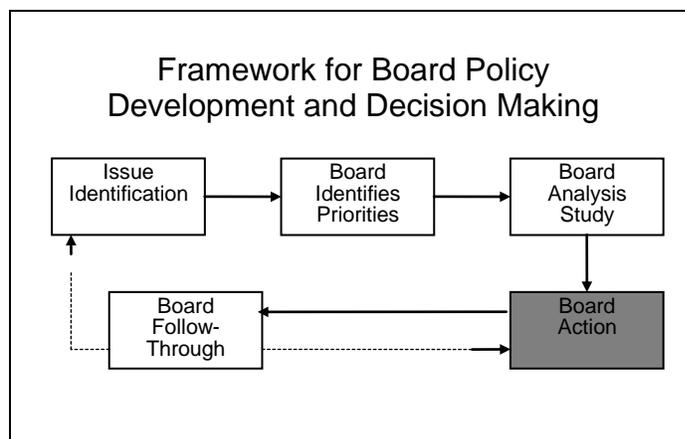


Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

July 29, 2010



Agenda Item: Kirkwood Community College's Accreditation Report (KCC)

Iowa Goal: Individuals will pursue postsecondary education in order to drive economic success.

Equity Impact Statement: KCC supports an open-door policy in enrollment of all students.

Presenters: Colleen Hunt, Chief
Bureau of Community Colleges and Career and Technical Education Services

Mick Starcevich, Ed.D., President
Kirkwood Community College

Attachments: 1

Recommendation: The Iowa Department of Education (Department) recommends continued accreditation for KCC through 2014. A state compliance accreditation visit will be held in 2014.

Background: This is a report of the evaluation of KCC for continued state accreditation as an associate degree-granting institution. The Department conducted the evaluation visit on April 6-8, 2010. The findings reflect the work of the accreditation team in the comprehensive review of KCC.

KCC is following the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) model for accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission, a commission of the North Central Association (NCA). With AQIP, an institution demonstrates it meets accreditation standards and expectations through sequences of events that align with those ongoing activities that characterize organizations striving to improve their performance.

Accreditation Evaluation

Kirkwood Community College

***On-Site Visit Conducted
April 6-8, 2010***

***Iowa Department of Education
Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation
Bureau of Community Colleges and Career and Technical Education Services***

STATE OF IOWA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Grimes State Office Building
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**Kirkwood Community College Accreditation Visit
April 6-8, 2010**

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**Kirkwood Community College's State Accreditation
Conducted on April 6-8, 2010**

Purpose of the Visit

This was an accreditation visit for Kirkwood Community College (KCC) by the Iowa Department of Education (DE).

Organizational Context

Consistent with the philosophy held by the college and in accordance with the charge given it by the state of Iowa as an institution of higher education and in concert with other agencies, KCC has the following vision, mission, principles and values:

Vision: To invent, develop, and deliver learning solutions for the 21st century.

Mission: Identify community needs, provide accessible, quality education and training, and promote opportunities for lifelong learning

Principles and Values: Integrity, mutual respect, open communication, innovation, partnership, lifelong learning, servant leadership, and excellence.

KCC is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). KCC embraces the philosophy, principles, and practices of the HLC, Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP). The college was approved to participate in this form of continuous improvement accreditation in 2006 integrating its own Kirkwood Quality Improvement Program (KQIP). Developed by the HLC, this approach informs and sustains the college's self-assessment by placing strong emphasis upon performance data and progress evidence. Thus, KCC's strategic and operational improvements are systematically aligned and integrated into the accreditation self-assessment process.

To ensure the college continues to advance its mission, vision, and priorities in a manner aligned with the HLC, the college engages in a reaffirmation procedure every seven years to demonstrate it is meeting or exceeding the HLC's accreditation standards and expectations. KCC relies upon five core AQIP processes to demonstrate it is meeting the ongoing requirements of HLC's criteria for accreditation. These processes are: Action Projects, Systems Portfolio, Systems Appraisal, Strategy Forum, and the Quality Checkup Visit.

KCC Facilities

KCC has an expansive campus built on 680 acres, the nation's only student-operated hotel/restaurant at a community college, a 400-acre working farm, programs in Geographic Information Systems, Biotechnology, Precision Sheet Metal Fabrication and Web Technologies, and the Midwest's premier equestrian facility.

- KCC's campus covers 680 acres, including a 400-acre working farm on its main campus. The 27 buildings hold more than 1.1 million square feet of interior learning space. Kirkwood also has a 15-acre athletic complex.
- The Hotel at Kirkwood Center: An upscale 71-room hotel, complete with an elegant gourmet restaurant, will be operated almost entirely by KCC's Hospitality and Culinary Arts students. Once complete in the summer of 2010, this Center of Excellence will be the nation's only such facility at a two-year school, and students will earn valuable real world experience right on campus.
- Linn Hall Simulation Lab: KCC's health care students receive hands-on experience in crisis situations in the \$3.6 million emergency medicine simulation lab, added to Linn Hall in 2008.
- Jones County Regional Education Center: Eight (8) local school districts, the city of Monticello, the Welter family, and KCC partnered to support rural students and sustain a viable, educated workforce through the Jones County Regional Education Center. The center occupies eight acres along Highway 151 in Monticello, strategically located near the midpoint between Cedar Rapids and Dubuque. At approximately 30,000 square feet, the center houses state-of-the-art classrooms, career and technical labs for academic programs, and administrative offices.
- Benton/Cedar Academic Wing: The \$14 million academic wing added 90,000 square-feet of classrooms and offices for English, KCELT (Kirkwood Excellence for Learning and Teaching), Institutional Effectiveness, Learning Services, and Social Science departments.
- Kirkwood Center for Continuing Education: The Kirkwood Center for Continuing Education blends technology with "green" architecture to create a premier learning environment for conferences, retreats, seminars, meetings, or other special events.
- Horticulture/Floriculture: The 32,000-square-foot Horticulture/Floriculture building features state-of-the-art energy efficiency, including geothermal heating and cooling, fully automated controls, plus a roof system that catches rainwater for use in the greenhouses and landscaping areas. A large student commons area, a small engine lab, and an indoor dirt floor used to teach patio building and other outdoor skills in all weather conditions are just a few of the amenities students will find at the complex.
- Michael J Gould Kirkwood Recreation Center: Opened in 2004, the 43,500-square-foot recreation center caters to healthy choices in exercise and relaxation. Three (3) full-size athletic courts, a 200-meter walking/jogging track, a weight room, a fitness area featuring dozens of exercise machines, an aerobics/multipurpose room, plus many fitness and wellness classes make it easy for students, faculty, and staff to stay fit and healthy.

- Iowa Equestrian Center: The Midwest’s premier equestrian facility serves a dual purpose: During the week, the stables, stalls, and arena serve as KCC’s Horse Science classrooms and working laboratory. On the weekends, the center hosts hundreds of prominent regional and national horse shows.
- Jones Hall: The center of industrial technology at KCC, Jones Hall, received an \$8.5 million makeover in 2008, featuring a new precision sheet metal fabrication area. The 30,000 square foot addition also made room for indoor shops for carpentry, HVAC (Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning) and plumbing programs.

Sites or Branch Campuses/Centers Reviewed

- Kirkwood Community College Campus—Cedar Rapids, Iowa City,
- Jones Center, Monticello

Interactions with Institutional Constituencies

1. Cabinet
2. President
3. Chief Academic Officer
4. AQIP (Academic Quality Improvement Program) Director
5. Dean of Students
6. Career and Technical Faculty
7. Deans and Directors
8. Arts and Sciences Faculty
9. Instructional Staff
10. Corporate College Staff
11. Enrollment Staff
12. Institutional Researcher
13. Equity Staff
14. Student Services Staff
15. Staff and Faculty Development Committee
16. Division Chairs
17. Board of Trustees
18. Human Resources Staff
19. High School Staff
20. Advisory Committees
21. Support Staff
22. Library Services Staff
23. Foundation and Grants Staff
24. Business Office, Radio, Marketing, Food Service, and Facilities Staff
25. Curriculum, Online Standards, and Assessment Committees
26. Job Training, Promise Jobs, WIA (Workforce Investment Act), and Youth Programs Staff
27. Quality Faculty Plan Committee

