



**Higher Learning Commission**  
A commission of the North Central Association

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March 8, 2013

Debra Daniels  
President  
1215 Houbolt Rd.  
Joliet, IL 60431-8938

Dear President Daniels:

Enclosed is a copy of 's *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* in response to the Systems Portfolio submitted under our new process guidelines. You will note that while the format of the report is similar, it is structured differently than earlier Appraisal Reports. We hope you are pleased with the changes. We are also sending your institution's Accreditation Liaison a copy.

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

We ask that you formally acknowledge receipt of this report within the next two weeks, and provide us with any comments you wish to make about it. Your response will become part of your institution's permanent HLC file. Please email your response to [AQIP@hlcommission.org](mailto:AQIP@hlcommission.org).

Sincerely,

Mary L. Green  
AQIP Process Administrator

# **SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT**

**in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of**

## **JOLIET JUNIOR COLLEGE**

**March 6, 2013**



**Academic  
Quality Improvement  
Program**

The Higher Learning Commission **NCA**

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## ELEMENTS OF Joliet Junior College's FEEDBACK REPORT

Welcome to the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*. This report provides AQIP's official response to an institution's *Systems Portfolio* by a team of peer reviewers (the Systems Appraisal Team). After the team independently reviews the institution's portfolio, it reaches consensus on essential elements of the institutional profile, strengths and opportunities for improvement by AQIP Category, and any significant issues related to accreditation. These are then presented in three sections of the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*: "Strategic Challenges Analysis," "AQIP Category Feedback," and "Accreditation Issues Analysis." These components are interrelated in defining context, evaluating institutional performance, surfacing critical issues or accreditation concerns, and assessing institutional performance. Ahead of these three areas, the team provides a "Reflective Introduction" followed closely by an "Executive Summary." The appraisal concludes with commentary on the overall quality of the report and advice on using the report. Each of these areas is overviewed below.

It is important to remember that the Systems Appraisal Team has only the institution's *Systems Portfolio* to guide its analysis of the institution's strengths and opportunities for improvement. Consequently the team's report may omit important strengths, particularly if the institution were too modest to stress them or if discussion or documentation of these areas in the *Systems Portfolio* were presented minimally. Similarly the team may point out areas of potential improvement that are already receiving wide-spread institutional attention. Indeed it is possible that some areas recommended for potential improvement have since become strengths rather than opportunities through the institution's ongoing efforts. Recall that the overarching goal of the Systems Appraisal Team is to provide an institution with the best possible advice for ongoing improvement.

The various sections of the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* can be described as follows:

**Reflective Introduction & Executive Summary:** In this first section of the *System's Appraisal Feedback Report*, the team provides a summative statement that reflects its broad understanding of the institution and the constituents served (Reflective Introduction), and also the team's overall judgment regarding the institution's current performance in relation to the nine AQIP Categories (Executive Summary). In the Executive Summary, the team considers such factors as: robustness of process design; utilization or deployment of processes; the existence of results, trends, and comparative data; the use of results data as feedback; and systematic processes for improvement of

the activities that each AQIP Category covers. Since institutions are complex, maturity levels may vary from one Category to another.

**Strategic Challenges Analysis:** Strategic challenges are those most closely related to an institution's ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning, and quality improvement goals. Teams formulate judgments related to strategic challenges and accreditation issues (discussed below) through careful analysis of the Organizational Overview included in the institution's Systems Portfolio and through the team's own feedback provided for each AQIP Category. These collected findings offer a framework for future improvement of processes and systems.

**AQIP Category Feedback:** The *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* addresses each AQIP Category by identifying (and also coding) strengths and opportunities for improvement. An **S** or **SS** identifies strengths, with the double letter signifying important achievements or capabilities upon which to build. Opportunities are designated by **O**, with **OO** indicating areas where attention may result in more significant improvement. Through comments, which are keyed to the institution's Systems Portfolio, the team offers brief analysis of each strength and opportunity. Organized by AQIP Category, and presenting the team's findings in detail, this section is often considered the heart of the *Feedback Report*.

**Accreditation Issues Analysis:** Accreditation issues are areas where an institution may have not yet provided sufficient evidence that it meets the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*. It is also possible that the evidence provided suggests to the team that the institution may have difficulties, whether at present or in the future, in satisfying the *Criteria*. As with strategic challenges, teams formulate judgments related to accreditation issues through close analysis of the entire Systems Portfolio with particular attention given to the evidence that the institution provides for satisfying the various core components of the *Criteria*. For purposes of consistency, AQIP instructs appraisal teams to identify any accreditation issue as a strategic challenge as well.

**Quality of Report & Its Use:** As with any institutional report, the *Systems Portfolio* should work to enhance the integrity and credibility of the organization by celebrating successes while also stating honestly those opportunities for improvement. The *Systems Portfolio* should therefore be transformational, and it should provide external peer reviewers insight as to how such transformation may occur through processes of continuous improvement. The AQIP Categories and the Criteria for Accreditation serve as the overarching measures for the institution's current state as well as its proposed future state. As such, it is imperative that the *Portfolio* be fully developed, that it adhere to

the prescribed format, and that it be thoroughly vetted for clarity and correctness. Though decisions about specific actions rest with each institution following this review, AQIP expects every institution to use its feedback to stimulate cycles of continual improvement and to inform future AQIP processes.

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## REFLECTIVE INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR JOLIET JUNIOR COLLEGE

The following consensus statement is from the System Appraisal Team's review of the institution's *Systems Portfolio Overview* and its introductions to the nine AQIP Categories. The purpose of this reflective introduction is to highlight the team's broad understanding of the institution, its mission, and the constituents that it serves.

*Joliet Junior College (JJC) was the nation's first community college, and was also one of the first institutions accepted into the AQIP in 2000. Besides the AQIP, JJC is also a member of the Continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN). This is a network of mostly community colleges that focuses on quality improvement and the sharing of best practices.*

*JJC is governed by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), and has the stated mission to "enrich people's lives through affordable, accessible, and quality programs and services. The college provides transfer and career preparation, training, and workforce development, and a lifetime of learning to the diverse community it serves." JJC serves more than 30,000 credit and 15,000 non-credit students annually from a district that includes seven counties, 1,442-square-miles, and a population around 700,000 residents.*

*JJC focuses on transfer programs, occupational education, adult basic and secondary education, continuing education, economic development, and personal enrichment. To deliver these offerings, JJC employs nearly 1,600 full- and part-time employees on the main campus (45 miles south of Chicago), two extended campuses, three education centers, multiple other locations, and online.*

*In most cases, JJC is making progress on its quality journey. Like many institutions the college has begun a large number of initiatives and processes to improve campus life, measure student learning, and gather assessment data. JJC has defined student learning outcomes (SLOs) for General Education and is beginning to assess them. The next step for JJC is probably the most difficult one, where the institution must get all departments on board with collecting data, and using it to drive improvements. As an example, JJC uses the CCSSE and SSI assessments to provide the college direction for improving the*



*quality of student life and learning, but it is unclear what process is used to analyze the results and implement improvements. While this is the most difficult step, it is one that JJC must move forward on in the near future.*

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

- **Category 1:** JJC is making systematic and comprehensive improvements to help students learn. JJC has begun a large number of initiatives and processes to improve campus life, measure student learning, and gather assessment data. Standardization in advising components across multiple sites, with a focus on providing better student service is commendable and expands the capacity of the College in recognizing and attending to diverse needs. JJC is also developing an infrastructure with its new personnel that may help the institution improve its processes and results in helping students learn. The transition in senior level leadership is creating an environment where improvement/change is part of the collective conversation as opposed to suggesting change as a result of a negative experience or circumstance. JJC has defined student learning outcomes (SLOs) for General Education and is beginning to assess them, but did not address how it determined which SLOs should be held at each level. Without a clear understanding of how the SLOs themselves were identified, it is impossible to determine if the SLOs are both needed and comprehensive. At JJC, the assessment of student learning is not systematic but varies by program, department, and individual instructor. This creates an opportunity for JJC to develop processes for collecting and analyzing data for all departments across the campus in the same way they have approached general education assessment processes. Finally, JJC uses the CCSSE and SSI assessments to provide the college direction for improving the quality of student life and learning, it is unclear what process is used to analyze the results and implement improvements. JJC reports a great deal of data, but little of it compares JJC to other higher education institutions or organizations outside of higher education.
- **Category 2:** JJC is making systematic and comprehensive improvements in accomplishing other distinctive objectives. Although it was not always clear from the evidence presented, the processes seem to be part of the organizational culture. Setting targets for improvement are part of the JJC planning system. A good example is the emerging communications process. In addition, JJC has identified the area of crisis management as a priority for the campus with initiatives and processes that need to be established. The campus strategic planning process incorporates the process for selecting targets for improvement. JJC has developed three distinct

non-instructional objectives that are emphasized in its strategic goals: Environmental Health and Safety, Campus Safety, and Institutional Sustainability. These objectives model good practices for safety and sustainability, and engage students and stakeholders in relevant activities. These are communicated throughout the planning and budgeting process. A long list of activities and projects undertaken by the institution over the last few years is evidence of the college's commitment. One example is that the College invites students to participate in the Green Teams' sustainability initiative. Linkages between its prairie restoration project and this service learning opportunity are evident, and specific targets to increase participation by faculty over the next six years are in effect. Although JJC lists many good initiatives, those listed seem to focus on internal stakeholders instead of external. That being said, JJC does involve external community representatives. While JJC has comparative statistics on campus safety measures, it has an opportunity to develop comparisons for its other two objectives involving sustainability and involving stakeholders in activities. When presenting other data, it seems that there was confusion on where it was placed, and if the data presented really pertain to the question. As an example, it seems that the data under 2R4 really belongs to 2R3, and little discussion or explanation of the data is presented. Understanding how the institution interprets and uses the data is important when determining how it is progressing on its quality improvement journey.

