Higher Learning Commission
A commission of the North Central Association

230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500 | Chicago, IL 60604-1411
312-263-0456 | 800-621-7440 | Fax: 312-263-7462 | ncahlc.org

February 18, 2011

Darrel L Hammon
President
Laramie County Community College
1400 E. College Dr.
Cheyenne, WY 82007-3299

Dear President Hammon:

Enclosed is a copy of Laramie County Community College's *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*. It begins with a concise Executive Summary, intended for those general readers that do not require a high level of detail. Your Systems Appraisal Team of quality experts provided extensive detail in the full report by identifying nine distinct groups of what they view as your institution's *strengths* and *opportunities for improvement*, one group for each of the nine AQIP Categories. We are also emailing your institution's AQIP Liaison a copy of this full *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*.

To receive maximum benefit from your Systems Appraisal, you and your colleagues should plan to invest substantial time in discussing it, considering the team's observations and advice, and identifying which actions will best advance your institution.

To comply with federal requirements, we need the CEO of the institution formally to acknowledge receipt of this report within the next two weeks, and to provide us with any comments you wish to make about it. Limit your acknowledgement and comments to a maximum of two typewritten pages, and understand that your response will become part of your institution's permanent HLC file, to be shared with future peer reviewers who review your institution (including the next Systems Appraisal team, the next Quality Checkup visit team, and the next Reaffirmation of Accreditation panel). Email your response to AQIP@hlcommission.org; call me or Mary Green (at 800-621-7440 x130) if you have any questions about it.

We know you will gain real value from the Systems Appraisal Feedback and the activities it will stimulate within your institution, and we are proud to be working with you as you continue along the never-ending path to improvement.

Sincerely,

Stephen D. Spangehl, Vice President for Accreditation Relations

SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

LARAMIE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

February 18, 2011

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Academic Quality Improvement Program

The Higher Learning Commission NCA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR LARAMIE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The following are summary comments on each of the AQIP Categories crafted by the Appraisal Team to highlight Laramie County Community College's achievements and to identify challenges yet to be met.

- Laramie County Community College is in the initial phase of its continuous improvement journey. To provide a vision for the journey dealing with Helping Students Learn, the institution has identified and iterated four core General Education learning outcomes to guide strategic initiatives. LCCC employs a variety of processes, approaches, and methods for Helping Students Learn that are yielding early results about students' perceptions of their learning. The next stage of LCCC's development in the continuous improvement process concerns making the deployment of these strategies, resources, and activities more systematic and coordinated so that direct evidence of student learning can be collected and analyzed, and targets for improvement can be set. To achieve durable systems that will yield reliable, replicable data for continuous improvement, LCCC must carefully attend to the purposes and means by which strategies, resources, activities, and metrics are integrated across the institution.

- Overall, LCCC is commended for its breadth and depth of non-instructional programming which comprises its Other Distinctive Objectives. This programming is aimed at meeting the needs of its stakeholders. As it expands its efforts in benchmarking and relies on improved stakeholder engagement, its efforts to become an improved organization are more likely to be realized. The College has established a strong foundation upon which it now must build measurable outcomes, consistent assessment processes, and stakeholder involvement. The College can further its development in this area by clarifying and aligning processes with desired results to help prioritize which Other Distinctive Objectives it will continue to support.

- LCCC has strategies in place for building and maintaining relationships with Students and Other Stakeholders. It is also beginning to collect data for Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs to serve as a basis for identifying satisfaction with current performance. The College can now examine how it can strategically develop and integrate new processes, gather and analyze data, target areas for improvement, and expand its existing foundational efforts into a more intentional, systematic, College-wide effort.

- LCCC is commended for its initial efforts to develop and implement processes for Valuing People and beginning the efforts to link work with institutional priorities. LCCC's recently completed Action Project has identified several recommendations for improving its performance management system, including development of competency-based position descriptions and expansion of these processes to include adjuncts and non-benefitted part-time staff. Implementing these recommendations may clarify expectations of employees and provide an agreed-upon basis for accountability. As the institution acknowledges, it is aware of needs for Valuing People and moving to implementing efforts for LCCC's continuous improvement. Its efforts to reward and retain employees presents baseline evidence, but LCCC, as part of its AQIP commitment, has an opportunity to be more intentional with efforts to Value People. Its various Action Projects (Performance Management; New Employee Orientation) and its establishment of a Quality Council all present LCCC with the opportunity to gather data and rely on external resources (best practices, literature review, benchmarking) to contribute to LCCC's efforts to improve the organization.

- The fact that LCCC has been addressing issues in this category since 1999 is a testament to the ongoing challenges faced by the College with regard to Leading and Communicating. The College deserves credit for several positive developments: a Climate Survey, the Leadership Academy, strategic plan-based budgeting, and a new strategic plan. LCCC is encouraged to continue its improvement efforts in Leading and Communicating, as these efforts are vital to the continued sustainability of its continuous improvement journey, especially given the large number of new employees at the institution. The mark of a high-performance organization is one in which employees and other stakeholders are engaged at all levels, and in which two-way communication is frank and encouraged.

  LCCC is making commendable efforts with regard to sharing information, yet its culture appears to be grappling with a larger, more complex issue: shared governance. Participatory governance can be difficult to define and implement. Nonetheless, it is clear that participation in important decisions and bi-lateral communication (opportunities from top to bottom and from bottom to top) are Leading and Communicating issues that the College needs to confront as a professional community in order to become a high performance organization.

- In today's climate of accountability and economic challenges, it will be vital for LCCC to use continuous quality improvement principles and data-informed processes to guide continuous improvement efforts and to Support Institutional Operations. Measures of effectiveness can be monitored – keeping an eye on benchmarks -- to indicate gaps that LCCC may need to address to improve the College.

  While still in its foundational stages, a culture of continuous improvement has been slowly emerging at LCCC. This is evident in Supporting Institutional Operations by the implementation of online administrative service systems and alignment of the budgeting process with the priorities stated in the strategic plan. The College recognizes the clear opportunity to set realistic targets for improved performance results and to develop continuous improvement processes to ensure that these targets are reached. LCCC has an opportunity to identify measures that correspond with the outcomes of support services. Doing so will help to accelerate the development of a continuous improvement culture at the institution.

- In the past, LCCC Measured Effectiveness by responding to external pressures and demands. As the College develops its data and information systems to support institutional effectiveness, the Institutional Research Office may want to incorporate input from the internal and external stakeholders who will use the data to make decisions. Having relevant, trustworthy processes in place for Measuring Effectiveness will help to guide the College on its journey of continuous improvement.

- LCCC recognizes that it has significant opportunities for improvement in Planning Continuous Improvement. The institution has made some efforts in this area with the creation of a new strategic planning process and a Quality Council, but it is still in the early stages of coordinating institutional planning, setting outcome measures and targets, and embedding evaluation processes for learning and improvement. Maintaining focus on its efforts in this area and providing additional training on AQIP and continuous quality improvement may facilitate LCCC's realization of several principles of high performing organizations: focus, agility, information and collaboration.

- The College's Strategic Plan, Mission, and Values all provide a foundation for the improvement of Building Collaborative Relationships. LCCC demonstrates in the Portfolio that it has a wide range of established partnerships, both internal and external. LCCC has established the framework through Action Projects to move the institution

toward development of systematic processes, plus the identification of rubrics, measures, and benchmarks that may result in improvements to advance the institution. LCCC has relationships that have powerful potential for the future—with the University of Wyoming, the Wyoming Community College Commission, area industry, and school districts. Purposeful, intentional, and ongoing analysis of these relationships can strengthen the institution.

Accreditation issues and Strategic challenges for Laramie County Community College are listed in detail within the Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis section of the Appraisal Feedback Report.

ELEMENTS OF Laramie County Community College's FEEDBACK REPORT

The *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* provides AQIP's official response to your *Systems Portfolio* by a team of readers trained in evaluation. After appraisers independently reviewed your document, the team reached consensus on essential elements of your institutional profile, strengths and opportunities for improvement by Category, and significant issues for your institution. These are presented in three sections of the Feedback Report: Accreditation Issues Analysis, Critical Characteristics Analysis, and Category Feedback*.* These components are interrelated in defining context, evaluating performance, surfacing critical issues, and assessing institutional performance.

It is important to remember that the Systems Appraisal Team had only your *Systems Portfolio* to guide their analysis of your institution's strengths and opportunities for improvement. Consequently, their report may omit important strengths — if you were too modest to stress them in your *Systems Portfolio*, or if your discussion and documentation of them was unconvincing. Similarly, the team may have pointed out areas of potential improvement that are already receiving the institution's attention. Again, the team used its best judgment in identifying improvement opportunities. If some of these areas of potential improvement are now strengths rather than opportunities because of your own focused efforts, that is all to your credit. If the team was unsure about an area, we urged it to err on the side of giving your institution the best possible advice about where investing your efforts might pay off. If some of their advice comes after the fact, after you've already tackled an area, no harm is done.

Executive Summary: Summative statements agreed upon by the Systems Appraisal Team reflecting the reviewers' assessment of the institution's current status in relation to critical quality characteristics: robustness of process design; utilization or deployment of processes; the existence of results, trends, and comparative data; the use of results data as feedback, and systematic processes for improvement of the activities that the Category covers. Since institutions are complex, maturity levels may vary from one Category to another.

Strategic challenges for the institution are listed in detail within the Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis section of the Appraisal Feedback Report.

Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis: Strategic issues are those most closely related to your institution's ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning, and quality improvement goals. Accreditation issues are areas where you have not yet provided evidence that you meet the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*, or where the evidence you have presented suggests you may have difficulties, now or in the future, in meeting these expectations. If accreditation is essential for your institution then any accreditation issues identified are, by definition, also strategic. The Systems Appraisal Team identified both of these kinds of issues through analysis of your Organizational Overview and the feedback it provided for each Category, as well as by reviewing the Index to the *Criteria for Accreditation* that you provided along with your *Systems Portfolio*. This list of strategic issues offers a framework for addressing ongoing improvement of processes and systems, serving as an executive summary of the Report's key findings and recommendations.

Critical Characteristics: Your Systems Portfolio's Organizational Overview provides context for the team's knowledge of your institution's identity, mission objectives, strategic goals, and key factors related to improvement. Critical Characteristics are those features most important for understanding the institution's mission, environment, stakeholders, competitive position, goals, and processes. Characteristics having the greatest relevance to each Category are identified in the Report.

Category Feedback: The Report's feedback on each of AQIP's nine Categories specifically identifies strengths and opportunities for improvement. An **S** or **SS** identifies strengths, with the double letter signifying important achievements or capabilities upon which to build. Opportunities are designated by **O**, with **OO** indicating areas where attention may result in more significant improvement. Comments, which are keyed to your *Systems Portfolio*, offer brief

analysis of each strength and opportunity. Organized by Category, and presenting the team's findings in detail, this section is the heart of the Report.

STRATEGIC AND ACCREDITATION ISSUES

In conducting the Systems Appraisal, the team attempted to identify the broader issues that present the greatest challenges and opportunities for your institution in the coming years. These are all strategic issues, ones you need to grapple with as you identify your institution's strategies for confronting the future and becoming the institution you want to be. The team also examined whether any of these strategic issues put your institution into jeopardy of not meeting the Higher Learning Commission's accreditation expectations.

Issues Affecting Compliance with the *Criteria for Accreditation*. An important goal for the Systems Appraisal was to review your institution's compliance with the Higher Learning Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*. The peer quality experts who served on the team were all trained in evaluating colleges and universities using the Commission's *Criteria*, and the Systems Appraisal process they followed included careful steps to ensure the team used the *Criteria* as a major factor in their review. As the team reviewed your presentation of your institution's systems and processes under each AQIP Category, it searched for accreditation-related issues and concerns. In addition, the team used the *Index to the Criteria for Accreditation* that you provided with your Portfolio to perform a comprehensive review of the *Criteria* and each Core Component to ascertain whether you presented compelling evidence that your institution complies with each of these Commission expectations.

The Systems Appraisal team concluded that Laramie County Community College has presented evidence that it complies with each of the Five *Criteria for Accreditation* and each of their Core Components. Although the Systems Appraisal does not in itself constitute a review for continued accreditation, the team's conclusion upon reviewing your Portfolio against the Criteria will serve as a telling piece of evidence during the Commission's next scheduled AQIP review of your institution for Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

Issues Affecting Future Institutional Strategies. The Systems Appraisal Team identified the following strategic issues to assist Laramie County Community College in prioritizing and taking

action on the important broad challenges and opportunities it faces. From these you may discover your vital immediate priorities, shaping strategies that can lead to a quantum leap in the performance of your institution. Implementing these strategies may call for specific actions, so AQIP's expectation that your institution be engaged in three or four vital Action Projects at all times will help encourage your administrators, faculty, and staff to turn these strategic goals into real accomplishments. Knowing that Laramie County Community College will discuss these strategic issues, give priority to those it concludes are most critical, and take action promptly, the Systems Appraisal Team identified:

- The College is encouraged to write AQIP documents with more intentionality and detail – *if* LCCC has a process, it needs to be described in detail to show *how* it works for the College. If the College does *not* have a process that addresses a Category question, simply say that. These descriptions will ensure that reviewers have clear and sufficient evidence to make a determination regarding whether or not AQIP principles are being met at LCCC.

- LCCC is encouraged to examine its ability to present a clear picture of where it is on its continuous improvement journey. A step in that journey would be clarifying and summarizing its processes and data collected so that readers have a clear understanding of what is being presented. The College can look to other colleges for examples of how to utilize succinct descriptions, benchmarking, and best practices to present a clear picture of the good work and accomplishments being made at LCCC.

- By implementing consistent, systematic processes that clarify roles, needs, and steps to address those needs, LCCC can ensure buy in, compliance, and understanding across the institution. For example, the College received a clear message from its Climate Survey that there are real issues in Leading and Communicating. It appears that the College is taking that message to heart. Ensuing processes should be inclusive, with clearly stated responsibilities and strategies for achievement, selection and documentation of appropriate data, determination of measures, and a commitment to sharing these processes across the institution.

- The College needs to identify and articulate measures that align with developed processes and results that are shared in the Portfolio. There appears to be a gap in understanding about collecting data at LCCC and incorporating that data into a systemic method of collecting and analyzing measures of LCCC processes. Narrowing this gap

would allow more appropriate responses to portfolio questions. College personnel are encouraged to have serious discussions about how to strengthen institutional responses to items requested in an AQIP portfolio.

USING THE FEEDBACK REPORT

The AQIP *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* is intended to initiate action for improvement. It is therefore important that the Report produced by the Systems Appraisal Team stimulate review of organizational processes and systems. Though decisions about specific actions are each institution's, AQIP expects every institution to use its feedback to stimulate cycles of continual improvement. At the next Strategy Forum an AQIP institution attends, its peers will examine in detail how it is using the feedback from its Systems Appraisal.

An organization needs to examine its Report strategically to identify those areas that will yield greatest benefit if addressed. Some key questions that may arise in careful examination of the Report may be: How do the team's findings challenge our assumptions about ourselves? Given our mission and goals, which issues should we focus on? How will we employ results to innovate, grow, and encourage a positive culture of improvement? How will we incorporate lessons learned from this review in our planning and operational processes? How will we revise the *Systems Portfolio* to reflect what we have learned?

How an organization interprets, communicates, and uses its feedback for improvement ought to support AQIP's core values, encouraging involvement, learning, collaboration and integrity. Based solely upon an organization's *Systems Portfolio*, the Report reflects a disciplined, external review of what an organization says about itself. The report should help an organization identify ways to improve its *Systems Portfolio* so it functions better to communicate accurately to internal and external audiences. But the Report's chief purpose is to help you to identify areas for improvement, and to act so that these areas actually improve. These improvements can then be incorporated into an updated *Systems Portfolio*, guaranteeing that future Systems Appraisals will reflect the progress an institution has made.

Within a year following the Systems Appraisal, an institution participates in another AQIP Strategy Forum, where the focus will be on what the institution has learned from its Appraisal (and from its other methods of identifying and prioritizing improvement opportunities, and what it has concluded are its major strategic priorities for the next few years. AQIP's goal is to help an

institution to clarify the strategic issues most vital to its success, and then to support the institution as it addresses these priorities through Action Projects that will make a difference in institutional performance.

CRITICAL CHARACTERISTICS ANALYSIS

The purpose of this section is to identify what team members understood to be the critical and distinguishing characteristics of your institution. They are the shared understanding of the most important aspects of Laramie County Community College, its current dynamics and the forces surrounding it, and its internal momentum and aspirations, at least as team members understood them. This section also demonstrates that the Systems Appraisal Team recognized and knew what makes Laramie County Community College distinctive. Should you find some characteristics that you think are critical and missing from this list, you may want to clarify and highlight these items when you revise your *Systems Portfolio* and other literature explaining your institution to the public.

Item   Critical Characteristic

OV1a A comprehensive, public community college founded in 1968, LCCC's service area comprises 23% of Wyoming's population and seven percent of the state's square acreage. LCCC has a 271 acre main campus in Laramie County, a branch campus in Albany County, and outreach centers in Pine Bluffs and Warren Air Force Base.

OV1b The College is governed by an elected seven-member Board of Trustees from Laramie County. The Board also has a non-voting member from LCCC's Albany County Advisory Council. The College is one of seven community colleges coordinated and partly funded by the Wyoming Community College Commission. LCCC has enjoyed a great deal of support from its service area through donations, bond issues, and mil levies.

OV1c Seeking to fulfill its mission as a dynamic learning center, the College offers 66 associate degree programs, 24 certificate programs, ABE, GED, a host of extracurricular programs, and 20 online programs which currently comprise 17 percent of LCCC's FTE.

OV1d LCCC's values are educational excellence, integrity, respect, and community. Its vision is to provide educational opportunities to prepare citizens for work, transfer, and continued learning.

OV1e   The College launched a 2010-2015 Strategic Plan that identifies five strategic directions: 1) maximize learning opportunities, 2) collaborate with the community, 3) ensure institutional effectiveness, 4) manage resources, and 5) increase collaboration and communication. The College is using this Plan to develop measurable outcomes and stimulate a culture of evidence-based continuous improvement.

OV2   LCCC's non-instructional goals can be categorized as cultural programs and community development (cultural workshops and speaker series, art exhibits, theater productions, concerts, library programs, economic and workforce development initiatives, career services, conferencing services, and customized training courses); lifelong learning (PK-20 initiatives such as career pathway development and articulation agreements, athletic programs, workforce programming, ACES programming, and child care and child development programming); and civic engagement (athletic team events, service learning, and active PR efforts).*.*

OV3a   LCCC identifies current and prospective students, their support networks, and the larger community as external stakeholders. Its internal stakeholders are faculty, staff, and donors. The needs of these groups are included in the LCCC Strategic Plan.

OV3b   Primary competitors for LCCC include universities, several regional community colleges, and online, for-profit providers.