Principle Documents, Materials, and On-line Information Reviewed

1. Web Page
2. AQIP (Academic Quality Improvement Program) Documentation
3. Kirkwood Organizational Chart
4. Student Handbook
5. Employee and Faculty Handbooks
6. College Catalog
7. College Statement of Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals
8. Student Placement Data Report
9. Course Schedule (all terms at main campus and centers) 2010, Fall 2009, Summer 2009, Spring 2009, and Fall 2008
10. Communiqué, February 11, 2010—September 11, 2008
11. Continuing Education Catalogs, February 2009—August 2010
12. Strategic Action Framework
13. Enrollment by Program (Fall 2009, Spring 2010, and Summer 2009)
14. Enrollment by Off-Campus Location (Fall 2009)
15. Fall Enrollment Trend Report 1998-2009
16. Program Data Report
17. Data Needs Manual
18. Counseling Materials
19. Recruitment Brochures
20. Civil Rights Related to Grievance Procedure
21. Contract Agreement Forms for Student Job Placement
22. List of Advisory Committee Members
23. Disaggregated Employee Data by Race/National Origin, Sex and Disability
24. Handbooks for Clubs, Co-Curricular, and Extracurricular Organizations
25. Discipline and Harassment Policies
26. Yearbooks and Graduation Awards Program
27. Coaches Handbooks
28. Housing Options Handbooks
29. Data Needs Manual
30. Kirkwood View book
31. Career Services Coordinators Reports
32. Board Policies
33. Career and Career Option Programs
34. Program Review Process
35. Accreditation Agreements
36. AQIP Documentation
37. Campus Safety Reports
38. Board Minutes
39. Organizational Chart
40. Student Handbook
41. Faculty Handbooks

42. Kirkwood Community College Continuous Quality Improvement Accreditation 2010
43. Official Letter of Higher Learner Accreditation Status
44. Data on Student Enrollment in Campuses, Departments, Programs, and Courses on the Basis of Racial/Ethnic Background, Gender, and Disability
45. Quality Faculty Plan
46. Continuing Education Brochures
47. International Travel Information
48. Financial Assistance Pamphlets
49. Faculty Workload Report Fall 2009, Spring 2010
50. Distance Demographic Information
51. Academic Program Review 2008-2009
52. Minutes from Standing Committees
53. Sports Offerings Demographics
54. Document of Strategies to Recruit, Enroll, Retain, Successfully Serve Students in Nontraditional Careers, Students from Underrepresented Racial/Ethnic Groups, English Language Learners, Students With Disabilities, and Other Nontraditional Students
55. Long-Range Planning for Building Development and Equipment
56. EEO (Equal Opportunity Employment)/AA (Affirmative Action) Documentation
57. Written Human Resources Policy and Procedures
58. Teacher Load Information
59. Faculty Personnel Files
60. Quality Faculty Plan

Additional State Review Requirements

- ✓ The Quality Faculty Plan (QFP), as required by Iowa Code, was reviewed at KCC and was found to meet the stated requirements of the Iowa Code.
- ✓ Review of faculty personnel files, as required by Iowa Code, did not present any issues.
- ✓ Review of faculty load, as required by Iowa Code, did not present any issues.
- ✓ Iowa Code requirement of reviewing 20 percent of career and technical education programs per year is being followed.
- ✓ Special needs issues were reviewed and found to meet the stated requirements of the Iowa Code.
- ✓ The college's AS-28s and the college catalog were reviewed and did not present any issues.

Adequacy of Progress in Addressing Previous Accreditation Visit

Kirkwood's QFP will require revision in order to bring it into compliance with Iowa Administrative Rules. The Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation looks forward to working with Kirkwood to bring its QFP into compliance. **Met: KCC submitted a revised QFP in 2009 to the DE, which met the stated requirements of the QFPs.**

1. HELPING STUDENTS LEARN

Category 1 identifies the shared purpose of all higher education organizations. 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. This category asks you to measure and analyze the performance of these key processes, and to describe what actions you take to continuously improve teaching and learning.

Strengths:

- The college's Iowa City Campus is adding additional developmental courses and a learning community (fall 2010) to address the large influx of underprepared students registering for courses at that campus.
- The college demonstrates a commitment to innovation through such examples as developing a hands-on medical simulation center and through an on-campus hotel connected with its culinary arts program.
- KCC has an Academic Program Improvement and Review Process with a five-phase process found in the Career Program Assessment Committee Overview document. The assessment process includes a three-year life span for specific programs. The college has a systematic approach to assessment.
- Interviewees from the assessment committee indicated strengths that included Kirkwood's employees' willingness to adapt to and create an environment that encourages positive change.
- Learning communities provide underprepared students the support they need to be successful. Of special note are Project Start and Project Finish. These two programs show a commitment on the part of the college to serve under-prepared, first-generation students. Students are given additional funding to help with expenses during their education. Underprepared learners may also participate in a College Prep Block which includes basic math, reading, writing, and computers. Students meet daily which helps to build community and leads to their success.
- The COMPASS test is used to assess KCC students' reading and math abilities for placement. KCC counselors can assess students' academic or personal needs and refer students to the appropriate resource.
- KCC's Learning Center provides a welcoming, nurturing environment that contributes to the success of students by providing free group and individual tutoring. Student athletes gather to work on skills and build community, which aids in retention.

- The Board of Trustees is committed to serving community and student needs. Interviewees expressed pride regarding the quality of staff and the hands-on environment that encourages staff initiatives. They were also proud of the Kirkwood Foundation, community partnerships, and the international diversity at the college. The administration commented about the Center for Professional Development for staff through tuition assistance. Faculty was encouraged to receive feedback from peers as well as through classroom observations. Interviewees also discussed the Kirkwood Excellence for Learning and Teaching (KELT) and the pursuit of sustainability through reduction in energy costs by the use of geo-thermal energy and green initiatives.
- The library staff indicated that they felt they were a definite part of the college and had administrative support. The interviewees indicated they participated in the Action Committee that provides services to students through the use of data. The library staff has a three-year action plan which was implemented in 2007. They indicated that they continued to serve additional students daily. As part of the library staff contribution to credit and noncredit courses, the staff offers a two-credit class for students. Library staff also conducts at least two training sessions every year and have two separate focus groups specifically for webpage design for library workers. Interviewees indicated a pride in the college because of the proactive nature of the college. Quick response to change, flexibility, and adaptability were mentioned as strengths that aid in staff retention.
- KCC provides flexible classroom delivery through its distance learning. This allows the college to provide services to all of its seven counties. In addition, a new position has been implemented for on-line liberal arts programs. Through the one-stop shop concept, on-line students are able to contact a designated individual with questions on such areas as financial aid and advising. The distance learning staff interviewees indicated pride about the number of opportunities in distance learning available to students. Most of the distance learning incorporates “face-to-face experiences” for students. KCC distance learning faculty is encouraged to visit various class locations during the academic year. Both full-time and adjunct instructors teach utilizing the distance learning process. Staff receives training/orientation every semester. Adjunct instructors are paired with experienced distance learning instructors as mentors. Interviewees emphasized how the staff works individually with students and provides technology support to them. Interviewees also expressed that they were allowed to experiment and not be afraid to fail. One example cited was that they are evaluating the software, AXION, which is believed to increase the identification of students as they log into class assignments.
- KCC utilizes Video on Demand to support professional development sessions and to expand campus communications.
- Interviewees indicated that administrators, faculty, and staff utilize KTS (Kirkwood Telecommunication System) to conduct meetings and training. This eliminates staff having to drive to campus for meetings. Tuesday and Thursdays, from 11:00 to 11:50 a.m., have been designated for this purpose.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Interviewees indicated challenges to the college include continuing to provide support services to students due to increased enrollment, while also experiencing budget cuts. The college may want to discuss how it can continue to adapt to community and student needs on such things as delivery of library services to students and staff and the ability to serve underprepared students given these factors.
- Interviewees representing various committee members indicated a feeling of “operating in silos.” The college has established committees such as assessment and curriculum, which all deal with assessment issues. The college might consider a way to integrate these committees and to develop a systematic process to provide information into the committees so as to enhance collaboration.
- The library staff interviewed “students who use the library” to determine what services and databases might be added to assist learning. Concern exists regarding the lack of data around “students who do not use the library.” Including interviews from this group of students could provide additional insight regarding library services and materials.

2. ACCOMPLISHING OTHER DISTINCTIVE OBJECTIVES

Category 2 addresses the processes that contribute to achieving your institution's major goals other than educating your students. Distinctive objectives are those that distinguish your institution from other colleges and universities, even if the performance of these processes does not currently make your institution distinguished. This category also asks how you track and evaluate these processes to ensure they contribute directly to achieving your institution's mission.