- **Category 3:** JJC created a planning team to achieve student success and completion, and has set targets and seems to be tracking them. Communication with stakeholders seems to be very thorough, although more communication with the non-attending community member may be necessary. Access to tutoring services has increased, and JJC has expanded its Academic Intervention Process to include an early-alert tool, which culminated in 2326 interventions. As a result of the success of these activities, college administration has identified this as an opportunity and has formed a college wide team to address the “student success and completion” agenda. JJC uses data and multiple systematic processes for assessing, identifying, analyzing, and addressing changing students’ needs, including strategic planning processes, analysis of enrollment trends, assessment processes, advisory councils, course scheduling, surveys, and anecdotal information. They have established Enrollment and Retention Plans with specific goals in each area to address identified needs and recognize components that relate to student satisfaction rates and employment-related outcomes. JJC identifies many different student groups, assesses the needs of these groups using surveys such as the CCSSE and Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI), and is proactive in addressing needs through new initiatives. These include mandatory new

student orientation for first time/full time students, tracking and expanding services for a growing minority population, new classroom space and additional human resources to manage growing schedules, and an aggressive developmental placement process. JJC uses a variety of methods to determine if new student and stakeholder groups should be targeted. This process includes looking at demographic, enrollment, and economic data. JJC has been able to respond by establishing a new Frankfort Education Center and by expanding the Romeoville Campus as a result of K-12 growth and workforce and economic indicators. Community scans are effective in gathering data on community needs but could be conducted more regularly. An opportunity exists to consider another external scan to see if the image of the college improved among stakeholder groups since the 2007 analysis. JJC reports that 52% of district residents have a positive or very positive image of JJC, while 47% had a neutral image. Although only 1.5% had a bad to very bad image of the institution, the 47% neutral image could be a concern. This neutral image may indicate that there is a significant portion of the district that does not understand or value what JJC does for the community itself.

- **Category 4:** JJC is making improvements in valuing people. The institution is communicating and collaborating with employees to identify both the strengths and weaknesses associated with valuing people. JJC also plans on using the results to both identify new opportunities and monitor future trends in employee satisfaction. Although the college identifies a number of measures/metrics that would support targeting improvements in culture and infrastructure, any such improvements are not identified. JJC has the opportunity to cite the improvements that it has made in this category, which have been identified through the surveys and AQIP processes. JJC has spent time ensuring all positions are aligned with stated departmental and college objectives. The college has a system in place at job creation to determine credentials, skills, and values for all employee categories. The job descriptions are tracked in an online system and reviewed regularly. Along with an attractive benefit package, JJC has developed multiple initiatives (Inclusion Plan, Succession Plan, Exit Interviews, etc.) for employee retention and talent management that evidences their commitment to valuing people. Conducting exit interviews, identifying variables that might lead to resignations or early retirement, and the development of customized training could have multiple benefits including improving employee engagement, maximizing employee satisfaction and output, along with decreasing employee turnover. JJC uses multiple methods to quantify valuing people, but much of the data is based on the PACE survey. Although PACE is a good instrument with favorable results, the relatively low percentage of respondents calls into

question the validity of the results. JJC may want to determine why the vast majority of employees did not participate, which may help determine if the low response rate is due to the instrument itself or the campus climate.

- **Category 5:** JJC undertakes a comprehensive strategic planning process every three years that involves conversations with internal and external stakeholders. During this process the mission and values are reviewed by the Board of Trustees, college administration, faculty and staff, members of the community, students, and other area stakeholders. This ensures that multiple viewpoints are sought when developing policies and budgets. Following a comprehensive review, the college retained its current mission, vision and core values. The College uses several instruments to gather information from a number of external stakeholders and stakeholder groups; however, the actual process of collecting information from current and future students is unclear. JJC identifies the need for “formal and comparable measures of student and stakeholder needs” in relation to satisfaction, but measures other than satisfaction should also be considered to address needs, expectations, and value to stakeholders. JJC is making improvements supported by the fact that the employees are willing to voice their concerns, the institution values those concerns, and the institution makes changes based on those concerns. This culture of continuous improvement shows JJC is making progress in developing systems in Leading and Communicating through its strategic planning and adoption of AQIP QAPs. Although JJC is making progress when compared to other institutions (increasing from an overall score of 3.26 to 3.51, with a four-year high of 3.68 and a norm base of 3.66), an opportunity exists to address the results of the PACE survey. Data indicate that while some scores were improving, all have dropped in the last year, and JJC scores below the norm base in all areas. The college might examine best practices at other colleges to improve in these areas. The college may also want to implement a plan to move the college from a consultative form of governance to a more collaborative form.
- **Category 6:** JJC uses numerous methods to identify the administrative support service needs of faculty, staff, and administrators. This includes internal environmental scanning, the strategic and operational planning process, the PACE employee survey, and presidential interaction with the Board of Trustees. Clarifying the process for identifying the needs would ensure the data from these sources is being consolidated and analyzed in a way that high priority needs are being met. JJC addresses student needs through several college processes (strategic planning, environmental scanning, analysis of enrollment trends) and by analyzing the results of student survey results (CCSSE, graduate survey, students satisfaction survey). The college has an opportunity to

identify processes and measures that would address the needs of other key stakeholders and create processes to intentionally solicit student feedback in many of the identified processes, instead of receiving it anecdotally. JJC presents data of student satisfaction for some student support services, but doesn't directly measure the processes in place for those services. There is an opportunity to expand on the performance results rather than discuss the number of financial awards made to students that are not necessarily reflective of JJC's student support services, but may be dependent on other factors. It is clear that JJC has made a number of improvements in this category, but it is not clear how systematic and comprehensive the processes and performance results are and how the data gathered by the college led to these improvements.

- **Category 7:** JJC is making improvements through the Colleague Improvement Project. This project is geared towards assessing the college's use of the Colleague system, identifying areas in which it can be improved, and improving how employees can engage with the system. The improvement of JJC's systems begins with a focus on institutional mission and goals. Depending upon available resources, plans for ensuring outcomes associated with stakeholder needs are developed and implemented. Plans are assessed and evaluated, with results used to make adjustments in the goals of the institution. JJC's culture of strategic planning and quality improvement help select specific processes for improved performance results in measuring effectiveness. The recognition process is used to set priorities and areas of improvement, which are then prioritized. The strategic planning process is inclusive of the entire college community and the college has a history of completing the goals defined in the process. JJC identifies an opportunity to seek data benchmarks among peers and to compare results over multiple years to identify trends. The college reports that the strategic and operational planning processes enables it to meet its goals, but the only data reported were for the Information Technology Area. JJC identifies a plethora of data that it collects and can benefit from more work developing and validating measures about the performance of the system in generating information and managing knowledge. This means data collection efforts need to be both effective and efficient and also designed to allow assessments of the information system itself. Refinement of the system can help JJC learn more about how well various needs are being met. This lack of refinement highlights an underlying need for the College to develop a proactive model. For example, the statement, "Non instructional units and programs are encouraged to utilize a version of the program review process..." indicates that there are no set requirements or mandatory guidelines across the College. Opportunities exist in terms of standardization in those requirements and

guidelines possibly addressing them in a new AQIP QAP along with analyses focused on goal attainment comparisons over multiple years, between units, and with peer-oriented benchmarks.

- **Category 8:** It should be noted that the review team was only able to identify one strength in this category. Many of the responses in this category did not answer the questions being asked, and the data were either missing or not relevant to the category. Since the last Systems Portfolio, in 2009, JJC continues its pursuit toward the identification of targets for performance. The College can benefit by analyzing the extent to which its current strategies and action plans are effective over the next three years and by capitalizing on what it learns from a system that articulates a date by which to implement and validate a performance assessment program. Fortunately, JJC understands that its planning process needs improvement. JJC has prioritized the need to establish a strategic planning process at the college that engages employees and helps them understand the value in planning. In addition, JJC has opportunities to define its culture and assess its infrastructure while using data and results to modify its planning processes, to develop and validate its performance measures, to evaluate its subsequent performance, and to identify additional areas for improvement. JJC could also benefit by making its strategic goals more specific. As an example, strategic goal one is to “Increase Student Success and Completion.” Quantifying this goal with a percentage to increase student success and completion would make the goal more measurable. Also, while an environmental scan is identified as a means by which to identify trends, opportunities exist in terms of clarifying the formal process, noting the frequency and duration of that process, and identifying the entities engaged in the interpretation of results and the description of trends. The College can also benefit by communicating a process in which it addresses unexpected or emerging issues beyond those anticipated in the original five year strategic plan, as elements within a broader effort aligning future strategic planning and continuous improvement and relating them to past improvement efforts and to AQIP principles and categories.
- **Category 9:** JJC has established a close and continuous relationship with the educational institutions from which it receives students and employs two full-time and one part-time recruiter for the 32 local high schools. JJC’s expanded relationships with high schools have led to an increase in dual-credit enrollment from 1857 in 2007 to 12,086 in 2011. JJC uses many other measures for collaborative relationships, which ensures the relationship is meeting its intended purpose. These include high school yield, transfer rates, number of graduates in career programs, donations, graduate surveys, and community surveys. These results provide valuable information

for identifying best practices and identifying future opportunities for improvement. JJC also identifies numerous relationships with other organizations and institutions, but does not identify processes for creating, prioritizing, and building these relationships. Improvement in this area could help JJC identify new areas for relationships, ensure relationships meet the needs of its partner institutions, and ensure that the partnerships are serving JJC as effectively and efficiently as possible. JJC recognizes it needs to communicate and integrate its processes for Building Collaborative Relationships so that it becomes systematic and comprehensive. The college can begin closing the loop by identifying future needs for data based on the results from analyses of current data and by linking those results to specific processes. JJC and other AQIP institutions can benefit from a model of quality improvement that demonstrates how structures, processes, and interactions across them generate results and improvements in relation to intended outcomes. It remains unclear whether JJC is able to separate inputs from outcomes and routine operations from proactive strategies in the context of developing, implementing, and evaluating collaborative relationships with the community.

