lines of communication between the organizations. The IWD Regional Director, who is a shared employee of NIACC and IWD, oversees WIA, PJ and IWD programs which are all impacted by IWD, NIACC, DHS and their associated relationships. The Regional Director is the administrator of the Coordinating Service Providers.

Furthermore, IWD holds weekly staffing meetings where the regional director disseminates information from the College and its processes and programs to IWD staff persons. Department meetings with Iowa Workforce staff and NIACC Student Development and Admissions staffs also serve to strengthen the understanding and relationships of the coordinating organizations. A Vocational Rehabilitation counselor is a part of Student Development Meetings held monthly at the College.

NIACC School Partnership Coordinators have assisted high school students in accessing the "No Limits" program available through WIA, and the NIACC John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center has provided advice, leadership, and financial resources in development of the Garner (Iowa) Entrepreneurial Academy for high school seniors. The Pappajohn Center was also instrumental in securing assistance from the University of Iowa Pappajohn Center to facilitate summer teacher training for high school business teachers interested in teaching the new NIACC Introduction to Entrepreneurship course.

9P4. How do you create, prioritize, and build relationships with the organizations that supply materials and services to your institution?

Most of the relationships built in the area of materials and service acquisition comes through our Vice President of Administrative Services. In addition to the standard operating procedures and NIACC Board

of Trustees policies of bidding certain items of certain dollar amounts, NIACC uses a series of relationship building techniques like phone calls, one-on-one meetings, group meetings, and drawing on past successful partnerships to make material and service acquisition decisions. NIACC does this to ensure we are receiving the highest quality, best value, and best service in the materials and services we purchase. Further to this end, NIACC embraces a decentralized supplies purchasing system wherein lies expertise related to the types of materials or supplies being sought out and purchased. In a few instances, NIACC utilizes administrative choice in securing services; architectural and legal services most notably because of the firms' knowledge of our campus, buildings, and business.

On a related note, the Fund Development Specialist/Grant Writer constantly seeks monetary and non-cash gifts to support the institution and its mission. Also, the College owned and operated bookstore (NIACC BookZone) and food service operations provides the College leeway in what materials and supplies are secured and at what cost we pass them along to students.

NIACC has also always embraced a "look local first" philosophy for the acquisition of materials and services. Engaging local business outlets and professional talent sources, when possible, does much to bolster the College's relationship with local businesses and firms while bolstering the local economy.

Another way NIACC builds relationships with the organizations that supply materials and services to the college is through the acceptance of donations. Many business and industry partners donate materials and supplies to NIACC to supplement the needs of the college. Two primary examples of this are the donation of corn and soybean seed for planting on the NIACC Farm and the donation of industrial equipment for use by the College's industrial programs. The donating companies get to take advantage of the tax breaks of the donations and NIACC saves resources by not having to purchase these resources.

9P5. How do you create, prioritize, and build relationships with the education associations, external agencies, consortia partners, and the general community with whom you interact?

This is another area where NIACC engages and interacts with various associations, agencies and the general community across the College spectrum.

In 2012, NIACC underwent the accreditation process for its Career Link Program (School Partnerships) with the National Alliance for Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) and received national accreditation. The School Partnership staff members belong to the Iowa Association of Career and Technical Educators. Since 1991, NIACC has been an active partner in the North Iowa Perkins Grant Consortium. NIACC also has national accredited programs in the field of Automotive Technology (National Automotive Technician Education Foundation (NATEF)/Excellence (ASE) Master Certification) and Nursing (National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission).

NIACC has a very active role in local economic development efforts. NIACC staff works closely with local economic development professionals and city and county officials to meet the retention and recruitment needs of the area economy. This work consists of retention visits to area companies with a team of city, county and college personnel to identify and serve the needs of local businesses. This same

team also showcases local incentives and College services to prospective businesses considering locating to the area.

To further enhance and demonstrate the commitment of building relationships with area business and communities, in 2012 NIACC created a new position: Executive Assistant to the President for Corporate and Community Relations. This position focuses on identifying and executing projects that support and strengthen the College's ability to help in matters of workforce and economic development.

WIA and PJ staff holds meetings with College staff in Student Services, Financial Aid and Admissions to keep them updated on changes within programs. Virtual Access Points have been setup in various locations at NIACC to provide students access to our workforce services without having to visit an office. IWD/WIA has a Regional Workforce Investment Board that consists of K-12 and College educators, city officials, employers, labor representatives, and elected county officials. Quarterly board meetings are held. Rapid Response meetings are held when businesses are downsizing or closing, and NIACC is a member of the rapid response team.

9P6. How do you ensure that your partnership relationships are meeting the varying needs of those involved?