Strengths:

- KCC has had successful sports teams that have not only excelled in athletic competitions but also have emphasized academics. KCC administration stated that they have made a conscious decision to limit their offerings to three male and three female sports including basketball, baseball/softball, golf, and volleyball.
- The Kirkwood Foundation has assets of \$18 million, which indicated strong support from the business and community. The foundation has been able to offer \$1.7 million in scholarships to students annually. Foundation staff reported that their main efforts were to obtain scholarships for students.
- KCC supports endowed faculty chair awards. Endowed faculty chairs provide an opportunity for selected faculty to undertake professional development projects in their disciplines or in instructional pedagogy, through writing, preparing, and presenting a special lecture, conducting research, or pursuing other opportunities. This program is a major effort by the Kirkwood Board of Trustees and the Kirkwood Foundation Board to demonstrate their commitment to quality instruction by recognizing and fostering instructional excellence and lifelong learning. Six (6) faculty members were recognized as Endowed Chair Recipients in 2009-2010.
- Administration, faculty, and staff reported that KCC supports innovation and risk taking among its personnel. Recent examples of such include the new hotel being built and the Jones Regional Education Center in Monticello, which were initially suggested by KCC faculty and administration.
- Administration reported that green initiatives were being implemented on campus. One example includes the fact that all chemicals used on the campus are green.
- Interviewees indicated that partnerships aid the programming and support of student learning. The college establishes and maintains partnerships with both public and private sectors. Examples include the K-12 districts, universities, and businesses located both on and off campus. AEGON, Ruffalo CODY, and Diamond V Mills are located on KCC's campus.

- Multiple interviewees indicated that KCC became a leader for the community when Cedar Rapids was affected by the flood. Community animals were housed at the equine center. In addition, over 120,000 square feet of the campus was utilized for various reasons to assist in the flood relief efforts. In addition, Linn County Emergency Management was located on the college campus.
- Administration indicated private fundraising efforts, which ended in spring 2008, had a goal of \$2 million, but in fact raised \$11.2 million. Multi-year pledges were included in this amount. Scholarships were a major component of this fundraising effort as well as support for noncredit initiatives.
- The college's food service program serves a variety of ethnic foods during diversity celebrations. The C-Store has made a conscious effort to reach out to groups by stocking a variety of ethnic foods and snacks. Staff employed in the bookstore, shipping and receiving, mail services, purchasing, and all auxiliary services provide mentorship through their daily interactions with students employed by the work-study program.
- KCC prides itself on its international education efforts. Development of the Kirkwood International Education Program has allowed delivery of programs to a variety of countries. In addition, Kirkwood participates in the Global Education Network and hosts the Community Colleges for International Development (CCAD).

Opportunities for Improvement

Interviewees indicated that the college has begun working on a career pathways project. Modularization of courses in programs initially such as Technology and Advanced Manufacturing are included. KCC currently is utilizing a grant issued by the DE for the purpose of development of such programs. KCC is encouraged to continue that process and investigate the possibility of gaining other grant opportunities to further this initiative.

3. UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS' AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS' NEEDS

Category 3 examines what your institution does to understand the specific needs and requirements of the individuals and groups it serves. It analyzes how you identify and subcategorize your student and other stakeholder groups (i.e., employers, students' families, communities, etc.) to understand what they need and expect from your institution. This category also looks at how you use the analysis of these results to continuously improve your operations.

Strengths:

- KCC offers a variety of services to students with disabilities and actively explores how the college can increase these services and funding. An example includes a grant application for funding to support a three-level program for autistic students, which would include programming for students who are ready for life skills training; programming for students ready for associate degree level work; and programming for students who are ready for transfer college level work. Each student is assigned to a case manager.
- KCC has made a commitment to its student body to keep the cost of education down. The college does not charge students beyond tuition and books. Students have access to the services of a free attorney to answer their questions.
- Recently, the college opened a lounge for over 400 veterans from the college area. KCC employs a full-time person to work with veterans and their needs. KCC was named one of the nation's top 20 veteran-friendly colleges by the Student Veterans of America (SVAO), a coalition of student veterans groups from college campuses across the United States.
- Students have the opportunity to work side-by-side professionals in the operation of a radio and television station and a student newspaper.
- KCC uses CCSSE (Community College Survey on Student Engagement) and other instruments to assess student needs and student activities. KCC staff reaches out to parents and students through the Kirkwood Events Group and the Kirkwood Roommate Finder on Facebook. The staff reaches out to parents through monthly electronic newsletters and a "Kirkwood Alert," which provides warnings in the form of an e-mail and text message.
- The college provides information to students through the handbook, accessible on-line and in paper format.
- Community partnerships provide opportunities for students. For example, students are offered employment, internships, and scholarships. Community partnerships also provide equipment and space to enhance student learning. One example is a partnership where six high schools send their students to one location to take college courses through KCC.

- During the flood of 2008, the college provided services to the community in a variety of ways, including housing over 1,000 animals in campus facilities. Through this experience, the college recognized there was a need for specialists in the area of animal rescue and developed a Human Officer Resource Program, which is the first in the nation.
- KCC's Career Center offers resources to over 3,000 businesses for recruitment of employees. The entire seven-county area uses the Career Center.
- Advisory committees give valuable input to programs that is used in program development.
- The Board of Trustees is committed to community needs and changing curriculum to meet students' needs. The interviewees exhibited pride on the quality of staff and the encouragement for staff initiatives. Interviewees stated that they were also proud of the Kirkwood Foundation and community partnerships as well as the international diversity that exist on campus.
- Every Friday, KCC has scheduled a structured college visit for high school students called TGIF (To Get Information Fast). This day is publicized in all surrounding high schools.
- A KCC representative visits the surrounding areas to conduct an orientation for high school parents and students and gives information on admission and academic opportunities.
- The athletic coaches ensure that their student athletes are aware of and utilize the student support services, tutoring, library resources, academic advising, and study labs. A student athlete's progress report is reviewed 3-4 times a semester depending on the coaches' requirement.

Opportunities for Improvement

- There are multiple services available to international students, but none specific to those underserved minority populations indigenous to the college area. Students could benefit from a staff member actively engaged in program development, as well as one who could further the discussion of embracing a student body; starting by including those minority students indigenous to the area.
- A limited number of staff or faculty who represent the diverse student body is available on campus. Both recruitment and retention would be enhanced by adequate representation across the campus.

4. VALUING PEOPLE

Category 4 explores your institution's commitment to the development of your faculty, staff, and administrators emphasizing that the coordinated efforts of all those you employ are required for institutional success. This category examines your institution's processes and systems related to work and job environment and focuses on measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Strengths

- KCC has added two staff development days during the fall semester specifically for faculty to explore "best practices" relating to instruction.
- KCC's Endowed Faculty Chairs program funds provide release time of six hours for approved faculty to explore interests related to their teaching area.
- Professional development dollars are available from a variety of sources. Faculty and staff can request dollars to attend conferences and seminars, and gain release time for writing and research. Tuition reimbursement is also available.
- Faculty and staff are encouraged to be creative and innovative in their initiatives to develop programs services to benefit the college and the community. KCC received a local award for being an ideal place to work, which sends a positive message to the community. The college values risk-taking, which serves as a motivator and morale booster for employees.
- The KCELT (Kirkwood Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching) Center is highly utilized for the development and training of staff, faculty, and community. All training is free and accessible to the employees. In addition, each staff and faculty member is given a \$500 training allowance to be used in the area of community education classes. Staff may take credit classes at no cost. Adjunct instructors may also earn free credit and coursework through non-credit offerings.
- KCC has developed an outstanding scholarship program. They have raised \$11.2 million over a two-year period. Clearly, the staff and faculty care a great deal about the student body. In fact, many cited the student body as their number one strength.
- When the floods of 2008 occurred, KCC responded in an efficient and beneficial way to both staff and community. Staff indicated that those impacted by the flood were given release time, financial compensation, counseling, and a place to stay, if needed. The college designed a website to coordinate donations. The college clearly showed that it valued the community and staff through outreach.

- A strong faculty and staff mentoring program is in place. In each case, the mentor/mentee meets monthly for lunch and for training workshops. This shows a strong commitment on the part of the college and on the part of the employees who volunteer to assist with the project for no additional compensation.
- Decentralizing work environments led to cost efficiency operations, which in turn led to retention of employees.
- There has been a significant increase in first-generation college students. This provides the KCC community a valuable opportunity to break the cycle of devaluing education.
- During annual evaluation, the staff and the supervisor develop an annual professional development plan together. The staff member can bring this into the supervisor at any time for revisions.