OV4a   The increase in the percentage of full-time employees (23%) closely mirrors the FTE growth experienced by LCCC in the most recent five year period, while part-time employees have increased by 45%. Current employees include 326 full-time (91 faculty, 26 administrators, 88 professional staff, and 121 Educational Services staff); 417 part-time (273 adjunct, 59 professional staff, and 85 Educational Services staff). Volunteers are also important contributors to the operation of the College.

OV4b   In April 2004, the Board of Trustees adopted a policy governance model in which the College President is charged with complete responsibility for recruiting, selecting, employing, and terminating all College employees. Currently, not all positions have a position description. The College is seeking to remedy this situation with its Performance Management Systems Action Project.

OV5a   Committed to its four values, LCCC has implemented several steps to align its decision making with its values and responsibilities: a 2009 Climate Survey, an Action Project on

Leading and Communicating, a College Council Action Project, and Defining Organizational Structures and Processes Action Project.

OV5b   The Board and the President ensure that LCCC meets the requirements of the Wyoming Community College Commission and other regulatory bodies. The College's Strategic Plan is aligned with that of the Wyoming Community College Commission.

OV6   LCCC's funding comes from state appropriations, local appropriations, and tuition and fees. LCCC's operations are aligned to support the College mission, vision, values, and strategic plan. Units of the College have operational plans with budgets that are aligned with the College's strategic plan.

OV7   Utilizing its Office of Institutional Research and Planning, the College employs data-driven decision making strategies to ensure continuous quality improvement and the attainment of institutional objectives. LCCC uses Datatel's Colleague to support administrative and student functions.

OV8a   LCCC's five strategic directions are aligned with those of the State of Wyoming. The major constraint on the College is its funding stream: tuition is set by the Wyoming Community College Commission, there are statutory constraints on local appropriations, and the Board of Trustees has the authority to levy property taxes only in Laramie County, even though the College operates a branch campus in Albany County.

OV8b   Key challenges for the College include funding limitations, enrollment growth, and limited resources, both human and facilities. LCCC's opportunities include the demand for additional services and programs, a growing partnership with the University of Wyoming, its location at the crossroads of two major interstate highways within an hour's proximity of four major universities, economic development and the demand for workforce retraining in the region, and the high percentage of new employees (53 % of employees have been at the College less than five years) who bring new energy to the institution.

OV9   LCCC maintains collaborative relationships with numerous groups including local school districts, the University of Wyoming and other higher education institutions, State agencies, local and regional business and industries, community development partners, program advisory councils, service learning partners, and internal groups such as the Quality Council and institutional teams.

CATEGORY FEEDBACK

In the following sections, each of which deals with strengths and opportunities for improvement for one of the nine AQIP Categories, selected *Critical Characteristics* are again highlighted, those the Systems Appraisal Team believed were critical keys to reviewing that particular AQIP Category. The symbols used in these "strengths and opportunities" sections for each Category stand for *outstanding strength* (SS), *strength* (S), *opportunity for improvement* (O) and *pressing or outstanding opportunity for improvement* (OO). The choice of symbol for each item represents the consensus evaluation of the Systems Appraisal Team members, and deserves your thoughtful consideration. Comments marked SS or OO may need immediate attention, either to ensure the institution preserves and maximizes the value of its greatest strengths, or to devote immediate attention to its greatest opportunities for improvement.

AQIP CATEGORY 1: HELPING STUDENTS LEARN

Helping Students Learn identifies the shared purpose of all higher education organizations, and is accordingly the pivot of any institutional analysis. This Category focuses on the teaching-learning process within a formal instructional context, yet also addresses how your entire institution contributes to helping students learn and overall student development. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to learning objectives, mission-driven student learning and development, intellectual climate, academic programs and courses, student preparation, key issues such as technology and diversity, program and course delivery, faculty and staff roles, teaching and learning effectiveness, course sequencing and scheduling, learning and co-curricular support, student assessment, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Laramie County Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 1, Helping Students Learn:

Item   Critical Characteristic

OV1a   A comprehensive, public community college founded in 1968, LCCC's service area comprises 23% of Wyoming's population and seven percent of the state's square

acreage. LCCC has a 271 acre main campus in Laramie County, a branch campus in Albany County, and outreach centers in Pine Bluffs and Warren Air Force Base.

OV1c Seeking to fulfill its mission as a dynamic learning center, the College offers 66 associate degree programs, 24 certificate programs, ABE, GED, a host of extracurricular programs, and 20 online programs which currently comprise 17 percent of LCCC's FTE.

OV1d LCCC's values are educational excellence, integrity, respect, and community. Its vision is to provide educational opportunities to prepare citizens for work, transfer, and continued learning.

OV1e The College launched a 2010-2015 Strategic Plan that identifies five strategic directions: 1) maximize learning opportunities, 2) collaborate with the community, 3) ensure institutional effectiveness, 4) manage resources, and 5) increase collaboration and communication. The College is using this Plan to develop measurable outcomes and stimulate a culture of evidence-based continuous improvement.

OV1f LCCC's progressive use of technology – its Integrated Technology Services (ITS) provides and maintains SMART classrooms, AV, computer labs, and distance education -- has resulted in the College's being named the #1 Tech-Savvy Community College in the nation for mid-sized community colleges from 2007 to 2009, according to Digital Community College survey.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Laramie County Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 1, Helping Students Learn.

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
1P1	S	The Student Learning Assessment Committee (SLAC), an inclusive, cross-functional team, determined four General Education learning outcomes that serve as a foundation for student learning. These outcomes are a refinement of the outcomes written by a faculty group in the 1990's and revised on the basis of input from an HLC Focus Visit. The outcomes are embedded in certificate and degree programs as well as stand-alone courses.
1P2	O	LCCC recognizes an opportunity to develop a systematic college-wide process for reviewing and revising specific program learning outcomes. A

clear, integrated process that includes internal groups as well as external credentialing bodies, and workforce and industry groups may help to ensure that program learning outcomes meet the changing needs of transfer institutions, accreditors, and businesses.

1P3a	S	LCCC employs a systematic, multi-step process to design new credit programs and courses. The process begins with needs assessment, input from a broad range of stakeholders to determine learning outcomes, program viability, marketing needs, competitors, articulation potential, and career opportunities. Appropriate applications are submitted for approval to the Wyoming Community College Commission (WCCC).
1P3b	O	There is no evidence presented regarding an institutional approval process for non-credit offerings. Non-credit offerings are typically designed to address stakeholder needs; an institutional approval process may ensure that non-credit offerings are aligned with institutional goals and objectives, and may ensure there is no duplication of offerings across the institution.
1P3c	O	While LCCC describes a detailed program design process, the role of the faculty, staff, and others is not clear. Clarifying the role of stakeholder input may help the institution in its ability to be nimble in the market place.
1P4a	S	LCCC uses multiple means to respond to strategic core learning objectives, students' needs and career goals, and the realities of the job market, including academic program reviews, articulation agreements, interaction with advisory committees, departmental monitoring of market trends, and new program approval.
1P4b	O	LCCC does not provide information about how input from the various constituent groups contributes to the balance and integration of the learning goals, career needs, and realities of the employment market. Clarifying how programs evaluate and prioritize this integration can help to ensure viability, consistency, and rigor in program improvement.
1P5	O	LCCC recognizes the opportunity to develop and document systematically across the institution prerequisites required of students for specific curricula, programs, courses, and learning. Formalizing

assessment and placement through benchmarking and longitudinal monitoring may improve patterns of learning success. LCCC has embarked on an Action Project to document clear criteria for determining prerequisites, which may help the institution take a systems approach to setting and monitoring these prerequisites.

1P6a	S	LCCC communicates program requirements to prospective and current students through a variety of mechanisms that begin as early as junior high and continue with advising opportunities and computerized programs for degree audit.
1P6b	O	While there are numerous points at which students have access to information about program requirements, LCCC provides no information about how intentional and pro-active the methods are, nor how evidence is used to inform the communication process. Development of a feedback loop for communication methods may ensure that students receive the message.
1P7	S	LCCC empowers students to select a course of study by providing access to advisors and electronic resources such as the Kuder Career Planning System.
1P8	S	To assist the growing population of underprepared students, LCCC offers a variety of services and programs, including late-start developmental math courses to allow students to "drop back" and a pilot competency-based developmental writing course. LCCC also offers ABE, GED, ESOL, and ASE programs and tutoring services.
1P9	O	LCCC acknowledges that it does not have a systematic process to determine students' different learning styles, although the Freshman Seminar and Student Success Center offer learning style inventory workshops. Implementing a systematic process may provide LCCC the opportunity to help students meet their goals and help the institution improve student satisfaction, retention, and program completion.
1P10a	S	LCCC demonstrates a commitment to serving the special needs of student subgroups through a variety of internal programs, including the

		Disability Resource Center, International Student Office, Transition Services Office, and Campus Living and Learning Systems.
1P10b	O	There is no evidence that the special needs services provided are part of a systematic process. An integrated college-wide process may help students connect better with the services and provide the institution with an opportunity to assess the effectiveness of these services.
1P11a	S	LCCC lists a number of mechanisms to define, document, and communicate expectations about teaching and learning, including the program review process, handbooks, WIDS, orientations, and a new faculty mentoring program.
1P11b	O	While LCCC has some mechanisms in place for communicating expectations for effective teaching, it is unclear whether these mechanisms communicate a clear and consistent set of expectations. Having a more systematic approach may improve the effectiveness of these strategies and allow the institution to integrate methods for assessing how well the expectations are understood and practiced.
1P12	O	While LCCC describes a range of activities (course scheduling, delivery methods and technologies, outreach centers), the institution acknowledges the need to develop a systematic process to determine the effectiveness of the activities. By putting such a process in place, the institution may, for instance, be able to determine which delivery modes, technologies, locations, and schedules best serve student and institutional needs.
1P13a	S	LCCC employs internal and external review processes to ensure that programs and courses are up-to-date and effective, including program review, program accreditation, and college-wide assessment of the core learning outcomes.
1P13b	O	LCCC cites assessment of student learning as a means of ensuring course and program currency and effectiveness, but there is no accompanying discussion of how this assessment functions in this way.