Note: Strategic challenges and accreditation issues are discussed in detail in subsequent sections of the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*.

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## **STRATEGIC CHALLENGES FOR JOLIET JUNIOR COLLEGE**

In conducting the Systems Appraisal, the Systems Appraisal Team attempted to identify the broader issues that would seem to present the greatest challenges and opportunities for the institution in the coming years. These areas are ones that the institution should address as it seeks to become the institution it wants to be. From these the institution may discover its immediate priorities as well as shaping strategies for long-term performance improvement. These items may also serve as the basis for future activities and projects that satisfy other AQIP requirements. The team also considered whether any of these challenges put the institution at risk of not meeting the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*. That portion of the team's work is presented later in this report.

Knowing that **Joliet Junior College** will discuss these strategic challenges, give priority to those it concludes are most critical, and take action promptly, the Systems Appraisal Team identified the following:

- Although JJC has begun to use a systematic strategic planning process, it has not fully implemented the process. Since the last Systems Portfolio, in 2009, JJC continues its pursuit toward the identification of targets for performance. The College can benefit by analyzing the extent to which its current strategies and action plans are effective over the next three years and by capitalizing on what it learns from a system that articulates a date by which to implement and validate a performance assessment program.
- JJC has defined student learning outcomes (SLOs) for General Education and is beginning to assess them. JJC is also doing course and program level assessment. The next step for JJC is probably the most difficult one, where the institution must get all departments on board with collecting data, and using it to drive improvements. While this is the most difficult step, it is one that JJC must move forward on in the near future. Without a systematic plan to assess student learning in general education, programs, and courses, JJC cannot ensure quality improvement in student learning.
- JJC presents data of student satisfaction for some student support services, but doesn't directly measure the processes in place for those services. There is an opportunity to expand on the performance results rather than discuss the number of financial awards made to students that are not necessarily reflective of JJC's student support services, but may be dependent on other factors.
- JJC involves external stakeholders, but most seem to be from other educational institutions. This could lead to the data reported by JJC that 52% of district residents have a positive or very positive image of JJC, while 47% had a neutral image. This 47% neutral image could be a concern, and could be helped by soliciting more involvement from the community.

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## **AQIP CATEGORY FEEDBACK**

In the following section, the Systems Appraisal Team delineates institutional strengths along with opportunities for improvement within the nine AQIP Categories. As explained above, the symbols used in this section are **SS** for outstanding strength, **S** for strength, **O** for opportunity for improvement, and **OO** for outstanding opportunity for improvement. The choice of symbol for each item represents the consensus evaluation of the team members and deserves the institution's thoughtful consideration. Comments marked **SS** or **OO** may need immediate attention, either to ensure the institution preserves and



maximizes the value of its greatest strengths, or to devote immediate attention to its greatest opportunities for improvement.

***AQIP Category 1: Helping Students Learn:*** This category identifies the shared purpose of all higher education organizations and is accordingly the pivot of any institutional analysis. It focuses on the teaching-learning process within a formal instructional context, yet it also addresses how the entire institution contributes to helping students learn and overall student development. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to learning objectives, mission-driven student learning and development, intellectual climate, academic programs and courses, student preparation, key issues such as technology and diversity, program and course delivery, faculty and staff roles, teaching and learning effectiveness, course sequencing and scheduling, learning and co-curricular support, student assessment, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Joliet Junior College** for Category 1.

*JJC's processes for Helping Students Learn are generally systematic, although some reactive components still remain as the college works to breakdown silos within the organization. JJC recognizes the need for progression from an episodic approach toward a continuous improvement approach and can realize benefits by demonstrating linkages between the College's list of priorities and efforts at silo reduction and the future set of results indicating improvements in student learning. A state-wide movement to include a performance-based funding component will have an impact on this category.*

**1P1a, S.** JJC has defined student learning outcomes (SLOs) for General Education and is beginning to assess them. Assessment of SLOs occurs within a well-structured system of review and informs program level assessment planning. To accomplish this, JJC created a timeline to implement the SLOs, joined the HLC's Academy for the Assessment of Student Learning, and assigned implementation responsibility to the assessment task force.

**1P1b, O.** JJC has worked on general education outcomes since 2008, and this has been made a priority in previous system portfolios. 1P1 specifically asks how the institution determines which common or shared objectives for learning and development should be held for all students at a particular level. JJC does a great job explaining how it developed the SLOs, but did not address how it determined which SLOs should be held at each level. Without a clear understanding of how the SLOs themselves were identified, it is impossible to determine if the SLOs are both needed and comprehensive.

**1P2, S.** Reviewed with no comment.

**1P3, O.** JJC has a process in place for proposing and developing new programs. This process includes many stakeholders and avenues for new program identification. Although new courses and programs may be identified in many ways, there doesn't seem to be a structured way to determine their merit and connection to the mission of the institution. In the response, JJC identifies an opportunity to link program development to the strategic plan. Doing this may allow JJC to make better data driven decisions when prioritizing or choosing between new programs that compete for limited resources.

**1P4, O.** JJC has processes in place for responding to the needs of all stakeholders when designing programs and specific courses that are relevant to various fields of study. This environmental scanning occurs on a five year cycle, but today's rate of change may require a shorter cycle. The new assessment coordinator is working with the college community to transform the program review process to be more effective by comparing outcomes to results, examining program quality, and measuring the cost effectiveness in regards to meeting students' needs. Actual program review is conducted by the faculty and program staff responsible for the program, but it is unclear what happens with the results. The college may benefit by having a process where the results are presented to the advisory committee and then to the college leadership. This would ensure the curriculum is current with employer needs and that improvements resulting from the review have administrative support. An opportunity exists for the assessment coordinator to help faculty and administration close the loop and ensure results from assessment drive resource allocations especially in the development of faculty and curricula.

**1P5, S.** Reviewed with no comment.

**1P6, S.** Through various places on JJC website, in its printed recruitment materials, presentations, etc., the institution communicates program objectives, requirements and placement rates to both current and prospective students. The use of multimedia platforms assures that students are aware of programs, program and institution requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

**1P7, O.** JJC and its students may benefit from the expansion of the new student orientation. All students benefit from orientation, and while it may be viewed as a barrier, it is usually considered beneficial to all students. Research also indicates that students benefit from a focus on identifying student career interests and professional goals, so this may be something that JJC

considers in the future. At this time there doesn't seem to be a systematic approach to advising that can confirm that the programs match student needs, interests, and abilities. Instead, JJC appears to rely on random events that may or may not lead to informed students.

**1P8, S.** Reviewed with no comment.

**1P9, O.** Although JJC identifies a student success course where students utilize their learning styles to assess personal academic strengths and weaknesses, this course is optional instead of required. Since this class is not required many JJC students may not understand her/his own learning style, strengths, and weaknesses. It is also not clear how faculty are addressing different learning styles in the classroom. Students' learning style differences are important in all curricula, which creates an opportunity for JJC to address learning styles throughout the college, rather than just in individual courses.

**1P10, O.** Reviewed with no comment.

**1P11, O.** Policies and process for ensuring that learning expectations are effectively communicated are in place at JJC. Communication channels include the web catalog, handbooks, contracts, etc., and are evaluated by both students and faculty. JJC has also adopted principles of academic freedom in the faculty contract with teaching effectiveness being assessed by student evaluations, peer review, and learning outcomes. Although processes exist to document teaching effectiveness, there is no evidence of the results being used. Developing a mechanism to report the results may help in faculty development. As an example, responsibility for learning varies by student type. On the one hand, some students take responsibility for their own learning and instructors facilitate the learning process. On the other hand, other students may require an instructor to teach the subject matter to them, placing the responsibility for learning on the instructor. This creates an opportunity for JJC to gain more robust data, to ensure that instruction is effective and challenging for all students.

**1P12, S.** JJC uses multiple methods to offer courses at times that meet students' needs in various programs. JJC also has processes in place for addressing student, program and institutional needs in course delivery. JJC uses Starfish software in conjunction with the Angel Course Management System. Starfish is used to monitor student performance, behavioral issues, and notify the appropriate staff for follow-up when issues are identified. Since students often do not ask for help, having this early warning system in place can help JJC identify at-risk students before they choose to stop-out.

**1P13, S.** Reviewed with no comment.

**1P14, O.** Reviewed with no comment.

**1P15, S.** Reviewed with no comment.

**1P16, O.** Reviewed with no comment.

**1P17, S.** Reviewed with no comment.

**1P18, O.** JC recognizes the importance of identifying and using valid and reliable measures across the institution. At this time assessment of student learning is not systematic but varies by program, department, and individual instructors. This creates an opportunity for JJC to develop processes for collecting and analyzing data for all departments across the campus in the same way they have approached general education assessment processes. An opportunity also exists to demonstrate convergence and/or divergence within or among the sets of measures in use, as the College improves its assessment plans and accommodates various commitments. Capacity building may involve tailoring the model presented in the form of Figure 1.2 to allow evaluations of steps two and four.