Opportunities for Improvement

- It would benefit the college to document processes to retain valuable information that will be otherwise lost through many upcoming retirements. It is evident that the college has done an outstanding job of retaining employees; however, many of those 20-30 plus year leaders will be leaving the college within a few years.
- Repeatedly, the team heard about communication issues, which is to be expected in a large organization; however, poor communication can lead to employee discontent and it impedes progress. A cross-functional group dedicated to collecting and disseminating information may be helpful.
- The large increase in enrollment this past year has brought a concentration of behaviors and mental health issues for which faculty and staff may not be prepared. Training for addressing students with behavior issues, including classroom management techniques, would be of value. This may be a priority area for research and study and for use of staff/faculty development dollars.

5. LEADING AND COMMUNICATING

Category 5 takes stock of your institution's leadership and communication structures, exploring the structures and processes that guide your institution in setting priorities, making decisions, and communicating institutional visions and goals to stakeholders and employees. This category also examines how measures, analysis, results, and efforts to continuously improve how these areas operate in your institution.

Strengths

- KCC provides a variety of retreats for college departments, as well as for the entire college staff to discuss a variety of topics important to the functioning of the departments and the college.
- The college has a commitment to quality teaching through the Endowed Chairs tuition assistance.
- Employees have an opportunity to get involved and provide input in the decision-making process as it relates to the college.
- Kirkwood Futures Initiative (KFI) provides all staff the opportunity to interact and offer suggestions for improvement. "Mick's Memo," a regular e-mail from the president, offers staff and faculty an opportunity to give the president feedback or to ask questions. The president also has lunch with students on a regular basis to gather feedback.
- Employees know, recognize, and identify with various programs because of the acronyms used. For example, KAPS, KQIP, KFI, KFA, KCELT, all begin with the "K brand." Similar to a college mascot, the "K brand" becomes recognizable to staff and faculty. KCELT—Kirkwood's Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching; KAPS—Kirkwood Activities Programs and Services; KQIP—Kirkwood Quality Improvement Process; KFA—Kirkwood Faculty Association; and KFI—Kirkwood Futures Initiative.
- Members of the Board of Trustees state that the college's administration provided them with timely and appropriate information, allowing the board to have sufficient time to make decisions.

Opportunities for Improvement

It would benefit the college to have a succession plan in place. As part of the process, information from current staff should be gathered concerning the duties associated with the positions.

6. SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS

Category 6 examines a variety of key institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive. They are: the design, the operation, and the performance of your institution's processes and systems related to student support, administrative support, identification of needs, contribution to student learning, and accomplishing other institutional objectives. Items in this category examine day-to-day operations, and how you use data, analyze results, and make improvements in these areas.

Strengths

- KCC's Foundation provides \$1.7 million in scholarships annually to support students with limited resources.
- KCC has developed a proactive retention program that includes an early earning system. Two (2) staff members reach out to at-risk students through phone calls, e-mails, and face-to-face sessions.
- College 101, a semester-long orientation class, has helped in retention and overall GPA. Data indicates those who have completed the class are more successful during their college career.
- Some students are advised by their program faculty and or department coordinators. This leads to better communication with the students starting before they ever go to class. Program expectations are clearly laid out ahead of time. The advisors in this area are very knowledgeable about the programs. Students are prepared for transfer as the coordinator or faculty works side-by-side with the student throughout the program. A further advantage to the students enrolled in these programs is that they cannot register unless they are advised. They also attend a program conference.
- KCC has strong mentoring programs in place. Students can request a mentor when they apply for admissions. Those staff and faculty wishing to mentor a student meet periodically with assigned students. This aids in retention and overall student success.
- The college's Cedar Rapids Campus provides a One-Stop Center enabling students to go to one individual to take care of enrollment, financial aid, and payment without having to be sent to additional sites.

- Interviewees stated that the IT department has done an outstanding job of providing assistive technology to students with disabilities. This includes large screen access and other reading-assisting technologies through the buildings. Instant messaging is available through the college and 75 percent of the projectors are ADA compliant. There are special computer stations for students in wheelchairs, special keyboards, software, and adjustable tables in the classrooms. Through technology, the college is also reaching out to international communities by providing software language conversation packages (i.e., when the college recruited a large number of students from Egypt, the IT department responded by installing Arabic language conversation software on computer systems).
- While the college does not have on-campus housing, the college has hired a full-time housing coordinator to assist with issues and activities experienced by students living in apartment housing adjacent to campus.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Advising staff attend ELA (English Language Acquisition) classes to register students. This is an advantage to the students in those courses. However, in general the ELA students may benefit by having a staff member appointed to help with their needs and provide advocacy, as these learners need more support. While International students who are at the college on student visas have a lot of support services available to them, non-visa, and ELA learners have more limited services.
- While the advising model for career and technical education students has many advantages, the model does create some silos. This can be confusing for students, especially for those who transition from one program area to another. More cross-training may be needed to provide advisors with the tools they need. Advising for students enrolled in liberal arts programs appears not to be meeting all student needs. Students stated that they skip advising together and register themselves—sometimes into classes for which they are ill-prepared. Further, it appears that while faculty are relied upon to advise in the liberal arts programs, the responsibility rests with a few who are willing. Consequently, the advising center sees the bulk of the students and is, according to many students, very understaffed. Adding to this issue is the increase in underprepared students registered for classes. While there is mandatory placement for both math and writing courses, students can register for difficult classes that require an advanced level of reading. According to many staff and faculty, the college has seen an increase in underprepared students, students with mental health, social, and academic needs, which compounds the issue and the need for increased and structural advising.
- Efforts have been made to centralize services through the one-stop concept. To address all student needs, the concept may need to be expanded to include additional counseling and advising.

7. MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

Category 7 examines the systems your institution uses to collect and analyze information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement. Items in this category ask you to examine your institution's systems for collecting, storing, managing, and using information and data at all institutional levels. This category asks how you track overall institutional performance in collecting the right data and distributing it to the right people at the right time. This category examines the effectiveness of your entire information system and assures it aligns with your institutional needs and directions.

Strengths:

- According to the interviewees, the success rate for athletic students in terms of transfer to a four-year institution is 90 percent, and the graduation rate is 75 percent.
- KCC has initiated Kirkwood Futures Initiative (KFI). This is a strategic action framework which is organized around past achievements and ideas generated by administration, faculty, and staff. The initial phase centered around the question, "How can we measurably strengthen our processes to improve student learning, our partnerships, and most of all internal collaboration."
- The college has strategic priorities that have measurable action statements—Key Performance indicators (KPI). Utilizing these KPIs, the college works under a "great to greater" concept. The strategic priorities are aligned with the mission and vision statement. The college uses survey data, communication among administration, faculty, staff, and work teams with SMART goals to continuously improve the institution.
- KCC has developed a comprehensive assessment of career and technical programs, transfer programs, and general education. Academic programs have developed competencies in collaboration with external partners and advisory committees. These competencies are assessed and documented. Programs also utilize industry-based assessment.
- Kirkwood currently uses COMPASS to assess incoming students for mandatory placement. In addition, KCC utilizes the National Community College Benchmarking Project for comparative data.
- Perception surveys are used for current and past students. This data is analyzed in order to recommend and implement change to improve student learning and success.
- KCC assesses student engagement through CCSSE (Community College Survey of Student Engagement).

- The Department of Institutional Effectiveness collects data through reports on their website. This single-point of contact provides effective communication for planning and decision-making. The college also has a system to track data requests and to monitor the quality of client services. The data collected by the Department of Institutional Effectiveness is selected to correlate with the college's action statements. This ensures effective data processes, measurement, and analysis.

Opportunities for Improvement

Because of the wide variety and quantity of data that KCC collects, it will be important for KCC to identify which data is critical to collect, analyze, and use to manage the institution and to drive performance improvement.

8. PLANNING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Category 8 examines your institution's planning processes, asking how your strategies and action plans are helping you achieve your mission and vision. Items in this category raise questions about your institution's vision, planning strategies, and action plans. They ask how you project performance targets and forecast resource needs. This category also investigates how you evaluate and analyze the effectiveness of your planning system, and undertake regular efforts to improve it.