1P14	S	In addition to a regularly-scheduled program review process, LCCC uses other processes to change or discontinue programs and courses.
1P15	O	LCCC has in place a range of services, programs, and activities that seek to address the learning support needs of students and faculty, but the institution does not use a systematic process to determine if and how these initiatives meet the actual needs of the two groups. A more coordinated and systematic process can help to ensure that resources are directed to those students who are identified as needing support.
1P16	O	LCCC acknowledges the opportunity to align co-curricular goals and curricular learning objectives. Developing a documented process to align curricular and co-curricular goals and offerings can enhance student development and help students see the relevance of their academic programs to career opportunities.
1P17	S	The degree of student success in meeting LCCC learning and development expectations is determined through the use of the ETS Proficiency Profile in conjunction with a number of summative measures including capstone projects, the degree audit process, licensure pass rates, and employer survey results.
1P18	OO	Within the current culture of increased accountability, LCCC has the opportunity to design a systematic process for assessing student learning that encompasses both general education and career programs. Closing the assessment loop—from identifying learning outcomes, to selecting measures and collecting and analyzing evidence—will help to ensure that data from the MAAP and other assessments is used to guide institutional improvement.
1R1-1R3	OO	LCCC is working to provide direct evidence that students have grown in four core abilities at the institutional and program levels. The institution should continue in this effort, clarifying how such data aligns with the indirect results from CCSSE. While instruments such as CCSSE, graduate survey data, and GPA transfer data to the University of Wyoming provide valuable information about students' experiences in the learning process, they do not provide evidence that students have met

the levels of proficiency set by the institution and program areas. Results for licensure exams and the ETS Proficiency Profile would be appropriate in this section as direct measures of student success.

1R4, 1R6a	O	LCCC provides limited evidence that graduates have acquired the knowledge and skills required of them, although such evidence for graduates of the Allied Health Programs data is provided. Results of pre-graduation transfer to the University of Wyoming is provided, but this data does not indicate that students acquired the knowledge and skills required—only that they earned certain grades that accumulated to a particular GPA. LCCC has an opportunity to gather an appropriate set of direct results to show that students have indeed acquired the particular skill sets and knowledge base that LCCC desires of them as documented in the learning outcomes for courses, programs, and degrees.
1R5	O	LCCC provides limited results data on student support services, considering the number of programs offered to address student and faculty needs. In addition, the data reflected in Tables 1R5.1 and 1R5.2 indicate that graduation rates fell, transfer rates increased, and the TRIO data is mixed, and there is no correlation made between those data and performance of learning support services.
1R6b	O	Beyond CCSSE results data, LCCC could benefit from identifying other cohort community colleges—through such mechanisms as the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP), for instance—to compare the performance of processes in Helping Students Learn. Comparative data could be used for benchmarking and setting targets for improvement.
1I1a	S	LCCC is working to develop a collaborative and systematic approach to Helping Students Learn. The open-entry/open-exit developmental writing program holds potential for improvement in student learning outcomes success. Data-informed monitoring of this pilot program may assist LCCC in using the methodology in other developmental areas.

| 1I2 | S | LCCC is intentional in its effort to put in place a number of work groups, processes, and inclusive action plans that indicate the institution is in the foundational stage of developing a culture of continuous improvement. |

AQIP CATEGORY 2: ACCOMPLISHING OTHER DISTINCTIVE OBJECTIVES

Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of your institution's major objectives that complement student learning and fulfill other portions of your mission. Depending on your institution's character, it examines your institution's processes and systems related to identification of other distinctive objectives, alignment of other distinctive objectives, faculty and staff roles, assessment and review of objectives, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Laramie County Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 2, Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives:

Item   Critical Characteristic

OV1d LCCC's values are educational excellence, integrity, respect, and community. Its vision is to provide educational opportunities to prepare citizens for work, transfer, and continued learning.

OV2   LCCC's non-instructional goals can be categorized as cultural programs and community development (cultural workshops and speaker series, art exhibits, theater productions, concerts, library programs, economic and workforce development initiatives, career services, conferencing services, and customized training courses); lifelong learning (PK-20 initiatives such as career pathway development and articulation agreements, athletic programs, workforce programming, ACES programming, and child care and child development programming); and civic engagement (athletic team events, service learning, and active PR efforts).

OV3a LCCC identifies current and prospective students, their support networks, and the larger community as external stakeholders. Its internal stakeholders are faculty, staff, and donors. The needs of these groups are included in the LCCC Strategic Plan.

OV9   LCCC maintains collaborative relationships with numerous groups including local school

districts, the University of Wyoming and other higher education institutions, State

agencies, local and regional business and industries, community development partners,

program advisory councils, service learning partners, and internal groups such as the

Quality Council and institutional teams.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Laramie County Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 2, Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives.

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
2P1a	S	LCCC gives an example of the process used for developing and operating one of its Other Distinctive Objective programs. This process involves gathering input, seeking grant funding, establishing and meeting operational goals for the program, and establishing institutional support in the form of permanent funding. This process serves as a model process for developing and operating Other Distinctive Objectives at LCCC.
2P1b	O	It is unclear whether the service learning and Workforce and Community Development examples provided in the Portfolio are characteristic of how LCCC designs and maintains key non-instructional processes. The College did not provide process-related information regarding non-instructional processes through which key stakeholders are served. Describing how these processes work across the campus can help the institution assess the extent to which the processes are systematized across campus.
2P1c	O	It is unclear how the individual efforts of departments and faculty and staff are integrated at a macro-level into a systemic approach to Accomplishing Distinctive Objectives. Integrating planning and vision-setting purposefully and systematically at all levels may yield opportunities that would not otherwise be identified and may increase stakeholder involvement.
2P2a	S	LCCC employs a variety of methods to communicate with internal and external stakeholders that are designed to heighten stakeholder

involvement and engagement with the institution. Distinctive Objectives are aligned with the College's Strategic Plan.

2P2b	O	LCCC has identified vehicles through which to gain input from external stakeholders about non-instructional objectives; however, it is not clear how often this information is solicited or gathered, who reviews the information collected, and how that input informs institutional direction in this capacity. Clarifying this process can help to ensure the institution does not over commit its resources.
2P3a	S	LCCC has developed numerous formal and informal communications mechanisms to engage relevant internal and external stakeholders concerning expectations related to distinctive institutional objectives.
2P3b	O	LCCC indicates that it employs different formal and informal methods of communicating expectations about Other Distinctive Objectives to each stakeholder group, but does not explain why there are different methods for each LCCC group or if LCCC understands that the messages have been received.
2P4	O	While LCCC recognizes an opportunity to develop institutional assessments of its Other Distinctive Objectives, it is unclear how the College intends to systematize the current benchmarks and evaluations present in individual areas, to develop additional relevant assessments to ascertain the value of these objectives, and to identify key internal and external stakeholders to involve in these review processes.
2P5	O	While LCCC employs a planning system progressing from faculty and staff, LCCC does not indicate how it determines the needs of faculty and staff or how it incorporates internal and external stakeholder input relative to its Other Distinctive Objectives.
2P6	O	LCCC may benefit from identifying and implementing a process such as SMART (sustainable, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound) to relate annual goals to non-instructional efforts, to assess these efforts annually using both internal and external stakeholders, and to keep faculty and staff needs in mind as external objectives are created and adopted each year. In so doing, the College will establish a continuous

quality improvement cycle in which the budget reflects careful planning and programming reflects carefully articulated and measured outcomes.

2R1-2R2a	S	LCCC provides a variety of measures and positive corresponding data for results in Cultural Programming, the Career Center, Workforce Development, Lifelong Learning and Enrichment, Athletes' GPAs, and ABE/GED/ESOL and ACES student enrollment and success information. Much of the data reveals an increase in services, attendance, new program offerings, and student success. LCCC has provided a broad range of relevant trend data and information on which to build a foundation for further improvements.
2R1-2R2b	O	It is important that the measures reported are consistent within and across the Tables showing the results of those measures. For example, Table 2R1-2R2.2 notes athletic GPA in comparison to that of the general student body. It then refers to Table 2R2f, where the results reported are different than what was reported in the first table. Also, Table 2R2c contains data -- 600-800 Career Fair Participants, then 300-400, then 500+ -- that reveals a more accurate data gathering method is needed.
2R2	O	LCC is showing growth in many of its non-instructional programs (service learning, home athletic events, concurrent enrollment, partnership diploma program, workforce development courses, customized training, and student employment). However, several of its non-instructional efforts are declining (employers attending job fairs, participation in SOAR, participation in the junior high summer school leadership program, some Life Enrichment classes, and students served by ACES). Other data is non-comparative in nature, and is therefore of questionable use.
2R3	O	The College recognizes the opportunity to establish benchmark data for the information presented in 2R2. Additionally, LCCC is encouraged to incorporate qualitative feedback from participants in its assessment of the degree to which it is accomplishing its non-instructional objectives. Having comparative data can help the institution assess whether the value that its non-instructional programming adds to the College exceeds that of other organizations.