**1R1-1R5, O.** Reviewed with no comment.

**1R6, O.** JC is utilizing tools that enable and empower leaders to draw comparisons with other institutions and to establish benchmarks with which to form and evaluate future plans focusing on helping students learn. Although JJC uses CCSSE and SSI assessments to provide the college direction for improving the quality of student life and learning, it is unclear what process is used to analyze the results and implement improvements. JJC reports a great deal of data, but little of it compares JJC to other higher education institutions or organizations outside of higher education.

**1I1, S.** JC is making systematic and comprehensive improvements to help students learn. JJC has begun a large number of initiatives and processes to improve campus life, measure student learning, and gather assessment data. Standardization in advising components across multiple sites, with a focus on providing better student service is commendable and expands the capacity of the College in recognizing and attending to diverse needs.

**1I2, S.** JJC is developing an infrastructure with its new personnel that may help the institution improve its processes and results in helping students learn. The transition in senior level leadership is creating an environment where improvement/change is part of the collective

conversation as opposed to suggesting change as a result of a negative experience or circumstance.

***AQIP Category 2: Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives:*** This category addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of the institution's major objectives that complement student learning and fulfill other portions of its mission. Depending on the institution's character, it examines the institution's processes and systems related to identification of other distinctive objectives, alignment of other distinctive objectives, faculty and staff roles, assessment and review of objectives, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Joliet Junior College** for Category 2.

*The Distinct Objectives of Environmental Health and Safety, Campus Safety, and Institutional Sustainability have continued since the 2008 portfolio and Environmental Health and Safety has been an objective since 2004. JJC's systematic approaches to these objectives have created an alignment with other departments and defined goals, which can be useful in addressing recent economic and fiscal constraints.*

**2P1a, S.** JJC has developed three distinct non-instructional objectives that are tied to strategic goals: model good practices for safety and sustainability, and engage students and stakeholders in relevant activities. These are communicated throughout the planning and budgeting process. A long list of activities and projects undertaken by the institution over the last few years is evidence that they are committed to these. One example is that the College invites students to participate in the Green Teams' sustainability initiative. Linkages between its prairie restoration project and this service learning opportunity are evident, and specific targets to increase participation by faculty over the next six years are in effect. Use of sustainable technologies, such as geothermal climate control and green roofing, is a best practice that should provide long term cost savings for the college. The sustainability effort continuing past the action project deadline is a great example of both sustainability and continuous improvement.

**2P1b, O.** While JJC lists many outstanding efforts it is engaged in to fulfill and exceed the requirements of category two, the question for 2P1 asks institutions to describe how these key non-instructional processes are both designed and operated. As a process question, this is looking at more than just what is being done, but instead for a description of how the process works. Without this description it is difficult to determine a level of maturity. As an example, JJC states

that “In 2009, a Behavior Intervention Team was created. This team has shared responsibilities through the JJC Campus Police and the Dean of Students. The questions that are not answered are: How was the need for this team identified? How was the team formed and who was involved? How is the team operated? Answering questions like this could help JJC ensure that it has a process in place that is both efficient (little duplication), and effective (solves the problems that most need to be solved). In addition, there are other stakeholder groups for higher education institutions that are not addressed, such as alumni, community, athletics, etc.

**2P2a, SS.** JJC is one of few colleges to have in place an updated National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) and its All Hazard Response Plan (AHRP). The development of common procedures and a common language for response teams is a model that could be shared with other colleges to inform their efforts in this area. The mental health assessment and strategy to increase campus safety is an appropriate addition to this plan. The college Sustainability Initiative Committee grew from a volunteer network to an AQIP Action Project on campus. Project goals, updates and feedback are transparent. Although the action project was retired in 2011, the committee keeps sustainability projects moving forward. All of the initiatives have merit, but one that is particularly noteworthy is the pharmaceutical distribution plan, that is currently open to JJC staff, faculty, and immediate family members within the same residence.

**2P2b, O.** This question focuses on the process JJC uses to determine its non-Instructional objectives for its external stakeholders. JJC lists many good initiatives, but those listed seem to focus on internal stakeholders instead of external. That being said, JJC does involve external community representatives. If this were to include the external community as well, it would be a great fit for this category.

**2P3b, S.** Reviewed without comment.

**2P4, O.** JJC has set up processes for assessing and improving the three main objectives utilizing a variety of quantitative and qualitative measures that involve obtaining input from students and stakeholders. Other measures include training and development, special operations, traffic and record management. Assessments for environmental health and safety take place on a regular preventative maintenance schedule and not a reactive schedule, where things are corrected after problems arise. However, based on the fourth section, it remains unclear how and whether JJC is addressing the opportunity raised in 2P3b of the 2009 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Although a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods are reported to be used to review and

assess Other Distinct Objectives, the process for conducting the assessment is unclear.

Additionally, the primary measures for assessing Institutional Sustainability are the completion of tasks. The college would benefit by identifying more quantitative measures for this objective.

**2P5, S.** Safety officers track information gathered from incident reports, communications, desk inquiries, and from focus groups on campus to determine safety needs. Several groups have been established to review the needs of the campus for sustainability. In addition, the college created a position of Environmental Health and Safety Manager in 2004 to lead the Environmental Health and Safety objective. While the College identifies several training opportunities for faculty and staff within the distinctive objectives: campus safety, institutional sustainability and environmental health and Safety, an opportunity exists for JJC to clarify the extent to which its investments of inputs and modifications to processes were effective in protecting the health, safety, and welfare of faculty, staff, and students.

**2P6, O.** Since 2006, JJC has made two large efforts in campus sustainability: The Campus Lake Management Team for improving water quality and the Environmental Audit conducted by students through specific courses. Data is collected on electricity, carbon dioxide emissions, car travel expenditures, recycling, and locally grown food served on campus. Reducing energy consumption and using “green” supplies are recent initiatives. However, this question asks, “How do you incorporate information on faculty and staff needs in readjusting these objectives or the processes that support them. In answering this question JJC only mentions surveys in the campus safety initiative. Unfortunately, this led to no discussion of how information from faculty and staff needs is used to readjust the objectives or the processes that support them. Doing this may allow JJC to not only determine if its systems are working through service testing (EHS), but also if the materials available meet the needs of faculty and staff. This also holds true for campus safety and Institutional Sustainability. As another example, in the Institutional Sustainability initiative it mentions mandated computer shutdowns and recycling efforts. It is unclear if this meets the needs of faculty and staff? Input from faculty and staff could help create more effective and efficient process for all three initiatives.

**2R1-2, O.** The results identified for campus safety are focused on the staffing levels in the area. The number of staff is not a measure of campus safety, and a better practice would be to report and analyze crime and incident data and determine if processes put in place are accomplishing JJC’s goal. The college would benefit by expanding results in areas of safety performance. This would help ensure resources efforts are accomplishing the stated objective

**2R3-4, OO.** While JJC has comparative statistics on campus safety measures, it has an opportunity to develop comparisons for its other two objectives involving sustainability and involving stakeholders in activities JJC has both 2R3 and 2R4 marked as 2R3, and it seems that the data under 2R4 really belongs to 2R3. For 2R3 JJC does include tables with data, but little discussion on what they learned from it. In 2R4 JJC discussed why their initiatives are important, but does not discuss how their results strengthen relationships. As an example, table 2.2 shows that in 2010 JJC had over four times more criminal offenses on campus than did an average of all IL Community Colleges. How does this strengthen the relationship with the community? Do discussions take place so that the community understands the data? These are all questions that JJC should consider: Statistics on campus crime, as reported in Table 2.2, especially in relation to the averages for all Illinois community colleges. Those statistics suggest JJC is aware of some instability in this area. Benefits may accrue from deeper and broader analyses of this data against the investments and modifications it describes in 2P4-2P6. JJC has the opportunity to address systematic and comprehensive nature of its processes and performance results.

**2I1-2, S.** JJC is making systematic and comprehensive improvements in accomplishing other distinctive objectives. Although not explained well within this category, the processes seem to be part of the organizational culture. Setting targets for improvement are part of the JJC planning system. A good example is the emerging communications process. In addition, JJC has identified the area of crisis management as a priority for the campus with Initiatives and processes that need to be established. The campus strategic planning process incorporates the process for selecting targets for improvement.

***AQIP Category 3: Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs:*** This category examines how your institution works actively to understand student and other stakeholder needs. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student and stakeholder identification, student and stakeholder requirements, analysis of student and stakeholder needs, relationship building with students and stakeholders, complaint collection, analysis, and resolution, determining satisfaction of students and stakeholders, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Joliet Junior College** for Category 3.

*The college seems to be well positioned to move into the alignment stage of their continuous improvement journey. JJC is striving to communicate the centrality of service to students and other key stakeholders.*



*As key components of its mission, JJC can gain momentum in these efforts by emphasizing how nonacademic units serve that mission. At this time, geographic separation and territorial issues between Academic Affairs and Student Development interfere with moving beyond the systematic level of maturity.*

**3P1, S.** JJC uses data and multiple systematic processes for assessing, identifying, analyzing, and addressing changing students' needs, including strategic planning processes, analysis of enrollment trends, assessment processes, advisory councils, course scheduling, surveys, and anecdotal information. They have established Enrollment and Retention Plans with specific goals in each area to address identified needs and recognize components that relate to student satisfaction rates and employment-related outcomes. JJC identifies many different student groups, assesses the needs of these groups using surveys such as the CCSSE and Noel-Levitz SSI, and is proactive in addressing needs through new initiatives. These include mandatory new student orientation for first time/full time students, tracking and expanding services for a growing minority population, new classroom space and additional human resources to manage growing schedules, and an aggressive developmental placement process. The College may benefit from efforts and analytics that focus on services and interventions that correlate with its retention and graduation rates. Additional benefits can accrue by demonstrating familiarity with the correlates of graduation rates present at the state and national levels and across comparable institutions. For example, improvements in enrollment and financial stability can result from efforts, analytics, and comparisons that provide a basis with which to articulate retention rate and graduation rate targets.