Strengths

- KCC's attention to "going green" has lowered energy costs for four consecutive years even though the college has continued to build new facilities. A commitment to geothermal has contributed as well as a reduction in the number of individual printers and copiers yielding a \$500,000 savings annually. This cost savings has in turn translated into increased student opportunities. The college community recognizes that efficiencies are achieved not only by bottom-line saving of money. The college understands that savings can serve as means to expand educational opportunities that advance the college's student learning and community service priorities.
- The college's advanced planning initiatives allow them to capitalize on projects when opportunities for funding (i.e., grants, private funding) are available. Interviewees indicated that the college seeks grants and funding to support initiatives that meet the needs of the college and its constituents rather than seeking the grants and then making them fit.
- The team observed that KCC has established a process for a quick response to community needs. An example is during the flooding in 2008 of Cedar Rapids when the college provided space for the needs of the community that was flooded.
- All levels of staff are part of the planning process and have equal opportunity for input and a channel in which to convey their concerns and ideas. In 2010, all KCC employees will look at progress data and provide input to the college's continuous improvement planning framework. Employees will look at processes and make suggestions on how to improve processes, while also examining resources needed. Interviewees indicated that the Futures Initiative gives all employees a sense of inclusion. This provides an opportunity for employees to identify themselves in the organizational, which impacts the culture of the college. Previous planning events resulted in such programs as the Wind Turbine and Humane Resource Officer programs.

- KCC developed a five-year model to manage budgets. Two (2) years ago, the college incorporated cost containment projects. Examples of this included eliminating many of the individual printers on campus and substituting them with printer/copier/fax machines for multiple person use, as well as energy cost-cutting initiatives such as geothermal, which allowed savings that enabled the college to not have to cut staff members who work directly with students such as retention specialists, and implemented developmental math initiatives. In another effort in advanced planning, the college anticipates a drop in enrollment in two years. They are making plans in the event that this occurs.

Opportunities for Improvement

The task for increasing diversity with the KCC administration, faculty, and staff will be ongoing. The effort must be multifaceted and persistent. Current efforts might be strengthened by using more minority students and community members on interview teams, continuing to work collaboratively with community organizations such as Diversity Focus to achieve goals and by providing support systems for minority staff once they are hired to enhance the quality of their work experience as KCC. KCC's plans should include a strong rationale for developing a more diverse workforce and clearly show how diverse role models or staff can contribute to a greater student success and a more inclusive college climate for learning. KCC might also want to explore other ways to get students and minority community colleges more involved in recruitment.

9. BUILDING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Category 9 analyzes how your institution's current and potential relationships contribute to accomplishing your mission. Items in this category examine your institution's processes and systems for building key internal and external collaborative relationships that align with institutional goals and directions. This category investigates how you measure and analyze the effectiveness of these efforts, feeding your evaluation into your own processes for improvement.

Strengths

External:

- KCC is a leader with the Cedar Rapids-Iowa City business corridor partnership and works effectively with a variety of businesses and industries in establishing priorities.
- The college's Iowa City campus works closely with the University of Iowa in meeting the needs of students who are dually enrolled at the two institutions to ensure their success. KCC and the University of Iowa share over 700 students.
- The college's Jones County Regional Educational Center has created a partnership with eight local school districts in providing career academies (computer, construction, automotive, welding, and graphics), and arts and sciences academy and Project Lead the Way (PLTW) courses in meeting the needs of students.
- Several groups (cabinet and library services groups) interviewed provided examples of the culture of service to humanity that exists in the KCC community. Examples included the use of college facilities as an emergency coordinating site during the Cedar Rapids flood of 2008. An emergency animal shelter was housed in the equestrian center.
- Partnerships with workforce development agencies help to meet the needs of returning students and the community.
- The college shows evidence of collaboration both internally and externally. They place a strong emphasis on teamwork and collaborating between the departments.
- The three businesses that are housed on the KCC Cedar Rapids campus provide employment opportunities for current students and graduates. Based upon these business relationships, students have internship opportunities that sometimes lead to permanent employment.

- There appears to be a significant amount of collaboration between academic departments, as is evidenced by the progress made in the Quality Faculty Plan and the cooperation between departments for the benefit of new faculty member. Faculty mentors collaborate with new faculty to create a faculty portfolio.
- There is collaboration between departments and divisions in developing SMART goals and other plans that feed into the AQIP (Academic Quality Improvement Program) plan.
- Many groups interviewed named community partnerships as one of many strengths of KCC. Business and industry partnerships such as Rockwell Collins, Diamond V Mills, AEGON, etc. are deeply valued by Kirkwood personnel. Groups interviewed were complimentary of the administrative team and faculty who are widely visible in the community. Providing ongoing community presence assures the community that KCC is a committed and connected community partner.
- KCC also provides the atmosphere for effective learning through continuing education. A 13-member staff interviewed expressed their satisfaction in the ability of the college to offer both credit and non-credit and certificate programs to students. The group interviewed was proud of collaboration and partnership among and between faculty members, the foundation, and other agencies in the community, as well as other colleges. The interviewees survey students once or twice a year to measure their satisfaction to the quality of program offerings.

Internal:

KCC staff is encouraged to test innovative entrepreneurial ideas. Resources are regularly available to test and refine innovative ideas. As an example, the math department piloted a new program a new program to deliver instruction through a combination of direct and on-line instruction. No change in student achievement resulted so refinements are being sought to see if student can be positively impacted. The culture of continuous improvement, based on data-drive decisions, is work that is never complete.

Opportunities for Improvement

More collaborative team meetings within and across divisions continue to allow faculty to get to know one another. As the college continues to grow, however, it is important to note that it would be important to continue these meetings so that there is no sense of disconnect between campuses.

SUGGESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

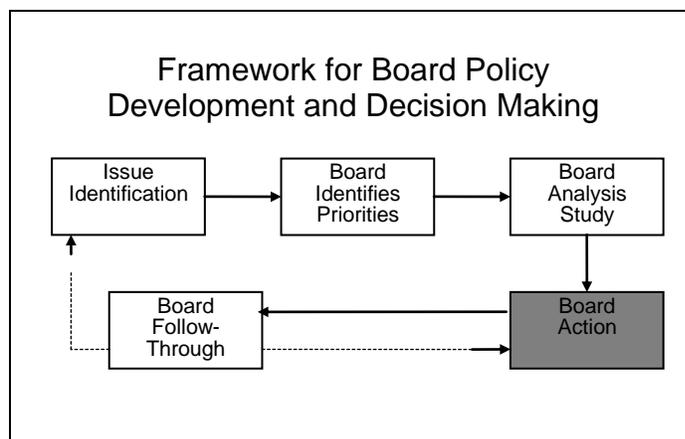
Recommendations: None noted.

The State Accreditation Team recommends continued accreditation for Kirkwood Community College. A State Comprehensive Accreditation visit will be held to coincide with the college's next Higher Learning Commission visit in 2014.

Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

July 29, 2010



Agenda Item: Southeastern Community College's Accreditation Report (SCC)

Iowa Goal: Individuals will pursue postsecondary education in order to drive economic success.

Equity Impact Statement: SCC supports an open-door policy in enrollment of all students.

Presenters: Colleen Hunt, Chief
Bureau of Community College Services and
Career and Technical Education

Beverly Simone, Ed.D., President
Southeastern Community College

Attachments: 1

Recommendation: The Department of Education recommends continued accreditation for SCC through 2013. A state compliance accreditation visit will be held in 2013.

Background: This is a report of the evaluation of SCC for continued state accreditation as an associate degree-granting institution. The Iowa Department of Education conducted the evaluation visit on April 21-23, 2010. The findings reflect the work of the accreditation team in the comprehensive review of SCC.

SCC is following the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) model for accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission, a commission of the North Central Association (NCA). With AQIP, an institution demonstrates it meets accreditation standards and expectations through sequences of events that align with those ongoing activities that characterize organizations striving to improve their performance.

Accreditation Evaluation

Southeastern Community College

***On-Site Visit Conducted
April 21-23, 2010***

***Iowa Department of Education
Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation
Bureau of Community Colleges and Career and Technical Education Services***

STATE OF IOWA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Colleen Hunt, Chief

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Southeastern Community College Accreditation Visit
April 21-23, 2010

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Southeastern Community College's State Accreditation Conducted April 21-23, 2010

Purpose of the Visit

This was an accreditation visit for Southeastern Community College (SCC) by the Iowa Department of Education (DE).