The primary way NIACC ensures relationships are meeting the needs of the varying parties involved is by meeting with and listening to our partners. We have found this is the best way to ensure continually that the needs of the College and our partners are being met at the highest possible level. These meetings and relationship assessments happen all over the College and across all the work we do with our many partners. We consider this approach a continuous improvement approach. By gaining and sharing input with our partners we are able to work together to decide which steps need to be taken to improve our relationship outcomes and then take these changes back to our respective organizations for implementation and assessment. This approach of partnership management has led NIACC to have extremely strong partnerships with a wide variety of constituents including economic and workforce development partners, K-12 schools, business and industry, and fellow Iowa community colleges.

9P7. How do you create and build relationships between and among departments and units within your institution? How do you assure integration and communication across these relationships?

NIACC understands the power of communication within and across an organization and has established a solid framework of outlets which serve to create and build relationships between and among department and units at our institution.

President's Council: A weekly meeting of the President's senior leadership team comprised of the Vice Presidents and Deans and Directors of departments and divisions from across campus. President's Council discusses and decides on matters pertaining to the overriding activities and operations of the College.

All-Staff Meetings: NIACC holds three All-Staff meetings each academic year. All-Staff meetings include information and activities pertaining to different topics important to the College at the time. These meetings are sometime used as an opportunity for the President to present a state of the College address. All full-time NIACC staff and faculty are required to attend these meetings.

Cracker Barrels: Informal information exchange sessions led by the President to discuss topics of the day and to answer questions staff or faculty member may have about any issue related to the College. NIACC holds four Cracker Barrel meetings each year. These meetings are generally held twice within the week in order to accommodate schedules.

Employee Category Meetings: The President meets twice a year with each employee category group (Faculty, PSS, Hourly, Facilities) to discuss issues and to answer questions pertaining to each specific employment category.

Personal Affairs Committee (PAC): Is comprised of the chairpersons of each respective employee category and the Human Resources Director. PAC discusses and researches employment related issues and makes recommendations to the Human Resources Director and administration about these issues.

College Senate: The predominately staff-managed governance body of the College and its policies and procedures. College Senate is comprised of members of various sectors of the College to provide the broadest and most effective communication possible across the campus.

Academic Affairs Council: Serves as the academic governing body for the College and approves new programs, new courses, course modifications, etc. To ensure adequate input and communication across college departments and divisions, the council membership is comprised of a diverse group of NIACC employees including, full-time Faculty members, Division Chairs, Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, Arts & Sciences Dean, Dean of Continuing Education, the Registrar, and Counselors.

NIACC-L: An e-mail system that allows NIACC staff and faculty to communicate with select audiences on and off campus or to the College as a whole.

Portal System: NIACC has recently developed and rolled out an internet portal site, myNIACC. The purpose of the portal is to be the primary means of campus communication on an on-going basis. The portal is also used by employees to monitor their vacation and sick leave, and other information related to their employment.

9R1. What measures of building collaborative relationships, external and internal, do you collect and analyze regularly?

Credit enrollment numbers:

Beyond that of just the financial implications, NIACC sees value in tracking overall enrollment numbers and student demographics because it speaks to the effectiveness of our overall efforts in building quality relationships and their impact on enrollment.

Employment Placement Report – career program graduates:

The employability and placement of our graduating career program students is very important to the relationships we build with our business partners. The NIACC Career & Internship Center conducts an annual survey of recently graduated career program students to gather data on if graduates are employed and if their employment is related to the field (career program) from which they graduated.

Concurrent Enrollment (Iowa high school students enrolled in college credit coursework):

In addition to tracking and considering concurrent student enrollment numbers, the School Partnership Department at NIACC measures and analyzes attendance and participation data of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Teacher and Counselor Network meetings. Attendance and participation in these networks is a solid indicator of the success of our collaborative relationships.

9R2. What are your performance results in building your key collaborative relationships, external and internal?

Credit enrollment numbers:

Fall 2012 credit enrollment at NIACC was 3,278, down from 3,557 in the fall of 2011. The highest enrollment over the past five years was in 2010 when fall credit enrollment was 3,744 students. Full information on NIACC enrollment and demographics (along with all other Iowa community colleges for fall 2008 – 2012) can be found in The Annual Condition of Iowa’s Community Colleges 2012 Report published by the Iowa Department of Education at the following link:

http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2758&Itemid=4621

See the Table of Contents on page iii of the report for section and pages related to fall enrollment.

Employment Placement – career program graduates:

As the below summary shows, NIACC has performed very well in the employment placement of their recently graduated career program students, both in overall employment and employment related to their field (program) of study.