2R4	O	LCCC offers a number of non-instructional programs, each of which has the potential to strengthen the institution and its partnerships with the community and local organizations. To fully realize the potential of its non-instructional efforts, LCCC can implement measurable, comparative outcomes that are assessed annually through a collaborative, consistent process.
2I1,2I2	O	The College has recognized the need to institute benchmarks and targets to employ collected data more meaningfully within systematic assessment processes. It is doing so by initiating an Action Project to develop such benchmarks. Additionally, comprehensive continuous improvement in Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives could be attained through intentional integration of these processes at the institutional level.

AQIP CATEGORY 3: UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS' AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS' NEEDS

Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs examines how your institution works actively to understand student and other stakeholder needs. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student and stakeholder identification, student and stakeholder requirements, analysis of student and stakeholder needs, relationship building with students and stakeholders, complaint collection, analysis, and resolution, determining satisfaction of students and stakeholders, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Laramie County Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 3, Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs:

Item   Critical Characteristic

OV3a LCCC identifies current and prospective students, their support networks, and the larger community as external stakeholders. Its internal stakeholders are faculty, staff, and donors. The needs of these groups are included in the LCCC Strategic Plan.

OV3b Primary competitors for LCCC include universities, several regional community colleges, and online, for-profit providers.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Laramie County Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 3, Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs.

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
3P1a	S	The changing needs of students at LCCC are identified from the feedback of a variety of stakeholders.
3P1b	O	The information collected from stakeholders is largely anecdotal. It is unclear how LCCC synthesizes and analyzes the data collected from its many stakeholders, and it is unclear how it ensures the information goes to the correct decision makers. Clarifying these processes can help to ensure that decision makers understand stakeholder needs in selecting a course of action regarding these needs.
3P2	S	LCCC traditionally built relationships with students from the time students were prospects and continuing through student support and student engagement activities. A recent Action Project on academic advisement has generated a reconsideration of how relationships with students are built and maintained. Recommendations from this Action Plan are currently being implemented.
3P3	O	LCCC recognizes the need to develop a process for determining the changing needs of key stakeholder groups and selecting courses of action with respect to those needs.
3P4	S	LCCC uses a variety of strategies to build and maintain relationships with external key stakeholders (the community college/UW partnership for longitudinal tracking holds special promise). These mechanisms involve individual employee engagement with stakeholders and departmental activities that engage targeted stakeholders. The institution is in the nascent stages of developing similar internal structures to build and nurture productive relationships within a positive work climate.

3P5	O	Since most of its processes for targeting new stakeholder groups take place at the departmental level, the College acknowledges that it needs to develop a systematic institutional approach.
3P6	S	A clearly defined process using both formal and information mechanisms is used at LCCC to collect complaint information from students and employees. An online feedback form is available to the public and a Process Improvement Form is available to all stakeholder groups. The College Quality Council is empowered to analyze the data collected from those forms to select needed courses of action.
3R1	O	While LCCC has identified the instruments through which it collects data on student and stakeholder satisfaction, it is unclear what measures within those instruments are being used. Clarifying, for example, what measures are being reviewed from the Climate Survey can help the College assess whether the instrument provides meaningful information about employee needs.
3R2a	S	LCCC graduates are satisfied with their overall experience at the College, providing feedback such as "glad they attended," "would recommend it," and "accomplished goals."
3R2b	O	While LCCC graduates are generally satisfied with their overall experience, they do not appear to be as satisfied with specific student support services as shown by both the graduate survey and the CCSSE results, where LCCC students consistently had a lower satisfaction with services than those of other Wyoming community colleges. In addition, data regarding the quality of the academic experience at LCCC is notably absent.
3R3	O	The correlation of the CCSSE data reported in Table 3R3.1 with information LCCC provides about processes for building relationships with students in 3P3 is not entirely clear. LCCC has some proactive mechanisms for building relationships; and the institution could benefit by reporting the results from these processes. Currently, there is little evidence of processes in place to measure, analyze, and act to improve on the results of the information collected. Evidence of the development

and distribution of comparative information and results of longitudinal studies will improve understanding of evolving student and stakeholder needs and serve as a basis for meeting those needs.

3R4/5a	S	The College is making strides on collecting data to measure internal stakeholder satisfaction with the creation and implementation of a Climate Survey. Results from this Survey provide College decision-makers with a strong basis for future Action Projects, particularly in the area of Leading and Communicating.
3R4/5b	O	While the initial Climate Survey provides some baseline data on internal stakeholder satisfaction, it does not provide data for external stakeholders or measures for building relationships with stakeholders.
3R6	O	Some foundational comparative data is available to LCCC decision-makers (CCSSE and WCCC Core Indicators – which could be a powerful tool for improvement at LCCC), but the College recognizes the need for additional data collection and measures for Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs. Such comparative data will enable LCCC to target specific areas for improvement. Use of dashboard indicators developed in a new Action Project should identify these areas.
3I1a	S	LCCC's initial Climate Survey and follow-up focus survey has provided feedback data on Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs, providing information necessary for the development of action steps to improve processes and data-driven decisions.
3I1b	O	While LCCC has made important improvement in this category and is continuing to focus its continuous quality improvement efforts in this area through two Action Projects, the College's processes do not appear to be systematic or comprehensive at this time. LCCC is encouraged to focus on data that is comparative in nature rather than merely descriptive or statistical in nature. Understanding how LCCC is doing in comparison to other colleges on specific efforts will help the College better set targets and measure the effectiveness of its efforts.

3I2a   S   LCCC is utilizing its AQIP efforts and strategic planning processes to identify additional improvement opportunities in Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs.

3I2b   O   The College has taken initial steps to improve its processes and recognizes the opportunity to foster a broader culture of continuous improvements. Using information gained about internal stakeholder needs as a model to guide selection of improvement projects in other areas can help ensure institutional action that creates value in those target areas.

AQIP CATEGORY 4: VALUING PEOPLE

Valuing People explores your institution's commitment to the development of your employees since the efforts of all of your faculty, staff, and administrators are required for institutional success. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to work and job environment; workforce needs; training initiatives; job competencies and characteristics; recruitment, hiring, and retention practices; work processes and activities; training and development; personnel evaluation; recognition, reward, compensation, and benefits; motivation factors; satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Laramie County Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 4, Valuing People:

Item   Critical Characteristic

OV4a   The increase in the percentage of full-time employees (23%) closely mirrors the FTE growth experienced by LCCC in the most recent five year period, while part-time employees have increased by 45%. Current employees include 326 full-time (91 faculty, 26 administrators, 88 professional staff, and 121 Educational Services staff); 417 part-time (273 adjunct, 59 professional staff, and 85 Educational Services staff). Volunteers are also important contributors to the operation of the College.

OV4b   In April 2004, the Board of Trustees adopted a policy governance model in which the College President is charged with complete responsibility for recruiting, selecting,

employing, and terminating all College employees. Currently, not all positions have a position description. The College is seeking to remedy this situation with its Performance Management Systems Action Project.

OV8b Key challenges for the College include funding limitations, enrollment growth, and limited resources, both human and facilities. A large percentage of new employees at the College and lack of transparency in decision making and planning processes are also challenges.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Laramie County community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 4, Valuing People.

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
4P1a	S	The College has clearly defined and implemented a formal process to identify the preferred, specific qualities for faculty, staff and administrators. The recently completed Action Project on Performance Management further enhanced this process and addressed the quality of part-time employees and adjunct faculty. LCCC's process for identifying specific credentials, skills, and values involves input from LCCC administrators, the President, HR, and external guidelines, such as those of the University of Wyoming.
4P2	S	LCCC hires by committee, using behavior-based interviewing during the selection process. This collaborative hiring process ensures that new personnel possess the credentials, education, skills, and values needed for employment at the institution.
4P3	S	Through its established recruiting and hiring processes, LCCC is well poised to attract and hire talent that fits with the mission of the institution. Practices such as sabbaticals, longevity recognition, educational benefits, and professional development serve to retain LCCC employees. The College has placed a strong emphasis on development from within to retain strong faculty and staff. One item of evidence of this emphasis is LCCC's leadership training program for employees.

4P4	O	LCCC recognizes the opportunity to develop a systematic process to employee orientation. This recognition is the evolution of a recent Action Project. Without such a process, the College cannot provide assurance that the strategic objectives of LCCC and its Vision and Mission are being delivered to all new employees in a consistent and standardized fashion. As LCCC addresses and evaluates implemented processes for this opportunity, improvement may occur and assurance achieved.
4P5	O	Although the College indicates that Human Resources tracks employees who are nearing retirement, the process seems reactive. There does not appear to be a systematic and proactive process in determining changes of personnel. The College's existing Leadership Academy may provide one such vehicle for LCCC's effort.
4P6	O	LCCC recognizes that it has an opportunity to develop more systematic work processes that align with the needs of its Strategic Plan and expectations for organizational productivity. Having a more systematic approach to work processes helps to ensure employees are focusing attention on key institutional outcomes and strategic priorities.
4P7	O	Having a formalized institutional Code of Ethics provides a base of understanding for ensuring that employees are following ethical practices. LCCC acknowledges this opportunity and its Orientation Team is working to develop a more comprehensive employee orientation to promote employee understanding of the College's behavioral expectations.
4P8-4P10	O	As the College progresses with implementing its Performance Management Action Project, it has the opportunity to establish, in a proactive and measurable way, durable systematic processes to identify, evaluate, address, and monitor employee training needs and activities, as well as consistent and comprehensive personnel evaluations.
4P9	O	Although 69 percent of supervisors reported to the Professional Development Action Team that employees shared professional development activities with others, no formal process is presented by LCCC to systematically determine training and development needs of employees or to evaluate such efforts. Also, LCCC may consider moving

beyond required in-service and local conferences as its paradigm for professional development to yield organizational improvement that relies on benchmarking and best practices concepts.