Organizational Context

SCC is a public institution of higher education which encompasses all of Des Moines, Henry, and Lee counties and part of Louisa county in Southeast Iowa, which has a total population of approximately 100,000. SCC's service area is bordered by the Mississippi river and Illinois on the east and Missouri on the south. SCC includes two campuses, located in West Burlington and Keokuk (South Campus) and two Centers, in Mount Pleasant and Fort Madison, Iowa. SCC is governed by a five-member Board of Trustees elected from and by the citizens of five separate director districts. SCC is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and is a member of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

SCC was established in 1967. The Burlington Junior College was founded in 1920, and Keokuk Community College was established in 1953, which became the north and south campuses of SCC. Today, SCC provides a variety of educational and enrichment opportunities to residents of Southeast Iowa, north central Missouri and West Central Illinois and is guided by its mission. SCC carries out its educational mission by offering pre-baccalaureate education for transfer students, career and technical education for direct employment, remedial instruction, training and continuing education, workforce solutions, and many student services.

Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission: The mission of SCC, an institution of higher education, is to provide quality, affordable, and accessible lifelong learning opportunities which meets or exceeds the expectations of the people they serve.

Vision: SCC envisions itself as a dynamic leader in lifelong learning, an innovator of responsive programs and services, and a promoter of professional, personal, social, and economic development.

Values: SCC values quality education. SCC values their students and employees, respects their diversity, recognizes and encourages the use of their unique talents and contributions to our entire college community, and supports their personal and professional development. SCC encourages their co-curricular, social, civic, and cultural participation. SCC invites innovation, creative problem-solving, and risk-taking. SCC values teamwork, cooperation, and collaboration as part of our continuous improvement efforts. SCC believes in an industrious, enthusiastic, and congenial work and learning environment. SCC values integrity in their interactions, and advocating open and respectful communication. SCC honors the trust placed in SCC to prepare learners for their many roles in a dynamic global society. All statements are posted on SCC's website.

Sites or Branch Campuses/Centers Reviewed

- Southeastern Community College Campus—West Burlington and Keokuk
- CBIZ (Center for Business)

Interactions with Institutional Constituencies

1. Cabinet
2. President
3. Vice Presidents
4. Interim Chief Academic Officer
5. Institutional Advancement/Grants
6. Students
7. Coordinators and Managers
8. Institutional Assessment Team
9. Information Technology staff
10. CBIZ Staff
11. Title III Staff
12. Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) Director
13. Arts and Sciences Faculty
14. Career and Technical Faculty
15. Deans and Directors
16. Athletic Directors
17. ICCOC (Iowa Community College Online Consortium) Staff
18. Coordinators and Supervisors
19. Quality Faculty Plan Committee
20. Curriculum Committee
21. Institutional Researcher
22. Equity Staff
23. Student Services Staff
24. Board of Trustees
25. Human Resources Staff
26. High School Liaison
27. Advisory Committees
28. Support Staff
29. Maintenance and Custodial Staff
30. Library Staff

Principle Documents, Materials, and On-line Information Reviewed

1. Web Page
2. Board Policies
3. Career and Career Option Programs Program Review Process
4. Articulation Agreements
5. Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) Documentation
6. Campus Safety reports
7. Board Minutes
8. Current Organizational Chart
9. Student Handbook
10. Faculty Handbook
11. Minutes from Standing Committees
12. Sports Offerings Demographics
13. Documentation of strategies to recruit, enroll, retain, and successfully serve students in nontraditional careers, students from under-represented racial/ethnic groups, English language learners, students with disabilities, and other nontraditional students.
14. Long-range planning for building development and equipment.
15. EEO/AA Documentation
16. Written Human Resources Policy and Procedures
17. Publications and Statements Representing the Institution
18. College Statement on General Education
19. College Catalog
20. Statements of Mission, Vision, Values and Goals
21. Student Placement Data Report
22. Course Schedule
23. Concurrent Enrollment Offering Information
24. District Demographic Information
25. Procedures for Evaluation and Revision of the Mission and Policies
26. Student Satisfaction Surveys and Results
27. Evidence of College's Assessment Planning and Implementation
28. Strategic Plan
29. Schedule of Professional Development Activities and Participation
30. Written Plans and Procedures for Involvement of Faculty, Staff and Students in Governance
31. Teacher Load Information
32. Faculty Personnel Files
33. Quality Faculty Plan

Additional State Review Requirements

- ✓ The Quality Faculty Plan, as required by Iowa Code, was reviewed at SCC and was found to have met the stated requirements of the Iowa Code.
- ✓ Review of faculty personnel files, as required by Iowa Code, did not present any issues.
- ✓ Review of faculty load, as required by Iowa Code, did not present any issues.
- ✓ Iowa Code requirement of reviewing 20 percent of career and technical education programs per year is being followed. SCC exceeds this recommendation by being on a three-year cycle.
- ✓ Special needs issues were reviewed and found to meet the stated requirements of the Iowa Code.
- ✓ The college's AS-28s and the college catalog were reviewed and did not present any issues.

Adequacy of Progress in Addressing Previous Accreditation Visit

None were recommended at the conclusion of the previous interim visit.

I. HELPING STUDENTS LEARN

Category 1 identifies the shared purpose of all higher education organizations. 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. This category asks you to measure and analyze the performance of these key processes, and to describe what actions you take to continuously improve teaching and learning.

Strengths:

- Faculty and staff have much opportunity to participate in professional development activities, and adequate resources are appropriated for these activities. Interviewees indicated that the college faculty and staff appreciate these opportunities.
- Program advisory committees are involved, invested, and engaged in improving programs and student learning.
- Faculty and the administrative team reported that the college has implemented a continuous process improvement (CPI) team to address the consistency of the academic rigor of the college's curriculum within programs and departments without regard to the mode of delivery. Several interview groups referred to this team as a positive step in assuring and maintaining academic rigor across the college. They stated that this team provides dialogue and collaboration among current, new, adjunct, and concurrent credit faculty. Interviewees stated that this team is a vehicle for coming to common terminology and common understanding about the characteristics of quality curriculum and instruction. Faculty and the administrative team cited the need to continue to expand the delivery of curriculum to additional students in the region utilizing all the methods of delivery. Concern was expressed, however, that the current quality of instruction must be maintained or improved. Faculty and administration expressed optimism that the team would be successful in identifying guiding principles that would enable the attainment of this goal of continuing quality.
- The college is very supportive of technology acquisition and infusion into instructional settings. Examples are: 1) the effort to make all classrooms "smart"; and 2) the satisfaction of the career and technical faculty with high tech equipment for their programs. All faculty, staff, and administrators interviewed were extremely complimentary of the Information Technology (IT) Department. IT was praised for their knowledge, responsiveness, and helpfulness in acquisition, support, and training regarding technology. Interviewees state that IT is viewed as forward-thinking. It was also stated that the IT Department exhibits the leadership necessary to establish and keep the college "out front" in technology use, and demonstrates a team approach across all areas of the college. Interviewees state the employees understand how to request technology through the tech request process to address needs in their area.
- Students interviewed stated that they believe that faculty, Success Center staff, and student services staff provide them with a very helpful environment to aid in their learning. Many students talked about the dedication of faculty.

- Students planning to transfer after completing their associate degree stated that when they are registering for the next term's classes that the advisors always discuss with them what the transfer institution also requires. In this way, the student meets the graduation requirement of SCC and the requirements for the transfer institution.
- Students stated that the administration of the college is approachable and that the administration is willing to listen to their ideas and concerns.
- Students stated that they received "one-on-one" attention from college staff.
- SCC participates in a rigorous hiring process which involves a teaching demonstration for faculty candidates. There is also a mentoring program and a new faculty orientation program to help ensure quality in new faculty.
- The faculty and the administration repeated shared examples of the responsiveness of the college to the needs of the community. The career and technical education (CTE) programs are on a once every three years program review cycle in which members of the program advisory committee participate. In the most recent cycle, employers have identified industrial standards and credentials that they value. The programs have incorporated those standards and credentials into the program's curriculum. Members of the community expressed their appreciation of the recent addition of facilities to address the increased demand for training in the areas of welding and construction. They also shared that the nursing program was expanded to include a weekend and evening option for completing the program in an effort to increase the number of graduates in response to increased need for health science workers in the region.
- The college has implemented numerous services to improve its linkages with secondary districts in the region. These services include the joint review and alignment of secondary career and technical education programs with related post-secondary CTE programs offered by the college via programs of studies and tech prep programs. Such initiatives have positively impacted students' participation and performance in concurrent enrollment programs and have in turn enhanced their opportunity for future success in the aligned post secondary CTE program.