**3P2, SS.** In an effort to foster and maintain strong relationships, the college offers many opportunities to its students. The college rolled out a "3 Step Admissions" process at three area high schools to guide students through the enrollment process. Faculty engages with students outside the classroom by serving as academic advisors (career & technical programs) and advisors for many student organizations on campus. Additional staff has been added to the residential facilities to engage students in activities. The college was awarded a grant which assisted in developing a mental health assessment plan, infectious disease outbreak plan, and allowed for the purchase of equipment.

**3P3, S.** JJC identifies its stakeholders as other college and educational-related groups, and business and industry partners. Needs of these groups are identified using a 3-5 year strategic and operational planning process. This process includes eight scans that include competition, economics, education, demographics, labor force, politics, social values and lifestyles, and

technology. Even more information is gained through regular meetings and community involvement. Each group of stakeholders has a developed set of expectations and requirements that the university works to meet. JJC may find it beneficial to include aspects of the "public good" in its mission statement and with input from its stakeholders, articulate how it serves the public good.

**3P4, S.** JJC's organization structure change in 2008 expanding the number of deans has helped them be more responsive to stakeholders. Additionally, through their involvement and through newsletters, the college maintains and builds relationships with stakeholders.

**3P5, S.** JJC uses a variety of methods to determine if new student and stakeholder groups should be targeted. This process includes looking at demographic, enrollment, and economic data. JJC has been able to respond by establishing a new Frankfort Education Center and by expanding the Romeoville Campus as a result of K-12 growth and workforce and economic indicators. In addition, through its monitoring of student services and requests, student development has responded by adding Veterans Coordinator. The decision to add new programming and services is based on input from directly affected stakeholder groups, and is championed by individuals or departments within the institution. The College uses Advisory Committees to discern linkages between academic programs and stakeholder groups and the structure and linkages appear to address opportunities articulated in the 2009 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report.

**3P6a, S.** Processes exist to respond to academic and non-academic complaints. A Behavioral Intervention Team has been formed to help address behavioral concerns.

**3P6b, O.** Student input on academic programs and quality may be gathered through course evaluations, satisfaction surveys, and other means of data collection, and then analyzed to determine if changes are needed in academic areas.

**3R1, S.** Reviewed with no comment.

**3R2, O.** The College reviews and assesses the results from the CCSSE survey questions that address student satisfaction, using a key measure for student satisfaction whether a student would recommend a service or the institution to others; however, an opportunity exists to assess student satisfaction further. JJC reports on its analysis of data from the SSI in Table 3.2 and portrays its commitment to understanding better student satisfaction and importance levels. Additional analyses in cross tabulation form, which highlights areas for which there are high or low levels of satisfaction and importance, can lead to refinements in various processes and operations. For

example, the College may want to begin focusing on areas students rate high in terms of importance and low in terms of satisfaction and alongside those areas found to occupy the high importance, high satisfaction cell. It would also benefit the institution to have years of data analysis to be able to drill down to specific areas.

**3R3, O.** Although JJC identifies student-faculty interaction as playing a key role in student satisfaction, no data are reported on the five key indicators used. CCSSE survey results indicate that students' needs are met through the orientation program and college success course. Attendance in both areas shows increases in participation, as well as a link to retention; however this course is not required of students. One notable achievement, the college has established a Safe Zone program with over 100 members of the college community serving as trained allies.

**3R4, O.** Community scans are effective in gathering data on community needs but must be conducted regularly. An opportunity exists to consider another external scan to see if the image of the college improved among stakeholder groups since the 2007 analysis. In addition, table 3.3 shows that 52% of district residents have a positive or very positive image of JJC, while 47% had a neutral image. Although only 1.5% had a bad to very bad image of the institution, the 47% neutral image could be a concern. This neutral image may indicate that there is a significant portion of the district that do not understand or value what JJC does for the community itself.

**3R5, O.** Reviewed with no comment.

**3R6, O.** Reviewed with no comment.

**3I1, O.** Reviewed with no comment.

**3I2, S.** The Student Success grant was used effectively to develop programs that impact students directly to improve their degree of success. The creation of a planning team to achieve student success and completion is also a strength. The institution has set targets and seems to be tracking them. Communication with stakeholders seems to be very thorough, although more communication with the non-attending community member may be necessary. Access to tutoring services has increased, and JJC has expanded its Academic Intervention Process to include an early-alert tool, which culminated in 2326 interventions. As a result of the success of these activities, college administration sees an opportunity to and has formed a college wide team to address a "student success and completion" agenda.

**AQIP Category 4: Valuing People:** This category explores the institution's commitment to the development of its employees since the efforts of all faculty, staff, and administrators are required for institutional success. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to work and job environment; workforce needs; training initiatives; job competencies and characteristics; recruitment, hiring, and retention practices; work processes and activities; training and development; personnel evaluation; recognition, reward, compensation, and benefits; motivation factors; satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Joliet Junior College** for Category 4.

*JJC has created a systematic focus on Valuing People through significant environmental and institutional changes. JJC has developed strategies to address recognition, collaboration, improving morale, and an inclusive atmosphere where people feel valued. The college recognizes that professional development is a potential area for improvement, along with communication, which is an ongoing challenge for many colleges. JJC is being encouraged to measure changes in its culture and to evaluate those changes in relation to various performance gaps and professional development activities.*

**4P1, S.** JJC has spent time ensuring all positions are aligned with stated departmental and college objectives. The college has a system in place at job creation to determine credentials, skills, and values for all employee categories. The job descriptions are tracked in an online system and reviewed regularly. JJC emphasizes its core values in its orientation program for new employees.

**4P2, O.** JJC uses job descriptions, interviews, online tracking systems, and background checks to ensure that all employees meet or exceed the expectations of positions. However, JJC does not state how the required credentials, skills, and values are determined. An opportunity exists for JJC to identify a process for actually determining which credentials and skills are required for each position. Being able to make these determinations may increase the effectiveness of JJC's hiring process.

**4P3, S.** Along with an attractive benefit package, JJC has developed multiple initiatives (Inclusion Plan, Succession Plan, Exit Interviews, etc.) for employee retention and talent management that evidences their commitment to valuing people. Conducting exit interviews, identifying variables that might lead to resignations or early retirement, and the development of customized training could have multiple benefits including improving employee engagement, maximizing employee satisfaction and output, along with decreasing employee turnover.

**4P4, O.** While the college has established a comprehensive orientation program; it has an opportunity to enhance the program by adding information regarding the institution's history, mission, and values. It is unclear if new personnel have access to an assigned mentor or have a resource available to ask questions as they arise after the initial orientation. The college could benefit by evaluating the effectiveness of the employee orientation process.

**4P5, O.** Human Resources is working with the Diversity Advisory Council and other areas of the college community to support diversity and inclusion. Responding to the Feedback reports from 2005 and 2009, the college has developed a succession plan that will address the increase in retirements in the future. JJC has the opportunity to include personnel change in its strategic planning as it addresses future needs of the institution.

**4P6, O.** JJC's President meets monthly with all union presidents to get input on employee satisfaction. JJC participated in the PACE survey in 2009 and 2011 to measure employee satisfaction; this assessment includes comparisons to peers in multiple areas of management, and is normed with 45 community colleges across the continent. While results from the PACE survey show that college employees seem to be happy with the work environment, only 25.8% actually completed the assessment. An opportunity exists for the college to increase the employee participation rate the next time the survey is administered.

**4P7a, S.** New initiatives have been implemented at JJC regarding ethical practices. Board Policies implemented by 2012 include policies on workplace harassment and civility, retaliation, nepotism, whistleblower protection, employee discipline, criminal background checks, and communications through the JJC newsletter and portal. JJC communicates policies and expectations on ethics through the Board Policies Manual, Employee Handbook, the JJC newsletter, and the HR newsletter. The college could capitalize on this by making ethics training available on a more regular basis for all employees.

**4P8, S.** Discipline specific training is developed for faculty and "diverse measures of effective teaching and learning" are incorporated. Campus wide training efforts are tied to the strategic plan and specific weeks are set aside for personal and professional development. Tuition waivers for all and training stipends for adjuncts reinforce the perception that training is valued and an integral part of employee development.

**4P9, S.** A number of organizational learning plans are in place to support the development of all employees. The Professional Learning Center was developed as an AQIP QAP to provide the professional development opportunities for all college staff.

**4P10a, S.** JJC has systems in place for personnel evaluation that are aligned with its objectives for instructional and non-instructional programs and services, and is also engaged in a process of continual improvement of that system. Changes made by JJC include making the performance review process available online, creating a best practice committee, and requiring that performance objectives are aligned to JJC's strategic goals and its core values.

**4P10b, O.** JJC recognizes its appraisal systems for administration, staff, and nonacademic personnel are in need of improvement. The college is researching and investigating methods for improving or making significant changes to the current personnel performance system. It is unclear what disciplinary process exists for employees not working to potential. The College may gain benefits and informative data by moving away from appraisal systems that emphasizes information from the immediate supervisor and employee reflections to a system that takes into account the collaborative and cross functional nature of work, possibly adopting a 360 degree approach to personnel evaluations.