4P10	OO	LCCC does not present an institution-wide evaluation system. Aligning the personnel evaluation system with College Mission and Values, with a focus upon improvement of the employee within the current position, may assist the institution in improving employee satisfaction and organizational productivity. The institution acknowledges that the Performance Management System Action Project has made recommendations for improvement in this area. As LCCC moves this area toward a continuous improvement model, aligned with its Mission and Values, improvement is more likely as practice reflects the articulated Employee Code of Conduct.
4P11a	S	The institution uses a variety of mechanisms to recognize and award employees—predominantly faculty—for performance.
4P11b	O	The College has several employee recognition mechanisms in place but also recognizes the key issues related to employee motivation and the opportunity, through its recently-implemented surveys, to identify those factors and align compensation, reward, and recognition opportunities with institutional objectives.
4P12	O	The recently-implemented Vital Focus Climate Survey presents LCCC with the opportunity to identify issues and address them for improvement. As this Survey becomes formalized, it will allow LCCC to use this information to guide improvement of its vital issues identified through the Survey and to employ benchmarking and best practices to advance the institution's realization of objectives.
4P13	S	The institution has multiple methods through which it monitors and acts upon employee safety and wellness. Its Safety and Security Department is staffed to oversee the safety and security of students and employees; a Campus Assessment Response and Evaluation Team has been established, and an Emergency/Crisis Response Plan is in place. As

reported by the Systems Portfolio, LCCC complies with appropriate government requirements (e.g. Cleary Act).

4R1	S	The College recently implemented its Climate Survey as a result of the AQIP learning process and is commended for its progress so far. LCCC is encouraged to implement a collaborative process by which results are analyzed and used to generate positive change at the College as a part of a continuous improvement cycle.
4R1-4R4	O	LCCC's current efforts to develop and deploy, as part of an ongoing process, appropriate measures for valuing people will present the institution with data to inform its practices. Surveys alone may not yield all solutions for LCCC's challenges and qualitative data may also be informative. Use of external resources, such as the work of Linda Johnsrud on campus morale and satisfaction, may also improve LCCC's efforts in this area.
4R3	O	LCCC recognizes it has no direct measures of the productivity and effectiveness of its employees in achieving its goals. Implementation of a mechanism, such as a SMART methodology (sustainable, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound), and moving beyond anecdotal evidence, can be a positive step in gathering this evidence. Utilizing such a methodology can provide LCCC employees with a better appreciation for how their efforts contribute to the overall effectiveness of LCCC.
4R4	O	The College acknowledges that it has no formal methods for comparing the results of its processes for Valuing People. LCCC is encouraged to build on the informal sharing with the other Wyoming community colleges to develop a more formal method.
4I1	S	LCCC is commended for its initial efforts with regard to Valuing People. It is learning to address key strategic issues, such as Valuing People, through Action Projects. As it moves forward with its Performance Management Action Project, it can continue to create and sustain a framework for Valuing People that is informed by data, best practices, and benchmarking.

4I2	S	The establishment of the Quality Council is evidence of LCCC's commitment to transform the organization to implement and sustain a culture of continuous improvement. As the institution designs and implements Action Projects related to Valuing People, LCCC is likely to experience improvements in this area.

AQIP CATEGORY 5: LEADING AND COMMUNICATING

Leading And Communicating addresses how your institution's leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide your institution in setting directions, making decisions, seeking future opportunities, and building and sustaining a learning environment. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to leading activities, communicating activities, alignment of leadership system practices, institutional values and expectations, direction setting, future opportunity seeking, decision making, use of data, leadership development and sharing, succession planning, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Laramie County Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 5, Leading and Communicating:

Item   Critical Characteristic

OV1e The College launched a 2010-2015 Strategic Plan that identifies five strategic directions: 1) maximize learning opportunities, 2) collaborate with the community, 3) ensure institutional effectiveness, 4) manage resources, and 5) increase collaboration and communication. The College is using this Plan to develop measurable outcomes and stimulate a culture of evidence-based continuous improvement.

OV5a Committed to its four values, LCCC has implemented several steps to align its decision making with its values and responsibilities: a 2009 Climate Survey, an Action Project on Leading and Communicating, a College Council Action Project, and Defining Organizational Structures and Processes Action Project.

OV5b The Board and the President ensure that LCCC meets the requirements of the Wyoming Community College Commission and other regulatory bodies. The College's Strategic Plan is aligned with that of the Wyoming Community College Commission.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Laramie County Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 5, Leading and Communicating.

Item	S/O	Comment
5P1	O	While the College recognizes that it needs to update its Mission, Vision, and Values Statements, and while the Board has determined that these Statements should be reviewed annually at its annual planning session, there is no indication of progress being made in this regard or how internal and external stakeholders will participate in the process.
5P2a	S	Strategic planning is an integral part of continuous improvement; aligning planning with current mission, vision and values is an important first step. Though the process by which it did so was not articulated, it is evident that, as part of its 2010-2015 Strategic Plan, LCCC developed processes for aligning budget and unit plans with the College's strategic directions and goals.
5P2b	O	By using stakeholder feedback to develop and strengthen systematic alignment processes to guide the entire institution in identifying and pursuing future opportunities, the College can apply continuous improvement principles, thereby refining and strengthening its efforts.
5P3a	S	LCCC uses focus groups, academic review processes, advisory committees, and business and community needs surveys to determine the needs and expectations of students and stakeholder groups.
5P3b	O	LCCC has many unit-level activities in place that are designed to serve various constituents, but it is unclear whether the focus groups that were held to gather input regarding stakeholder needs included all appropriate constituents. Ensuring stakeholder input helps to provide support for implementation and draws on the collective wisdom of the institution.
5P4	O	Organizing disparate activities and resources into systematic processes that are aligned with the College's priorities will empower LCCC to be organizationally informed of future opportunities and to guide the

decision-making ability of its leaders. As the institution implements a purposeful process, improvement is likely to occur.

5P5a	S	The institution uses a variety of employee groups – committees, task forces, teams – to make decisions at appropriate levels for specific issues. Some groups are recommending bodies, while others are decision-making bodies.
5P5b	O	The College's annual Climate Survey has revealed gaps and dissatisfaction with some decision-making processes. The College is commended for taking proactive steps regarding this discovery by creating and implementing a College Council and an AQIP Action Project focused on Defining Organizational Structures and Processes. Clarifying processes and group roles and responsibilities may help to address concerns about decision-making. LCCC is encouraged to stay focused and intentional in its desire to improve in this particular area.
5P6	O	LCCC identifies processes in this area and recognizes the opportunity to develop and implement assessment plans and to clarify how data, information, and performance results are used in decision making. Clarifying the role of data in decision-making processes may help LCCC accomplish its strategic goal of improving institutional effectiveness.
5P7	O	While LCCC has several mechanisms in place for *sharing* information, the College recognizes the opportunity to utilize bi-modal, *interactive* communication methods that may facilitate collaborative decision making and consensus building. As part of its continuous improvement journey, LCCC is attempting to address these concerns through AQIP Action Projects and recently implemented Campus Conversations.
5P8	OO	LCCC acknowledges the limitations of its information presentation model of communication; however, it presents no measures or processes for improvement. Through its Action Project, the College is encouraged to seek methods of communication through which its leadership can communicate a shared mission, vision, and values and reinforce the characteristics of high performance organizations.

5P9	S	The College has clearly made a commitment to leadership development through both internal and external opportunities. LCCC's Leadership Academy is a positive opportunity to develop future leaders within the organization. The content described is management focused; the College is encouraged to remember that 'management' is a different concept from 'leadership'. This form of succession planning is important, and is also relevant to Category 4.
5P10	S	The Policy Governance Manual addresses Presidential succession for LCCC for emergency situations. LCCC is encouraged to continue succession planning through its Leadership Academy and other initiatives to sustain institutional momentum.
5R1	O	While LCCC has launched an instrument for collecting information about leadership and communication, it is unclear what measures leaders use to analyze the effectiveness of these efforts. Clarifying measures and expected outcomes will help communicate a shared vision for performance in critical areas such as leadership, decision-making, and communication.
5R2	OO	Results of the 2009 Climate Survey indicate significant opportunities to improve communication on campus. Improving communication-related processes, roles, and responsibilities may help address issues of trust, decision-making, and job satisfaction indicated by the Survey. Strong leadership, communication, and trust are important characteristics of high-performing organizations, and are essential in order for the College to yield measurable results in this category.
5R3	O	LCCC is developing a process by which it can compare its performance results with those of other institutions. LCCC is not currently using data in this area. Use of multiple assessment instruments will provide LCCC with a thorough understanding of its performance in comparison to other colleges nationwide. CCSSE data and comparative data available through the National Benchmarking Project may be useful sources for LCCC as it strives for improvement.

5I1/2	S	Leading and Communicating efforts and opportunities were evident in LCCC's 1999 Self Study. Subsequent efforts to address those needs have resulted in the College's decision to become an AQIP institution, an annual Climate Survey, AQIP Action Projects, the Leadership Academy, and the College's 2010-2015 Strategic Plan. These activities are evidence of LCCC's effort to transform into a culture of continuous improvement.

AQIP CATEGORY 6: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS

Supporting Institutional Operations addresses the variety of your institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student support, administrative support, identification of needs, contribution to student learning and accomplishing other distinctive objectives, day-to-day operations, use of data, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Laramie County Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 6, Supporting Institutional Operations:

Item   Critical Characteristic

OV1e The College launched a 2010-2015 Strategic Plan that identifies five strategic directions: 1) maximize learning opportunities, 2) collaborate with the community, 3) ensure institutional effectiveness, 4) manage resources, and 5) increase collaboration and communication. The College is using this Plan to develop measurable outcomes and stimulate a culture of evidence-based continuous improvement.