Opportunities for Improvement

- In taking advantage of professional development, the college might consider having faculty concentrate on activities specific to instructional strategies and assessment of student learning. Interviews and document review show an emphasis on professional development for all faculty, staff, and administrators. This positive emphasis has moved the college ahead in its strategic planning and Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) processes. The same type of experience could move the college ahead on assessment of student learning, reporting, and improvement processes regarding student learning.
- Students indicated a concern that adjunct faculty are not as accessible to them as they would like. The college might consider studying ways to provide additional access to adjunct faculty by the students.
- Students on the Keokuk Campus stated that it was difficult to complete some class projects requiring library assistance since there was not a librarian available (librarian out with health issues).

II. ACCOMPLISHING OTHER DISTINCTIVE OBJECTIVES

Category 2 addresses the processes that contribute to achieving your institution's major goals other than educating your students. Distinctive objectives are those that distinguish your institution from other colleges and universities, even if the performance of these processes does not currently make your institution distinguished. This category also asks how you track and evaluate these processes to ensure they contribute directly to achieving your institution's mission.

Strengths:

- SCC's athletic programs include men's baseball, men's basketball, women's softball, and women's volleyball at the West Burlington campus as well as women's basketball at the Keokuk campus. The men's basketball is the "winning-est" NJCAA (National Junior College Athletic Association) men's basketball team in the nation. Athletes exhibit a strong graduation rate.
- Interviewees indicated that SCC employees demonstrate a commitment to the community by serving on a variety of community boards and area committees.
- The college provides professional development to all staff twice annually.
- SCC is a member of the Great River Regional Partnership which serves all four counties and involves local businesses, industry, government, and education.
- SCC serves as the local entity (Center for Business [CBIZ]) in providing Iowa Jobs Training funds (260F) and Iowa Industrial New Jobs Training Funds (260E) to area businesses.
- SCC has well-established partnerships with local K-12 districts and provides high school relations staff to keep these partnerships viable.
- The college collaborates with many entities which include: local chambers of commerce, regional economic development groups, advisory groups, joint enrollment ventures with K-12 districts, CBIZ, grants office, Booster Club, the Intech! Advisory Committee, SBDC (Small Business Development Centers), and WIA (Workforce Investment Act) On-Campus.
- The college is involved in a variety of college resource development projects, one of which includes obtaining scholarships for students.
- SCC has passed a district six-cent levy as well as the local 20 1/4 cent levy utilized for operation of the college.
- College employees are encouraged to submit ideas for improvement. An example of this includes participation in "More-Same-Less" data collection events.
- SCC's Foundation currently has holdings of \$3.3 million.
- Interviewees and document review indicated that the college includes a full time employee who spends approximately one half of her position as the on-staff grant writer. Resulting grants to the college include the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) scholarship (\$558,150,150) from the National Science Foundation (NSF), Community Jobs Based Training from the Department of Labor (\$1,660,285), the Earmark for Health Resource Services, which provided the Health Training Simulation Lab (\$118,000), a Youth Build grant (\$900,000), and the Title III

grant entitled "The Promise of the Open Door" (\$2 million). The grant writer collaborates with other departments of the college, consortia, other community colleges, and community groups in the writing of grants to ensure that grants meet specific needs of those entities. Additional grants that the college staff is involved with include the STEM Equity Pipeline project, Carl Perkins basic grant, Carl Perkins Tech Prep grant, One Source Project with Lumina, and the Energy State Energy Sector Partnership (SESP) with CBIZ. The addition of grant dollars to the college has benefited students, staff, faculty, administration, and the community. The college pursues grants that coordinate with their strategic planning process.

- The college provides a variety of activities for students which include: fall and spring picnics, BBQ and entertainment, Art Club, Film Club, English club, Phi Theta Kappa, Business Professionals of America, Skills USA, EMS (Emergency Medical Services), Respiratory Care, Student Board (Student Government Association), and musical productions. Many of the clubs are involved with their national counterparts.
- The college works collaboratively with the Des Moines County community by maintaining the fairgrounds which is adjacent to campus. College maintenance staff is regularly scheduled Monday beginning at 5 a.m. until Saturday afternoon at 3:00 p.m. However, staff is scheduled for additional weekend hours as needed making staff available to the community and the college for weekend activities. This service is provided through three staff shifts.

Opportunities for Improvement

- As the college revisits their 2005-2012 Facilities Plan, it may be helpful to redistribute the plan to all staff to increase awareness and provide a better understanding of the contents and the processes involved.
- Students stated that the buildings on the West Burlington campus are sterile and dated. Such information can be noted as the college revises its facilities plan.
- There is no facility large enough on either campus to accommodate a meeting of the entire college staff.

III. UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS' AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS' NEEDS

Category 3 examines what your institution does to understand the specific needs and requirements of the individuals and groups its serves. It analyzes how you identify and subcategorize your student and other stakeholder groups (i.e., employers, students' families, communities, etc.) to understand what they need and expect from your institution. This category also looks at how you use the analysis of these results to continuously improve your operations.

Strengths

- The Great River Region Partnership collaboration with SCC, Iowa Wesleyan College, and area economic development prompted two economic studies which identified the following targeted industries for future growth: light manufacturing, transportation, distribution systems, and animation. Document review and interviews revealed plans for developing future programs and courses based on these identified targeted industries. The Intech! Program and the future film animation program are evidence of how the college has responded to these needs.
- Interviewees indicated that faculty, staff, and administration are committed to customer service.
- The college has developed strong articulation relationships with Hannibal-LaGrange Western Illinois University, Iowa Wesleyan College, Iowa State University, University of Northern Iowa, and the University of Iowa.
- Interviewees indicated that the college has developed key performance indicators for student placement.
- Internal data on retention, along with graduation rates, supported the successful Title III grant application process. Expected outcomes of the grant are increased course completion, improved transition from developmental to college-level courses, more student movement from ABE (Adult Basic Education)/GED (General Education Development)/ESL (English-as-a-Second Language) instruction to college-level courses, increased fall-to-fall retention, and improved graduation rates.
- SCC is one of seven Iowa community colleges that are a part of the Iowa Community College Online Consortium (ICCO). The consortium provides a variety of on-line courses as well as an on-line associate degree.
- Student services surveys and CBIZ course assessments are utilized by the college to assist in determining how well the college provides services and training.
- The college's rapid response team, which assists area dislocated workers, was able to assist businesses very efficiently and quickly during the recent economic downturn.
- The college is recognized nationally for "best practices" in its nursing program.

Opportunities for Improvement:

- While postsecondary enrollment options/jointly administered programs continue to grow, faculty mentioned that the college needs to continue to evaluate and ensure the rigor of the college classes provided to high school students taught by high school faculty.
- The college administered the Community College Survey on Student Engagement (CCSSE) in 2007 and 2009 and the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) in 2009 and 2010. There is an opportunity to assess the trend data, benchmark against peer institutions, and begin conversations on possible institutional process improvements based on the results.
- More data is accessible to the college due to the recent contract with an institutional researcher. College data is becoming more transparent for internal use. An opportunity exists to continue to build the institution's "Common Data Set."
- SCC does not describe a systematic process for gathering and analyzing student complaints. Each department collects and manages its own student complaint information. SCC may find that a central, systematized process for collection and analysis of complaints could assist in identifying patterns and system-wide issues that need to be addressed.
- Interviews and document reviews indicate that the college has an opportunity to enlist the additional participation of persons of color from the immediate area.

IV. VALUING PEOPLE

Category 4 explores your institution's commitment to the development of your faculty, staff, and administrators emphasizing that the coordinated efforts of all those you employ are required for institutional success. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to work and job environment and focuses on measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Strengths

- The college has enhanced its communication by providing access to pod casts, e-mail, the college's Hawknet, and continues the communication through its fall and spring Communication Days.
- SCC demonstrates a strong emphasis on professional development for all of its staff. Employees are provided with opportunities both internally and externally for their professional growth. Two (2) half-day and one full-day professional development sessions are planned by committees of employees. Presenters from within the college ranks as well as presenters with regional and national reputations have participated in these professional development days. Professional development funds are provided through department budgets and specific professional development budgets (i.e., up to a maximum of \$2,000 per faculty member of PIC [Professional Improvement Credit], and up to \$500 professional development tuition reimbursement per staff employee. The entire amount budgeted per year has been sufficient to meet requests).
- Faculty have an additional scheduled half day of professional development that is planned by a faculty committee.
- The college's administration, faculty, and staff are committed to student success.
- There is close and effective integration among staff and faculty. Coordination exists between various levels of administration. Faculty access to administration is open. All are welcome to be part of the CPI process.