**4P11, S.** JJC has designed an award and recognition program based on its core values as a result of an AQIP QAP. It has engaged in continuous improvement in its benefits and compensation systems.

**4P12, O.** Reviewed with no comment.

**4P13, O.** Reviewed with no comment.

**4R1, O.** JJC lists the instruments they use in addressing human resources. However, an opportunity exists to analyze the data which could inform process improvement.

**4R2, O.** JJC uses multiple methods to quantify valuing people, but much of the data is based on the PACE survey. While PACE is a good instrument with favorable results, the relatively low percentage of respondents calls the validity of the results into question. JJC may want to determine why the vast majority of employees did not participate, which may help determine if the low response rate is due to the instrument itself or the campus climate.

**4R3, O.** Although results are reported as evidence of productivity and effectiveness in achieving goals, it is unclear how some of the results such as FTE per gross square foot and Equalized

Assessed Evaluation pertain to valuing people. The college would benefit by identifying results that are consistent with the processes identified in the category. JJC has the opportunity to display the productivity and effectiveness of its faculty in terms of student contact hours, number of graduates or classes taught that shows it is effective in achieving its goals as an institution of higher education.

**4R4, O.** JJC demonstrates that comparative data are available but has the opportunity to demonstrate how it compares with other higher education institutions or institutions outside higher education.

**4I1, S.** JJC is making improvements in valuing people. The institution is communicating and collaborating with employees to identify both the strengths and weaknesses associated with valuing people. JJC also plans on using the results to both identify new opportunities and monitor future trends in employee satisfaction.

**4I2, O.** While the college identifies a number of measures/metrics that would support targeting improvements in culture and infrastructure, any such improvements are not identified. JJC has the opportunity to cite the improvements that it has made in this category which have been identified through the surveys and AQIP processes.

***AQIP Category 5: Leading and Communicating:*** This category addresses how the institution's leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide planning, decision-making, seeking future opportunities, and building and sustaining a learning environment. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to leading activities, communicating activities, alignment of leadership system practices, institutional values and expectations, direction-setting, use of data, analysis of results, leadership development and sharing, succession planning, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Joliet Junior College** for Category 5.

*After experiencing significant change in leadership, JJC, through their new president, is stabilizing its senior administration and improving institutional communication. JJC exhibits a track record of collecting data in the area of leading and communicating and converting the data into actionable information, though recent changes have been reactive due to a lack of succession planning, and have called into question the rationale for current and future data collections. As an issue that has been identified in previous reviews, this should be a priority for JJC in the future.*

**5P1, S.** JJC undertakes a comprehensive strategic planning process every three years that involves conversations with internal and external stakeholders. During this process the mission and values are reviewed by the Board of Trustees, college administration, faculty and staff, members of the community, students, and other area stakeholders. This ensures that multiple viewpoints are sought when developing policies and budgets. Following a comprehensive review, the college retained its current mission, vision and core values.

**5P2a, S.** Leadership at JJC sets direction by aligning departmental operational plans directly with the institution's strategic plan. This alignment is then used to drive requests for technology, equipment, human resources, and financial resources. Leaders also align employee performance goals with the strategic plan to ensure that all employees are working to fulfill the goals of the strategic plan. High performance is realized through achieving the goals set in each administrative unit as a result of the strategic planning process.

**5P2b, O.** JJC can demonstrate its concern for perspectives and diversity in its planning processes in a more effective manner by incorporating bottom-up approaches or by making those approaches more apparent.

**5P3a, O.** The College uses several instruments to gather information from a number of external stakeholders and stakeholder groups; however, the actual process of collecting information from current and future students is unclear. JJC identifies the need for "formal and comparable measures of student and stakeholder needs" in relation to satisfaction, but measures other than satisfaction should also be considered to address needs, expectations, and value to stakeholders.

**5P4, S.** The core of sustaining a quality, learning environment is the development of an effective planning and budgeting process, which ensures that the college has adequate resources to meet its mission and that resources are targeted toward priorities, as opposed to just incremental. JJC has instituted planning processes that incorporate future needs as well as enhance a focus on students and learning.

**5P5, O.** JJC recognizes the need to develop systematic processes to align decision-making within the institution that enables it to fulfill its mission. One of the charges of their AQIP project is to define the work of committees and to determine which committees will be standing committees that fit into the governance process. While responsible divisions for each committee are listed, it is unclear how overall committee membership is determined from evidence presented. In



addition, the creation of a review or “check” cycle within the Plan-Do-Check-Act continuous improvement cycle might provide additional opportunities for input and revision from various groups as well as reinforce the continuous improvement culture within the college.

**5P6, O.** While JJC has accumulated sufficient data generated by both internal and external sources, it has the opportunity to incorporate this data in its strategic planning and decision-making in a systematic manner. Having a clear process for using data could help JJC ensure that the best decisions are being made, and that the institution’s resources are being used wisely.

**5P7, S.** Reviewed with no comment.

**5P8a, O.** JJC communicates a shared mission, vision, and values through new employee orientation and gift bag inserts. This is strengthened by the fact that JJC allows all current employees to have input when the institution’s mission, vision, and values are updated every three years. An opportunity does exist for JJC to communicate the mission, vision, and values in a continuous process to promote a shared view by all employees.

**5P9a, S.** JJC has opportunities for leadership enhancement and training at multiple levels of the college. The college president is championing leadership development by rolling out the Program for the Advancement of Leadership Managers (PALM) program. Other opportunities include the Joliet Chamber of Commerce Community Leadership School and the National Chair Academy.

**5P9b, O.** Although many opportunities for leadership enhancement and training exist, it is unclear how this leadership knowledge is shared within the institution. More can be gained by linking development activities and by promoting leadership as a concept separate from position or title, beyond its investments in senior level administrators.

**5P10, S.** JJC has specifically developed a strategic plan for leadership succession that ensures the maintenance and preservation of its mission, vision, and values.

**5R1, O.** JJC uses the PACE instrument to measure leading and communicating. JJC may consider using multiple measures for this category to help identify exactly where and why problems exist.

**5R2, O.** Reviewed with no comment.

**5R3, O.** Although JJC is making progress when compared to other institutions (increasing from an overall score of 3.26 to 3.51, with a four-year high of 3.68 and a norm base of 3.66), an opportunity exists to address the results of the PACE survey. Data indicate that while some scores

were improving, all have dropped in the last year, and JJC scores below the norm base in all areas. The college might examine best practices at other colleges to improve in these areas. The college may also want to implement a plan to move the college from a consultative form of governance to a more collaborative form.

**5I1, O.** JJC is making improvements supported by the fact that the employees are willing to voice their concerns, the institution values those concerns, and the institution makes changes based on those concerns. This culture of continuous improvement shows JJC is making progress in developing systems in Leading and Communicating through its strategic planning and adoption of AQIP QAPs. Although the college identified that communications, leadership succession and professional development were priority initiatives funded in the 2010 budget cycle, performance results are not articulated in these areas.

**5I2, S.** JC recognizes that governance and lines of communication through the committee process are both problematic areas and has developed two new AQIP QAPs to provide college-wide recognition of the importance of these two issues.

***AQIP Category 6: Supporting Institutional Operations:*** This category addresses the variety of institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to student support, administrative support, identification of needs, contribution to student learning and accomplishing other distinctive objectives, day-to-day operations, use of data, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Joliet Junior College** for Category 6.

*Processes for Institutional Operations are systematic and have been focused on updating the college's Master Plan to identify significant areas of growth and job creation in new labor market areas. To do this, JJC is taking satisfaction data from students and stakeholders into account while setting priorities, forming and implementing plans, and moving toward more comprehensive approaches to quality improvement. The development and use of communication strategies might also inform other efforts to improve communication, which are identified as challenges in categories 4 and 5.*

**6P1, O.** JJC addresses student needs through several college processes (strategic planning, environmental scanning, analysis of enrollment trends) and by analyzing the results of student survey results (CCSSE, graduate survey, students satisfaction survey). The college has an

opportunity to identify processes and surveys that would address the needs of other key stakeholders and create processes to intentionally solicit student feedback in many of the identified processes, instead of receiving it anecdotally.

**6P2, S.** JJC uses numerous methods to identify the administrative support service needs of faculty, staff, and administrators. This includes internal environmental scanning, the strategic and operational planning process, the PACE employee survey, and presidential interaction with the Board of Trustees. Clarifying the process for identifying the needs would ensure the data from these sources is being consolidated and analyzed in a way that high priority needs are being met.

**6P3, O.** Although JJC has a police department to provide campus security and an Environmental Health and Safety Department that oversees day-to-day safety questions and concerns, an integrated communication plan could help ensure that everyone at JJC understands the processes for physical safety and security, especially in light of the recent threats faced at U.S. campuses.

**6P4, S.** JJC manages its key support services processes through its organizational structures and feedback opportunities in student services and administrative services. These processes are enhanced by frequent reviews through strategic planning, budget planning, and reporting requirements. The college's recent purchase of the CAS Guidelines for student services offices presents another opportunity to improve student support services.

**6P5, O.** JJC shares several processes in student development that encourage knowledge sharing, innovation, and empowerment. However, limited processes have been identified for administrative services. JJC does have an opportunity to encourage knowledge sharing, innovation, and empowerment through two-way communication. JJC outlines many methods of one-way communication using medium like email, but does not identify a process to ensure that communication has actually taken place. Without knowing if the messages are actually received and understood, it is impossible to know if innovation and empowerment are occurring.