OV6a LCCC's funding comes from state appropriations, local appropriations, and tuition and fees. LCCC's operations are aligned to support the College mission, vision, values, and strategic plan. Units of the College have operational plans with budgets that are aligned with the College's strategic plan.

OV6b Aligned with the five key strategic directions iterated in the new strategic plan, service centers are responsible for key resources and equipment to serve students, internal groups and the community at large.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Laramie County Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 6, Supporting Institutional Operations.

Item	*S/O*	*Comments*
6P1-6P2	O	While LCCC has in place several unit-level mechanisms for assessing internal stakeholder support service needs (complaint processes, periodic inspections, and conversations within the strategic planning process), the institution recognizes an opportunity to develop a more systemic and systematic approach to assessing service needs. Having such an approach would help to ensure that broad stakeholder needs are assessed, prioritized, and translated into support service requirements.
6P3a	S	LCCC has been proactive about key processes that contribute to the safety and security of employees and students. These include implementation of an emergency response plan, an emergency alert system, installation of security cameras, and implementation of drills and training for appropriate personnel. The College is encouraged to implement an annual assessment of these plans and mechanisms to ensure that the institution is poised to respond efficiently and effectively should circumstances warrant.
6P3b	O	It is unclear how the support processes related to these initiatives have been designed, maintained, and communicated within the institution. Many pieces seem to be in place, and the receipt of the DOE's Emergency Management for Higher Education Program grant will provide seed money, training, and structure, so the College has a viable opportunity to develop a more systematic approach in this area.
6P4a	S	In addition to the responsibilities service supervisors have for daily management of their operations to provide student, administrative, and organizational support, LCCC conducts a series of cross-functional forums at multiple levels to fully connect, address, evaluate, and improve institutional support operations. An in-process review based on input received may ensure LCCC is meeting the intended needs.

6P5a	S	Documentation of support processes to encourage knowledge sharing, innovation, and empowerment occur through a number of mechanisms that include electronic and paper publication of senior management meeting agendas and minutes, and minutes from the Quality Council and other institutional committees. Campus Conversations also provide a forum for sharing information. Two Action Projects dealing with understanding College functions were created to address communication needs. Functional areas of the institution also publicize information, as appropriate.
6P5b	O	LCCC recognizes an opportunity to make decisions more transparent to the campus. As the institution creates communications systems, it has the opportunity to break down silos within functional areas and establish intentional, integrated processes for knowledge sharing, innovation, and empowerment of constituents who use these systems which is vital to sustain a culture of improvement.
6R1a	S	LCCC collects and analyzes data gathered using a variety of quantitative measures, including number of students accessing services; fund distribution patterns; climate surveys; Graduate Survey, and enrollment services, library, and facilities usage rates to track organizational support services processes.
6R1b	O	LCCC is beginning to develop and utilize measures of its student, administrative, and organizational support service processes, so it is important that appropriate measures are selected – size of the library collection is not a measure of student support. However, if the size of library collection is a result of processes supporting student learning, LCCC needs to describe that process. The presented results are primarily summative and appear to be reactionary. Moving the College's use of results beyond summative and into evaluative data-informed processes is likely to advance the institution.
6R2	S	Usage rates, service calls, number of students accessing services, and funds distribution are important measures of the degree to which support services are used. LCCC provides performance results for FAFSA that

indicate an increase in applications received; acquisition of electronic library databases and e-books has increased; and students served in the Disability Resource Center have increased. LCCC also provides data from graduates about student support services provided by the institution, as well as CCSSE results about importance of and satisfaction with the services.

6R3a	S	As reported, audit findings have noted no issues to be addressed.
6R3b	OO	LCCC indicates that an annual audit takes place, but results for other administrative processes are not provided. Other administrative functions such as Human Resources, Facilities, Operations, and Physical Plant are areas that impact the mission of the College, and should therefore be assessed regularly with regard to performance results. In order for LCCC to become a high-performing organization, implementation of systematic processes for identifying administrative measures and gathering and analyzing results will be necessary.
6R4	O	The narrative provided lacks sufficient evidence that LCCC is using information and results to drive improvements in its administrative and student support areas.
6R5	OO	The only comparative data being used is CCSSE data. While this is one strong source, the WCCC likely also collects this type of data and would be an important, local source for comparative data. That LCCC's scores are low in comparison to other institutions with regard to job placement and skill labs is a possible impetus for a future AQIP Action project.
6I1-6I2a	S	LCCC has made a number of improvements in its support processes, and the emerging culture of continuous improvement is providing the impetus for appropriate linkages of processes, results, and improvements in Supporting Institutional Operations. Through aligning its budgeting process with its strategic plan, the College is beginning to systematize its processes.
6I1-6I2b	O	It is important to note that comprehensiveness is an important focus for LCCC when it comes to assessing effectiveness in this category.

AQIP CATEGORY 7: MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

Measuring Effectiveness examines how your institution collects, analyzes, and uses information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to collection, storage, management, and use of information and data – at the institutional and departmental/unit levels; institutional measures of effectiveness; information and data alignment with institutional needs and directions; comparative information and data; analysis of information and data; effectiveness of information system and processes; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Laramie County Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 7, Measuring Effectiveness:

Item   Critical Characteristic

OV1e   The College launched a 2010-2015 Strategic Plan that identifies five strategic directions: 1) maximize learning opportunities, 2) collaborate with the community, 3) ensure institutional effectiveness, 4) manage resources, and 5) increase collaboration and communication. The College is using this Plan to develop measurable outcomes and stimulate a culture of evidence-based continuous improvement.

OV7   Utilizing its Office of Institutional Research and Planning, the College employs data-driven decision making strategies to ensure continuous quality improvement and the attainment of institutional objectives. LCCC uses Datatel's Colleague to support administrative and student functions. The College collects and selects data that are aligned with its goals and operations. Some departments maintain local "shadow" databases to collect and analyze specific data pertinent to the functioning of that department. Managing these shadow data bases presents a challenge for the College.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Laramie County Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 7, Measuring Effectiveness.

Item   S/O   Comment

7P1a,7P2a   S   LCCC identifies a range of internal and external requirements and strategic goals that guide the selection, management, and distribution of data relevant to planning processes, instructional and non-instructional

programs, and institutional services. The planned adoption of a proactive rather than retrospective posture in measuring effectiveness may fortify performance improvement.

7P1b,7P2b	O	Having relied on traditional methods of selecting, managing, and distributing data and performance information to support its instructional and non-instructional programs and services and also its planning and improvement efforts, LCCC has recognized the need for coordination of these processes through its IR Office and Quality Council. This approach may be enhanced by purposeful planning around how recipients will use the data in decision making and how data distribution can enhance collaboration and communication across units.
7P3	O	LCCC acknowledges that it can be more proactive and systematic in determining the needs of departments and units in collecting, storing, and providing access to data. To date, the institution has responded to external requirements for reporting and managing access. Implementation of processes to systematically determine institutional needs will help the institution be more responsive and encourage a culture of evidence and continuous improvement.
7P4	O	Although LCCC generates several performance reports for internal and external audiences, it is unclear how these data are analyzed, who participates in the analyses, and for what purposes. A more integrated, systematic approach to analyzing data may help the institution assess whether it is meeting performance expectations and build the trust critical to college-wide improvement efforts.
7P5	O	LCCC recognizes an opportunity to develop criteria and methods for selecting sources of comparative data; the College also has an opportunity to clarify how it intends to use the comparative data already collected. Developing these processes under the leadership of the Institutional Research Office may help to ensure that the institution and programs benchmark their performance against appropriate organizations.

7P6	S	LCCC is developing processes to align department and unit measures, data analysis, and operational plans with the College's strategic objectives. Data gathered from this process will inform budget development.
7P7a	S	LCCC has some processes in place to ensure data is secure and data systems are reliable and accessible by appropriate personnel.
7P7b	O	LCCC is developing processes to ensure data is accurate. Having consistent standards and benchmarks to ensure data integrity and accuracy across the institution may help to ensure data entry errors are identified and corrected in a timely way.
7R1-7R3	OO	While LCCC has been collecting data related to various functions like enrollment and expenses, it has no identified measures of its information and knowledge management systems. The institution is working to develop a systematic approach to evaluating data collection, use, storage, and distribution, and to compare its performance in these areas against other organizations. Because the College aspires to create a culture of continuous improvement, it may want to ensure it evaluates its information and management systems, to ensure employees have timely, relevant, and accurate data that meets their needs.
7I1a-7I2a	S	LCCC is striving to make improvements in Measuring Effectiveness. Improvements include identifying cores measures of institutional effectiveness that include student learning outcomes data and refining data collected and analyzed as part of the program review process.
7I1b-7I2b	O	LCCC has launched some initiatives to address opportunities in the area of Measuring Effectiveness, but it may want to examine how it can make its processes and performance results more systematic and comprehensive, communicate its performance to internal and external constituencies, and set realistic targets for improved performance results. Maintaining focus on these efforts will help to ensure that employee concerns about communication and collaborative decision making are addressed.

AQIP CATEGORY 8: PLANNING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Planning Continuous Improvement examines your institution's planning processes and how your strategies and action plans are helping you achieve your mission and vision. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to institutional vision; planning; strategies and action plans; coordination and alignment of strategies and action plans; measures and performance projections; resource needs; faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities; measures; analysis of performance projections and results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Laramie County Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 8, Planning Continuous Improvement:

Item   Critical Characteristic

OV1e   The College launched a 2010-2015 Strategic Plan that identifies five strategic directions: 1) maximize learning opportunities, 2) collaborate with the community, 3) ensure institutional effectiveness, 4) manage resources, and 5) increase collaboration and communication. The College is using this Plan to develop measurable outcomes and stimulate a culture of evidence-based continuous improvement.