Opportunities for Improvement

The college culture exhibits an historical perception of lack of trust. Efforts have been made by administration to address this issue (i.e., groups reading and studying the book, *The Speed of Trust* and implementing practices within departments). Additionally, communications across the district have been enhanced through regular podcasts and opportunities for all employees to participate in selection of critical topics for AQIP focus. At this time, it is unclear as to the extent of the effectiveness of these strategies. Therefore, the college is encouraged to continue these discussions in Cabinet and the all employee communications during professional development days.

V. LEADING AND COMMUNICATING

Category 5 takes stock of your institution's leadership and communication structures, exploring the structures and processes that guide your institution in setting priorities, making decisions, and communicating institutional vision and goals to stakeholders and employees. This category also examines how measures, analysis or results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas operate in your institution.

Strengths

- The college sought input from 25 local companies in crafting the training provided through the Intech! programs. The college has received a \$1,660,000 Community Based Jobs Training grant to fund scholarships for students and equipment for the Intech! programs as well as has received equipment donations from local industries in support of the Intech! programs.
- The college's Board and Administration have cooperatively reviewed all board policies to align with policy governance. Out-of-date policies have been deleted and those not appropriate in the Policy Governance Model, yet still viable, are being migrated to administrative guidelines.

Opportunities for Improvement

The college might consider examining its comprehensive strategic plan to ensure that it is measurable.

VI. SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS

Category 6 examines a variety of key institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive: the design, operation, and performance of your institution's processes and systems related to student support, administrative support, identification of needs, contribution to student learning, and accomplishing other institutional objectives. Items in this category examine day-to-day operations, and how you use data, analyze results, and make improvements in these areas.

Strengths

- *To meet the needs of nontraditional and working students, SCC is preparing an on-line orientation program to the college (both campuses and centers) so students may access the information at convenient times.*
- The Success Center on the Keokuk Campus, which offers a variety of services to students, has been expanded and staffed to assist in meeting the needs of students.
- SCC's primary campuses are located in immediate proximity to both local hospitals and mental health agencies. In West Burlington, the campus is directly across the street from Great River Medical Center, Great River Mental Health, Burlington Area Family Medical Center, and the Community Health Center of southeast Iowa. In Keokuk, students are just five minutes away from the Keokuk Area Hospital, Life Solutions Behavioral Health, and Counseling Associates, Inc. This has allowed SCC to operate largely through a referral network for students' personal, emotional, and mental health crisis situations.
- Both the West Burlington and the Keokuk campuses have an undesignated computer lab with up-to-date equipment for student use.
- Students on the Keokuk campus stated that they thought the academic advising was helpful in not only assisting them in meeting graduation requirements for the college, but also that the advisors assisted in making sure that courses transferred on to the four-year college of their choice.
- The nursing program at the Keokuk Campus has designed space for classrooms and their assistive teaching technology of the Sim Man clinical technology.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Multiple interview groups on the West Burlington and Keokuk campuses discussed the need for additional facilities (i.e., performing arts, student activities, lecture classrooms). As the college revisits the 2005-2012 Facilities Plan, it may be helpful to redistribute the plan which does contain a variety of identified needs including a discussion of a Southeast Iowa Center for the Arts, a Health Education Center, and an Athletic Complex.
- Interviewees indicated that there is a belief that mental health services are not available to students. Redistribution of information to students and staff concerning mental health services would help alleviate this misconception.
- Interviewees indicated that students are not required to have photo student identification cards. The college might evaluate whether this would be beneficial to operations.

- Interviewees indicated that there was a need for reliable follow-up on problems with students. The college is encouraged to exam their current student follow-up to create a more reliable system.

VII. MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

Category 7 examines the systems your institution uses to collect and analyze information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement. Items in this category ask you to examine your institution's systems for collecting, storing, managing and using information and data at all institutional levels. This category asks how you track overall institutional performance in collecting the right data and distributing it to the right people at the right time. This category examines the effectiveness of your entire information system and assures it aligns with your institutional needs and directions.

Strengths

- The expertise of SCC's contracted institutional researcher has allowed the college to move forward with consistent data and reporting formats, both of which are beneficial to the college's planning processes.
- The faculty, administration, and members of the Career and Technical Education Program Advisory Committees described the process utilized to align their program's curriculum with nationally-recognized industry standards and credentials. The majority of students who have since completed these programs have demonstrated their mastery of these standards via third-party assessments and have been awarded credentials recognized by the industry they are preparing to enter.
- Eighty-two point two percent (82.2%) of SCC 2009 graduates are employed in jobs directly related to their SCC areas of study or are continuing their education.

Opportunities for Improvement

- When asked questions about assessment of student learning, many faculty described perceptual information rather than direct assessments that provide data for analysis.
- SCC is in the early stages of completing feedback and communication loops within its continuous improvement processes. Transparency and communication of this data to all employees will enhance the already-existing efforts to build collaboration across the college.

VIII. PLANNING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Category 8 examines your institution's planning processes, asking how your strategies and action plans are helping you achieve your mission and vision. Items in this category raise questions about your institution's vision, planning strategies, and action plans. They ask how you project performance targets and forecast resource needs. This category also investigates how you evaluate and analyze the effectiveness of your planning system, and undertake regular efforts to improve it.

Strengths

- The college's cabinet and PEC (President's Executive Council) review district information.
- The college has established 18 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that review the health of the college regarding student success and satisfaction market penetration, graduate placement rates, employer satisfaction, licensure and certification rates, transfer rates, student engagement, and college financial stability. National, regional and local benchmarks are used, and the data is reviewed by the Cabinet and presented to the Board of Trustees twice a year.
- The college subscribes to conservative financial management.
- Multiple interviewees indicated that the college has a reputation for rapid response to the entire region's community needs. Interview groups and document review indicated that the college personnel provides training for regional career and technical career areas, educational programming for those students who desire to transfer to four-year institutions, retraining of the region's dislocated workers, and collaboration with business/industry and the community to offer programs designed to meet the region's needs such as Intech! The rapid response is enabled by the fact that the college utilizes data-driven decision-making. In addition, regional economic development is at the forefront of those decisions. Decisions are made to ensure financial stability of the college and correlation with the college's mission, vision, values, and goal statements, and the Master Education Plan.

Opportunities for Improvement

Several interview groups indicated that they did not believe that they had adequate knowledge and understanding of new instructional programs being developed and offered at the college. As SCC develops new programs and other initiatives, additional modes of communication across the college, which would keep all staff informed of the progress, might increase the support for the development of those programs and initiatives. Communication might include providing the relationship to the existing Master Education Plan, as well as the college's mission, vision, values, and goal statements, and the new data used in determination of the new initiative.

IX. BUILDING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Category 9 analyzes how your institution's current and potential relationships contribute to accomplishing your mission. Items in this category examine your institution's processes and systems for building key internal and external collaborative relationships that align with institutional goals and directions. This category investigates how you measure and analyze the effectiveness of these efforts, feeding your evaluation into your own processes for improvement.

Strengths

SCC is a member of the Iowa Community College Online Consortium (ICCO), which offers Associate degrees online. ICCOC online courses can lead to successful employment, serve as a starting point for a baccalaureate degree at a four-year transfer institution, or provide a way to update career skills.

SCC is one of the seven members of the Great River Region Partnership along with the SEIA (Southeast Iowa) Regional Planning, Iowa Wesleyan College, and the economic development offices for the four counties in SEIA. The President of SCC serves as the Chair of this partnership which works to expand the economic vitality and skilled workforce base in SEIA.

SCC's partnership with the Great River Medical Center (GRMC) provides joint appointments of clinical nursing faculty. As the college was having a difficult time recruiting clinical instructors this arrangement allows people to be hired full time by GRMC and then charged back to SCC for their clinical teaching hours. SCC faculty and administration are equal partners with GRMC in the selection of these employees.

SCC has numerous partnerships with such organizations/businesses/agencies as: CBIZ, the Great River Medical Center (Burlington), the Keokuk Area Hospital, 25 industry partners in the Keokuk area for the Intech! project, and concurrent enrollment of many high school students from the local education agencies.

Opportunities for Improvement

Having an additional focus on strengthening collaboration between faculty in the arts and sciences and CTE divisions in the development of new programs and services would assist the college with its internal relationships.

SUGGESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

None suggested. The State Accreditation Team recommends continued accreditation for Southeastern Community College. A state interim accreditation visit will be held to coincide with the college's next Higher Learning Commission visit in 2013.