**6R1, O.** JJC lists several measures that support student support, administrative, and information technology services. Each student services area has a director that reports to a dean or to the Vice President of Student Development. Staff members within these departments provide information, solicit student input and resolve concerns, and assess the efficiency and effectiveness of services. Table 6.1 gives all the services provided and the indicators for success for each area. However, an opportunity exists to move beyond data collection and provide regular analysis of the data.

**6R2, O.** Table 3.2 exhibits student satisfaction for some student support services, but doesn't directly measure the processes in place for those services. There is an opportunity to expand on the performance results rather than discuss the number of financial awards made to students that are not necessarily reflective of JJC's student support services, but may be dependent on other factors.

**6R3, S.** JJC provides comprehensive quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate proficiencies in administrative support service processes, yet the college can expand the data to include performance results for other support services such as information technology, mail services, communications systems, and employee benefits plans.

**6R4, O.** JJC lacks clarity and specificity in its description of results leading to improvement in support of institution operations. The college can benefit by demonstrating greater depth in its analyses and providing rationale for future data collections based on those analyses. Opportunities exist through which JJC serve as a model for best practices among a set of comparable institutions.

**6R5, O.** JJC identifies benchmark results for student support services with the results of the CCSSE survey. An additional opportunity exists with student support services as longitudinal results are gathered through the Noel-Levitz SSI survey. The college also has an opportunity to develop a plan to develop benchmarks for administrative services.

**6I1, O.** JJC has made a number of improvements, but it is not clear how systematic and comprehensive the processes and performance results are and how the data gathered by the college led to these improvements.

**6I2, O.** Reviewed without comment.

***AQIP Category 7: Measuring Effectiveness:*** This category examines how the institution collects, analyzes, and uses information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to collection, storage, management, and use of information and data both at the institutional and departmental/unit levels. It considers institutional measures of effectiveness; information and data alignment with institutional needs and directions; comparative information and data; analysis of information and data; effectiveness of information system and

processes; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Joliet Junior College** for Category 7.

*JJC's systems for measuring effectiveness are reactive and the college is making moves to institutionalize this effort. JJC is inconsistent in how it uses data for continuous improvement though it is working to develop an inventory of databases that it can mine to help make better decisions in the future. The creation of a future Action Project appears to be an appropriate next step in moving ahead with further strategic continuous improvement efforts, which could have a significant positive effect college wide.*

**7P1, O.** While JJC has an in depth program review process for gathering data on both instructional and non-instructional programs, there is an opportunity for more detailed data on specific instructional and non-instructional objectives. JJC selects data as required by the ICCB requirement for Illinois Community Colleges. JJC also lists other data that it collects and lists in Table 1.2. The portfolio states that “Colleges in Illinois are encouraged to develop additional local standards for review...” but it is unclear whether JJC regularly develops these standards, how the standards are determined, and how the standards interface with the strategic plan and continuous improvement. That lack of clarity and other statements tend to highlight an underlying need for the College to develop a proactive model. For example, another statement, “Non instructional units and programs are encouraged to utilize a version of the program review process...” indicates that there are no set requirements or mandatory guidelines across the College. Opportunities exist in terms of standardization in those requirements and guidelines possibly addressing them in a new AQIP QAP along with analyses focused on goal attainment comparisons over multiple years, between units, and with peer-oriented benchmarks. JJC can gain benefits from standardization and analyses, including data sharing between departments and units that generate collaborative targets for improvement. It appears that comparison with external entities does take place at times, but the process is described as reactive and not deliberate. JJC can become more proactive by identifying a process for how the data is selected, how it is managed, or how it is distributed. Outlining a process for the selection, management, and distribution of data could ensure that JJC is collecting and using relative data.

**7P2, S.** JJC uses a model for measuring institutional effectiveness in attending to linkages among its mission, goals, priorities, gathers data to support its planning processes and AQIP QA projects, participates in the National Community College Benchmarking Project, and uses some benchmarks in comparing its performance to other institutions. JJC recognizes the value of comparing its performance to other institutions and against benchmarks or stretch goals it sets in

relation to its strategic planning and decision making processes. JJC outlines a process where the institution's mission and quality improvement efforts drive planning which in turn drive priorities, evaluations and identification of data. JJC is trying to determine the best way to share and utilize the data that has and will be collected. As it moves forward in drawing those comparisons, it can gain additional benefits and actionable data information by developing and validating one or more comparison groups. A next step toward alleviating its reactive posture seems to include comparative assessments on how well it is doing relative to its aspirations and perhaps other groups by which to assess its financial structure, its affordability, and/or other strategic orientations. Identifying ways to share and use this data could help improve the effectiveness of JJC's operations and aid its quality improvement efforts.

**7P3, S.** Data collection and storage methods are well documented though processes are described as “encouraged” suggesting they are optional. JJC identifies a six step process that is used by departments to request data from OIR&E. The Office of OIR&E has a well-defined process for serving data requests and is sensitive to the usability of the data. They define usable data as consistent, accurate, timely, collected systematically and accessible. This definition allows for communications in clarifying the need for the data, the timeline, and whether the need is ongoing or ad hoc. Centralized data are stored in the institution's ERP. Decentralized data are created by OIR&E, but stored and managed by individual departments that requested the data. The institution determines the needs of departments by systematically requiring program reviews and reports as well as routinely providing data to external agencies. JJC uses program review, accreditation, and annual reporting to determine data needs. A system is in place for departments to request additional data, which helps to ensure accuracy and consistency. The process extends beyond need determination and reporting to analysis, reporting and improvement. Data are available on request, but it unclear how these data inform a planned and recurring review and improvement process. It is also unclear how requests for proprietary data are handled, and how access levels are determined.

**7P4, O.** The process used to evaluate these data, to plan improvements and check to see that improvements have had the desired effect are in need of clarification. For instance, evidence of an improvement cycle is missing and/or unclear. As permitted according to data availability, JJC describes trends, measures, and surveys as the main components in its data analyses though it can be more proactive and deliberate in identifying direct measures of effectiveness by refining the methods it employs in data collections and statistical analyses.

**7P5, O.** JJC describes increasing efforts to compare data to peer benchmarks, including the NCCBP and NCES and identified some sources of comparative data for integration, as a consequence of recent training sessions on how to measure institutional effectiveness. The college has made excellent strides in utilizing comparative data (NCCBP, NCES, and IPEDS) within the higher education community. They realize that their efforts need to focus on benchmarking outside of higher education. In addition, JJC recognizes the need to gather and analyze data both to facilitate quality improvement initiatives and to comply with routine external reporting requirements. Continuous expansion of its data collection and monitoring efforts can provide information critical to the improvement of departments and programs.

**7P6, S.** JJC ensures department and unit analysis of data and information aligns with institutional goals through the strategic planning process. The strategic planning process drives most other processes at the institution, including budgeting and program review. This information is shared throughout the institution through various electronic systems and the JJC Weekly News.

**7P7, S.** Reviewed without comment.

**7R1, S.** JJC measures performance and effectiveness of information systems by focusing on system security and data integrity and reliability. It regularly collects data and information about student admissions and registration, human resources, and communities within its district. The college collects and reports data, as required by external audiences (Table 7.2). JJC can gain meaningful and actionable information about its effectiveness by seeking results that emerge from correlation analysis and measurement triangulation. Additional benefits include gaining information with which the College can assess the validity and reliability of its data and results and the extent to which its data and information meet various internal needs and inform efforts targeting performance improvement and demonstrates effectiveness.

**7R2, O.** The strategic planning process is inclusive of the entire college community and the college has a history of completing the goals defined in the process. JJC identifies an opportunity to seek data benchmarks among peers and to compare results over multiple years to identify trends. The college reports that the strategic and operational planning processes enables it to meet its goals, but the only data reported were for the Information Technology Area. JJC identifies a plethora of data that it collects and can benefit from more work developing and validating measures about the performance of the system in generating information and managing knowledge. This means data collection efforts need to be both effective and efficient and also

designed to allow assessments of the information system itself. Refinement of the system can help JJC learn more about how well various needs are being met. The College can draw from and expand upon the two examples it uses to show that its data are used to measure effectiveness and to present evidence that the institution's mission and goals are supported by its system for Measuring Effectiveness. Expanding the existing results and linking them to processes in this area would help the organization demonstrate goal achievement.

**7R2-3, O.** JJC recognizes that it has the opportunity to gather comparative data with regard to processes for Measuring Effectiveness in relation to other institutions of higher education or organizations outside higher education. In addition, JJC identifies an opportunity to seek data benchmarks among peers and to compare results over multiple years to identify trends. However, the College identifies a plethora of data that it collects, but does not identify how its performance and effectiveness compare to other institutions and organizations. JJC can gain additional benefits from an external, proactive focus that allows for such benchmark-oriented comparisons and provides information regarding the satisfaction of internal needs and the linking of processes to results and of results to improvements.

**7I1, S.** JJC is making improvements through the Colleague Improvement Project. This project is geared towards assessing the college's use of the Colleague system, identifying areas in which it can be improved, and improving how employees can engage with the system. The improvement of JJC's systems begins with a focus on institutional mission and goals. Depending upon available resources, plans for ensuring outcomes associated with stakeholder needs are developed and implemented. Plans are assessed and evaluated, with results used to make adjustments in the goals of the institution.

**7I2, S.** JJC's culture of strategic planning and quality improvement help select specific processes for improved performance results in measuring effectiveness. The recognition process is used to set priorities and areas of improvement, which are then prioritized. JJC discusses setting targets in reaction to external mandates. However, it is unclear how these improvements impacted internal audiences and how processes and targets are set for internal stakeholders.

