

## 2.5 - Building Collaborations and Partnerships

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Building Collaborations and Partnerships focuses on aligning, building and determining the effectiveness of collaborations and partnerships to further the mission of the institution.

### 2P5: PROCESSES

Describe the processes for managing collaborations and partnerships to further the mission of the institution. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Selecting partners for collaboration (e.g., other educational institutions, civic organizations, businesses)
- Building and maintaining relationships with partners
- Selecting the tools, methods and instruments to assess partnership effectiveness
- Evaluating the degree to which collaborations and partnerships are effective

### 2R5: RESULTS

What are the results for determining the effectiveness of aligning and building collaborations and partnerships? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 2P5. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)
- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks
- Interpretation of results and insights gained

### 2I5: IMPROVEMENT

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

## Responses

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### 2P5a. Selecting partners for collaboration (e.g., other educational institutions, civic organizations, businesses)

LCCC's process to identify and select partners for collaboration is grounded within its model of continuous improvement. This model incorporates the rigorous assessment of institutional effectiveness in mission attainment as well as strategic and institutional planning. The College's mission and the four foundational elements of the comprehensive community college (academic preparation, transfer preparation, workforce development, and community development) drive the College to stay connected to and collaborative with partners in each of these domains (e.g.,

K12, four-year institutions, businesses, and community-based organizations). The College uses these pillars as bases for establishing partners.

The process for selecting partners for collaboration is also guided by [Goal 2](#) (pg. 14) of LCCC's strategic plan: "Strengthen relationships and connections with key community partners, such as K12, UW, other four-year institutions, and business and industry to improve student transitions between educational entities and into the workforce," underscoring the need for partnerships with those specific entities. Additionally, the College's participation in the local economic development organizations, such as the local Chamber of Commerce and Cheyenne Leads (the College President sits on the Board of Directors for both organizations) enables LCCC to proactively develop partnerships to meet emerging needs for new programs, to provide scholarships for students, and to create employment pathways for students.

### **2P5b. Building and maintaining relationships with partners**

The process for building and maintaining partnerships relies on stakeholder engagement and open communication. Engagement and communication means, which may be formal or informal, include regularly scheduled meetings, phone or e-mail conversations, participation in community organizations, and formal events. Additionally, the College encourages employees to connect with their state, regional, and national professional peers. Through these connections, opportunities for articulations, joint purchasing of strategic software, and policy changes have been realized. The LCCC Foundation is key in building and maintaining partnerships for certain financial and other resources that specifically impact students, building projects, and strategic initiatives.

### **2P5c. Selecting the tools, methods and instruments to assess partnership effectiveness**

The process for selecting tools and methods to assess partnership effectiveness is to align with desired partnership outcomes. Specific tools and measures vary according to the type and purpose of the partnership being assessed. Both formative and summative tools are used, including surveys, monitoring reports, achievement of partnership milestones, the College's KPIs, and other evaluative instruments. [Figure 2P5-1](#) provides examples of various partnerships formed and how the effectiveness of those partnerships is measured.

### **2P5d. Evaluating the degree to which collaborations and partnerships are effective**

Referenced above, the College's process to evaluate the effectiveness of partnerships includes both summative and formative assessment. Summative evaluation of partnership effectiveness is predominantly grounded in the College's KPIs. For example, the proportion of transfer students who successfully matriculate to the University of Wyoming (UW) measures the effectiveness of program articulation agreements with the University. Formative evaluation utilizes process-related metrics such as the achievement of partnership milestones. For program partnerships with UW, for example, formative evaluations include the number of signed program articulation agreements and the numbers of students progressing through these programs of study.

### **2R5a. Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)**

The annual KPI report card includes several measures of overall partnership effectiveness, shown in [Table 2R5](#). Most of these measures show positive results for 2017-18, as compared with previous years.

The [Wyoming Community College Commission's Annual Partnership Report](#) catalogs partnerships that Wyoming community colleges established and maintained for each fiscal year, providing additional evidence of process effectiveness for building and maintaining partnerships. In addition to total number of partnerships, the report provides information for ten major partnerships for each college during the academic year. [LCCC's ten partnerships](#) selected for inclusion range from educational programming featuring academic program articulations with the University of Wyoming to regional development with the Career Fair, which is co-hosted with the State of Wyoming Department of Workforce Services/Cheyenne Workforce Center.

The annual report on new student transfers to UW, provided to LCCC by UW's Office of Institutional Analysis, is an example of effectiveness results for a specific partnership (referenced above in 2P5d). The data provided include a [Headcount of Transfers to UW Colleges](#), as well as [Retention & Graduation of Degree-Seeking Transfers from the Community Colleges Entering with 30 or More Credit Hours](#) and [60 or More Credit Hours](#).

#### **2R5b. Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks**

[Table 2R5](#) includes internal targets (improvement goals), established systematically through annual KPI analysis, and external benchmarks. (External benchmarks have not been identified for all KPI measures.) As shown, internal targets were met for nine of the fifteen measures. Results for four of the five measures with identified external benchmarks met those goals.

Internal targets and external benchmarks have not been systematically established for other process measures.

#### **2R5c. Interpretation of results and insights gained**

Analysis of the available results indicates that most partnership processes are having the desired impact on student success and progress toward their educational goals. Many of the measures that have negative trends are impacted by enrollment, which has been declining across the College (as well as the Wyoming community college system as a whole). These measures need to be reviewed to determine whether or not they remain relevant; some may be replaced by more direct measures as the newly implemented function assessment process (mentioned throughout this portfolio) becomes embedded in LCCC's culture of continuous improvement.

#### **2I5. Based on 2R5, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?**

As mentioned throughout this portfolio, LCCC is participating in AACC's Guided Pathways 2.0. Through this participation, the College is strengthening partnerships with local K12 school districts so that students have a more seamless transition from local area high schools to LCCC

programs. Additionally, LCCC has built better connections with UW through formal program articulation agreements and a general education articulation agreement to improve success for students transferring to the University. Furthermore, LCCC has become accredited by the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Programs (NACEP) to enhance concurrent/dual enrollment partnerships with local school districts.

Planned improvements include:

- Strengthening academic program advisory processes and updating the accompanying program advisory committee handbook to ensure that these processes operate effectively. This will include identifying more direct measures of process effectiveness.
- Establishing internal targets and identifying appropriate external benchmarks for existing process effectiveness measures.