OV8a   LCCC's five strategic directions are aligned with those of the State of Wyoming. The major constraint on the College is its funding stream: tuition is set by the Wyoming Community College Commission, there are statutory constraints on local appropriations, and the Board of Trustees has the authority to levy property taxes only in Laramie County, even though the College operates a branch campus in Albany County.

OV8b   Key challenges for the College include funding limitations, enrollment growth, and limited resources, both human and facilities. A large percentage of new employees at the College and lack of transparency in decision making and planning processes are also challenges.

OV8c   LCCC's opportunities include the demand for additional services and programs, a growing partnership with the University of Wyoming, its location at the crossroads of two major interstate highways within an hour's proximity of four major universities, economic development and the demand for workforce retraining in the region, and the high percentage of new employees (53 % of employees have been at the College less than five years) who bring new energy to the institution.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Laramie County Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 8, Planning Continuous Improvement.

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
8P1a	S	LCCC appears to be making progress toward developing a strategic planning model that incorporates broad stakeholder participation, short- and long-term planning horizons, and information on its current strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. The model also seeks to align institutional goals with the Global Ends of the Wyoming Community College Commission Statewide Strategic Plan.
8P1b	O	It is unclear how several components within LCCC's strategic planning model function. For example, it is unclear whether the process described was a one-time approach used to launch the current Strategic Plan or whether it represents the institution's on-going process. It is also unclear how the College's Vision and Values guide the planning process, how internal and external stakeholders help establish the Board's Global Ends Statements, and how the College uses internal and external scans to inform the culture of continuous improvement. Clarifying the function of each step may ensure the process is intentional and will deliver the hoped-for results.
8P2	S	Short-term and long-term strategies are selected as part of the creation and annual updating of the LCCC Strategic Plan. The initial Plan established 5-year strategic directions which have goals and short-term objectives. The annual planning process is generally aligned with the annual budgeting process.
8P3a	S	The design for LCCC's Strategic Plan includes the development of key action plans originating in work units with appropriate administrative review and approval.
8P3b	O	The College has an opportunity to further clarify some aspects of its process for developing action plans that support organizational strategies. For example, it is unclear how it develops action plans that transcend specific departments (Defining Organizational Structures and Processes).

8P4	O	LCCC is in the early stages of aligning it planning processes with strategies and action plans across the College. It is unclear what "integrative mechanisms" are being developed to accomplish this alignment. Implementing processes that are systematic and ensure stakeholder involvement may cultivate an evidence-based culture and facilitate LCCC's realization of several principles of high performing organizations: focus, agility, information, and collaboration.
8P5	OO	LCCC has an opportunity to define the process through which it is defining objectives, selecting measures, and developing performance targets. Defining these aspects of the planning process can help to ensure shared expectations for performance and provide context for how leaders deploy the College's limited resources.
8P6a	S	The new planning process links strategy selection and action plans by seeking to align prioritized departmental objectives and accompanying proposed budgeted initiatives with the Strategic Plan.
8P6b	O	While LCCC uses the budgeting process to link specific projects to the Strategic Plan, it is unclear how the institution develops strategy: how the institution will seek to accomplish the plan's objectives. Without a strategy, the institution may lack a mechanism for evaluating whether it is supporting the right mix of action projects.
8P7a	S	LCCC uses the SWOT process and financial reports reviewed by the Board of Trustees to address risk in the planning process.
8P7b	O	The College has an opportunity to further develop its risk assessment by establishing more continuous internal and external scanning processes. The College may also want to consider a broader definition of risk than financial risk, especially the risk of not attending to the threats and missed opportunities identified in its scanning process. Having this broader understanding of risk may help the institution anticipate the consequences of action and inaction
8P8	O	The institution recognizes that there is no mechanism for aligning employee professional development with the changing requirements of action plans and objectives as articulated in the Strategic Plan. Alignment

of professional development with institutional priorities and goals will help the institution better meet its objectives and help to deploy resources in a more systematic manner.

8R1-8R3	OO	Providing relevant data for 8R2 and 8R3 depends on having established clear measures of the effectiveness of the institution's planning processes. It is not evident that LCCC has developed outcome and process measures for its planning processes. Developing these measures is important in determining whether survey instruments, like the Noel-Levitz College Employee Satisfaction Survey, will meet the College's needs. It is also important in determining whether the Board monitoring reports and the Strategic Plan progress reports described in Table 8R3 are useful performance indicators of the College's planning processes.
8R4	O	Prior to selecting a survey to provide comparative data, LCCC may want to clarify its measures for planning performance. Having relevant measures may ensure the benchmarking activity provides relevant information to guide improvements.
8R5	O	Evidence is not provided that LCCC's system for Planning Continuous Improvement is effective. The College is in the initial stages of determining how it will measure and evaluate its planning processes.
8I1a-8I2a	S	LCCC's new Strategic Plan, its Quality Council, and the advent of zero-based budgeting are indications of recent improvements made in Planning Continuous Improvement that could help the College develop a culture of continuous improvement.
8I1b-8I2b	O	While some new processes are in place in Planning Continuous Improvement, LCCC is in the early stages of developing a linked, comprehensive system.

AQIP CATEGORY 9: BUILDING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Building Collaborative Relationships examines your institution's relationships – current and potential – to analyze how they contribute to the institution's accomplishing its mission. It

examines your institution's processes and systems related to identification of key internal and external collaborative relationships; alignment of key collaborative relationships; relationship creation, prioritization, building; needs identification; internal relationships; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Laramie County Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* **section covering Category 9, Building Collaborative Relationships:**

Item   Critical Characteristic

OV1e The College launched a 2010-2015 Strategic Plan that identifies five strategic directions: 1) maximize learning opportunities, 2) collaborate with the community, 3) ensure institutional effectiveness, 4) manage resources, and 5) increase collaboration and communication. The College is using this Plan to develop measurable outcomes and stimulate a culture of evidence-based continuous improvement.

OV2 LCCC's non-instructional goals can be categorized as cultural programs and community development (cultural workshops and speaker series, art exhibits, theater productions, concerts, library programs, economic and workforce development initiatives, career services, conferencing services, and customized training courses); lifelong learning (PK-20 initiatives such as career pathway development and articulation agreements, athletic programs, workforce programming, ACES programming, and child care and child development programming); and civic engagement (athletic team events, service learning, and active PR efforts).

OV9 LCCC maintains collaborative relationships with numerous groups including local school districts, the University of Wyoming and other higher education institutions, State agencies, local and regional business and industries, community development partners, program advisory councils, service learning partners, and internal groups such as the Quality Council and institutional teams.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Laramie County Community College's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 9, Building Collaborative Relationships.

Item   S/O   Comment

9P1-9P3	O	While LCCC demonstrates partnerships with organizations that provide and receive students and provide student support services, it is unclear what processes LCCC uses to build, prioritize, and maintain these relationships. 9P1-9P3 asks *how* the institution goes about creating, building, and prioritizing relationships. It is clear that LCCC does create and maintain relationships and articulation arrangements, but the spirit of the question remains unanswered. The issue of how the institution prioritizes and sustains relationships also remains essentially unaddressed.
9P4a	S	As demonstrated in the Systems Portfolio, LCCC follows state and locally prescribed guidelines for creating, prioritizing, and building relationships with organizations that provide supplies or services to the College. The College employs appropriate ad hoc committees to provide recommendations for vendors. Also, the College has established a purchasing policy that is detailed in a contractor handbook that is given to all organizations that supply materials and services to the College.
9P5	O	The description provided leaves it unclear how the College proceeds to create, prioritize, and build relationships with the external organizations with which it interacts. Clarifying these processes may help the institution meet its needs with external partners.
9P6	O	LCCC does not present a systematic process to monitor the effectiveness of its partnership relationships. LCCC acknowledges this gap in the Portfolio and is aware that implementing some ongoing process to evaluate and plan these relationships is analogous to its commitment to organizational improvement.
9P7	O	LCCC recognizes that current disparate processes to create and build relationships between and among departments and units within the institution require systemic structure to operate effectively. As the institution creates communication systems, it has the opportunity to establish intentional, integrated processes that will forge deeper, more effective and aligned relationships between departments and units. Two new Action Projects (College Wide Council and Defining Organizational

Structures and Processes) are anticipated to have utility for LCCC to advance relationship building.

9R1   O   LCCC does not have a systematic process to collect and analyze measures of its collaborative relationships. Although LCCC has provided several examples of data which can be incorporated into a systematic process to collect and analyze measures related to its internal and external relationships, the data is not aligned with the measures. As an example: performance results for concurrent/dual enrollment programs and workforce development indicate program growth. This data could be useful to inform improvement processes if aligned with a systemic effort to use defined measures and ensuing data (results) to inform improvement.

9R2/9R3   OO   LCCC has provided several examples of data which can be incorporated into a systemic process to collect and analyze measures related to its internal and external relationships, but to date that process has not been realized. Examples include percentage of high school graduates enrolling at LCCC in the following academic term, increases in clinical sites, increased participation in Workforce Development programs, and increased participation in concurrent enrollment opportunities facilitated through the College. College personnel are encouraged to have serious discussions about how to strengthen institutional responses to items requested in an AQIP portfolio.

9I1/9I2   O   No improvements have been reported by LCCC for this category. The use of comparative data (such as that used by the Wyoming Community College Commission) and its own results reported for Category Nine reflecting growth and increased participation, may be used by the institution to better document and understand Collaborative Relationships—and how the organization can cultivate, sustain, and improve them.