NIACC’s Five Year Placement Rate Summary

<u>Overall Placement Rate*</u>		<u>Training Related Placement Rate*</u>	
2012	97%	2012	90%
2011	98%	2011	87%
2010	95%	2010	83%
2009	95%	2009	90%
2008	95%	2008	89%

*Data provided by NIACC Career & Internship Center

Concurrent Enrollment:

2012 concurrent enrollment at NIACC was 1,209, down from 1,372 in 2011. The highest concurrent enrollment over the past five years was in 2010 when concurrent credit enrollment was 1,423 students. Full information on NIACC concurrent enrollment numbers (along with all other Iowa community colleges for fall 2008 – 2012) can be found in The Annual Condition of Iowa’s Community Colleges 2012 Report published by the Iowa Department of Education at the following link:

http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2758&Itemid=4621

See the Table of Contents on page iii of the report for section and pages related to joint enrollment.

Attendance at Career and Technical Education (CTE) Teacher and Counselor Network meetings is a solid indicator of the success of our collaborative relationships are as follows:

- CTE Network (Ag, Business, Family and Consumer Science, and Industrial teachers) average 90% attendance/participation
- Counselor Network – 75% attendance/participation

NIACC has facilitated these Network meetings since 1991.

9R3. How do your results for the performance of your processes for Building Collaborative Relationships compare with the performance results of other higher education institutions and, if appropriate, of organizations outside of higher education?

When comparing community colleges in Iowa, the local control and focus of the community college system in Iowa and the unique characteristics (college size, location, service area demographics, industry make-up and program offerings) of each individual Iowa community college make a complete and true “apple to apple” comparison hard to come by. That said, the best basis for comparison of results is with other community colleges in Iowa. Each year the Iowa Department of Education publishes The Annual Condition of Iowa’s Community Colleges Report. This report compares Iowa’s fifteen community colleges across a variety of categories like enrollment, student success, tuition and fees.

Enrollment numbers: According to The Annual Condition of Iowa’s Community Colleges 2012 Report published by the Iowa Department of Education, NIACC raked tenth out of the fifteen community colleges in Iowa in credit enrollment in fall 2012. Full information on NIACC enrollment and demographics (along with all other Iowa community colleges for fall 2008 – 2012) can be found in The Annual Condition of Iowa’s Community Colleges 2012 Report published by the Iowa Department of Education at the following link:

http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2758&Itemid=4621

See the Table of Contents on page iii of the report for section and pages related to fall enrollment.

Employment Placement – career graduates:

While there is not a central repository of employment placement data for the Iowa Community College system, what data we were able to access through internet searches and other Iowa community colleges’ websites suggested that NIACC’s placement rates (both overall and training related) rank near the top of all Iowa community colleges.

Concurrent Enrollment: According to The Annual Condition of Iowa’s Community Colleges 2012 Report published by the Iowa Department of Education, NIACC ranked eleventh out of the fifteen community colleges in Iowa in concurrent enrollment in 2012. Full information on NIACC concurrent enrollment (along with all other Iowa community colleges for 2008 – 2012) can be found in The Annual Condition of Iowa’s Community Colleges 2012 Report published by the Iowa Department of Education at the following link:

http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2758&Itemid=4621

See the Table of Contents on page iii of the report for section and pages related to joint enrollment.

9I1. What recent improvements have you made in this category? How systematic and comprehensive are your processes and performance results for *Building Collaborative Relationships*?

NIACC is gathering and analyzing more enrollment and related figures (gross and program) and student demographics (gender, age, etc.) than ever before in an attempt to improve the recruitment, retention and completion of students. In addition, NIACC is beginning to use better the internal framework and infrastructure of the organization to gather data and input with the purpose of building more productive and effective collaborative relationships. This approach is serving the College, our partners, and our students better and is enhancing our ability to focus on continuous quality improvement (see question 9I2. below).

9I2. How do your culture and infrastructure help you to select specific processes to improve and to set targets for improved performance results in *Building Collaborative Relationships*?

More and more NIACC is beginning to use its infrastructure and culture to its fullest extent to improve and set targets for increased performance. An excellent example of this took place at the January 2013 All-Staff meeting. At this meeting, a four-hour AQIP working session titled “Acting on What Matters” was conducted with the entire NIACC staff and faculty focusing on What Matters Most, Celebration of Collaborative Initiatives, Seeking Opportunities for Significant Differences at NIACC and Recommendations for Quick Fixes. The outcomes of this work session were then compiled and are being used by the AQIP Quality Council to set priorities for action projects and other AQIP related uses.

This is not the first time the College has used an All-Staff meeting as working meeting. Because of AQIP and the use of All-Staff meeting time, NIACC culture is beginning to change. Employees are beginning to look at All-Staff meetings as working meetings versus the old model of viewing them as a meeting where they passively receive announcements about what is going on at the College and what will be going on at the College over the next semester or year. Staff and faculty have begun to embrace the participatory nature of the meetings, and the information received by the AQIP Quality Council because of this new meeting structure has been invaluable as the College generates ideas for improvement, prioritizes its actions, and charts the course for idea improvement implementation.