***AQIP Category 8: Planning Continuous Improvement:*** This category examines the institution's planning processes and how strategies and action plans are helping to achieve the institution's mission and vision. It examines coordination and alignment of strategies and action plans; measures and



performance projections; resource needs; faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities; analysis of performance projections and results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Joliet Junior College** for Category 8.

*JJC claims it has a systematic planning process that is focused on its mission and vision. The planning process continues to evolve as JJC pursues linkages between operational and strategic plans, and will use this linkage to more effectively allocate resources. Although a systematic structure may be in place, it is not clear how the structure is supported or informed, and how goals are determined given data challenges and leadership turnover.*

**8P1, O.** JJC has a well-defined process for strategic planning that identifies priorities focusing organization's efforts. A comprehensive environmental scanning process is completed by senior leadership helps identify trends enabling the college to anticipate and respond to change in the external environment. Those processes cover a three year period and include scanning the environment (both internal and external) and collecting data through CCSSE, PACE, and program evaluation. The planning process is driven by the organization's mission, vision, and values and is oriented towards the future. At JJC, strategic planning processes recognize major decisions to be faced over a three- to five-year period beyond the current year. An internal scan identified critical issues and a need to examine JJC's culture, organizational structure, relevant data, and various strengths and weaknesses. Departmental and academic plans tend to flow from the institution's plan. JJC could benefit by making its strategic goals more specific. As an example, strategic goal one is to "Increase Student Success and Completion." Quantifying this goal with a percentage to increase student success and completion would make the goal more measurable. While an environmental scan is identified as a means by which to identify trends, opportunities exist in terms of clarifying the formal process, noting the frequency and duration of that process, and identifying the entities engaged in the interpretation of results and the description of trends. The College can also benefit by communicating a process in which it addresses unexpected or emerging issues beyond those anticipated in the original five year strategic plan, as elements within a broader effort aligning future strategic planning and continuous improvement and relating them to past improvement efforts and to AQIP principles and categories. Clarification of processes, measures and analysis methods can help JJC demonstrate that its efforts at Planning Continuous Improvement are indeed systematic and systemic.

**8P2, S.** Operational plans are developed employing a number of different strategies and stakeholders, including a SWOT analysis, and planning for programs, facilities, enrollment, HR, marketing and communications, and budget. Various departments and committees are involved in identifying objectives, which suggests widespread involvement and input. The college's operational planning process directs departmental plans describes action steps that address shorter term goals. The processes are linked to the strategic plan, which contains the longer term goals. Five long term strategies are developed during the strategic planning process. The strategies are determined following the scanning processes and data collection. JJC can further capitalize on this strength by clarifying how it selects and prioritizes short and long-term strategies that link to its mission and vision, which go above and beyond the ICCB requirements. In addition, Figure 8.2 could explain the process for selecting the college's strategic goals. While JJC identifies many planning processes and priorities and describes the breadth of its planning processes, it appears ready to add depth by integrating those processes. The operational plan appears to be a subset of the strategic plan and needs clarification in terms of how the operational planning goals align and intersect with the strategic plan, the college mission, and various AQIP and QAP efforts.

**8P3, O.** Key action plans are developed at the department level and are aligned with the budget process. Each department at JJC is asked to construct a one-year plan that determines resource, equipment, and staffing needs in anticipation for planning for the fiscal year budget. As departments submit requests within their one year plans, it is unclear how and by whom they are reviewed, approved and prioritized, and how this decision making aligns with the strategic plan and budgeting process. The plan includes analysis of data as previously described and information from program reviews and college plan documents. JJC may want to develop a process where these plans are integrated so as to identify areas of duplication or areas that are not addressed. This could help improve both the effectiveness and efficiency of JJC's planning process. While a timeline of events is provided in Figure 8.1, JJC can further capitalize on its planning processes by adding clarity in terms of describing its stakeholders and their involvement and all the processes for identifying, revising, and communicating strategies. JJC does incorporate data from some planning documents, but can benefit by demonstrating how action plan development support short and long-term strategies and continuous improvement goals and how those plans fit annual tactics or operating plans and multiple-year strategies.

**8P4, O.** JJC identifies a process where senior administrators identify and prioritize needs whether present or absent from departmental plans. Developing and communicating the processes

used in aggregating, coordinating, and aligning plans result in greater efficacy. JJC has the opportunity to develop an institutional planning process that aligns with the institution's values and mission and takes into account the perspectives of managers and leaders at multiple levels within and across the organization.

**8P5, O.** JJC does not have aligned processes for defining objectives, selection of measures, or selecting performance targets for its organizational strategies and action plans. As described in its response, JJC has a disjointed planning process that varies across departmental and institutional levels. The college recognizes the effort needed to operationalize the strategic goals and the work needed develop a consistent process to select measures and set performance targets. Centralizing the measurement system may help address this serious, longstanding issue. JJC recognizes that selecting measures and setting performance targets is an opportunity for improvement. The college describes "wide variability in terms of types and commitment to departmental evaluation". JJC could benefit from gathering best practices from peer institutions with measurements and performance targets based on previous data and performances, benchmarking with other institutions or industry, accreditation benchmarks or requirements, and the identification and development of new data elements. Performance targets for organizational strategies and action plans ideally include many aspects of high-performing organizations and build on past successes.

**8P6, O.** While JJC states that managers are requested to align budget requests to strategic goals and therefore the college mission, the college recognizes the need to improve the processes divisions and departments follow in developing and communicating objectives and strategies. The college has identified a three year financial plan, is currently working to revise those process and to demonstrate stronger linkages among its planning, budgeting, and evaluative processes. JJC reviews both revenue and capital expenditures when creating the three-year financial plan. JJC also integrates environmental scanning into this process. JJC has an opportunity to develop a system aligning strategy selection, action plans, and financial planning with results from outcome assessments and resource gap analyses. Those alignments can enable the institution to better demonstrate how its budgets relate to results from assessments of plans. JJC can further capitalize on its resource base by establishing significant linkage between its strategy selection and action plans by developing processes that connect strategic planning processes to recent results and improvement efforts, by analyzing gaps between current resources and future needs, and by relating the contents of Table 8.7 to the text that surrounds it.

**8P7, O.** JJC identifies a process where environmental scans are used to help identify changes in the external environment. There is no process described to limit risk in projects that move forward. JJC may want to develop a process where possible scenarios are developed, along with contingency plans for each possible scenario. Obviously JJC cannot predict and plan for every possible scenario, but planning for the most likely ones could help JJC plan for the future. While the College states that risk is taken into account during planning, there is no clear process described by which risk is identified, assessed and addressed.

**8P8, O.** There does not appear to be a process to ensure that professional development opportunities are taken, that the development is appropriate and timely, and that these opportunities are linked to the ongoing and changing needs of the institution. There does not appear to be a formal process to link these professional development opportunities to the strategic plan or Action Plans. JJC has the opportunity to provide professional development training for its faculty, staff, and administrators, and can communicate information on its strategic plan and action projects to all in the institution and key stakeholder groups.

**8R1, O.** JJC uses the PACE survey and the strategic planning process to measure the effectiveness of its planning processes. It is unclear how the strategic planning process is used to analyze the planning process, in part, due to the scarce amount evidence; for instance, only one year of data and one national level benchmark provide a base from which JJC draws comparison. With an expansion of methods JJC employs in its comparisons, it also has an opportunity to identify specific measures for the process and ways to measure them. JJC holds PACE data on perceptions of employees toward planning. Also, evaluation of the college's planning processes is conducted through the Strategic Planning process and their activities of the planning teams involved. While the college uses the PACE survey in a manner limited to assessing employee involvement in the planning process, a small percentage of the college community completed the survey. An opportunity exists to enhance employee participation in PACE by gaining information that will improve their involvement or experiences in the planning process. JJC uses the PACE survey items but has the opportunity to identify, validate, and use additional, more relevant measures of effectiveness and methods for assessing its planning process and systems. These measures may include graduation rates, retention data, program reviews, financial data, and more.

**8R2, O.** Reviewed with no comment.

**8R3, OO.** Since the last Systems Portfolio, in 2009, JJC continues its pursuit toward the identification of targets for performance. The College can benefit by analyzing the extent to which its current strategies and action plans are effective over the next three years and by capitalizing on what it learns from a system that articulates a date by which to implement and validate a performance assessment program. As an item of possible interest to others seeking to learn from the nation's first community college, that system can include information about the rationale supporting performance target formation, a record communicating turning points, a set of parameters it JJC employs in its processes, and so forth.

**8R4, O.** While the college states that it recognizes the need for performance targets and comparative data and it compares favorably to peers, comparable results are absent or unclear. The college has an opportunity to utilize more fully, methodically, and intentionally the results from NCCBP, CCSSE, and the Noel-Levitz SSI to gain additional benchmark data that will enhance its planning processes. The College can extract information from the SSI by examining satisfaction ratings against importance ratings, tabulating those ratings into a matrix that relates items across high and low ratings (for instance, high satisfaction and low importance), comparing gap scores within JJC and across institutions possibly against planning parameters, and/or some other approach that produces statistics identifying areas for improvement

**8R5, O.** JJC recognizes that full compliance with departmental and program planning is an area for improvement. JJC identifies an opportunity to link the actions of the institution with its mission. With this linkage JJC can affirm the extent to which its resources are being used as effectively and efficiently as possible.

**8I1-8I2, OO.** JJC understands that its planning process needs improvement. JJC has prioritized the need to establish a strategic planning process at the college that engages employees and helps them understand the value in planning. One solution that JJC identifies is to develop a Strategic Monitoring Evaluation Team. In terms of this effort to enhance further organizational collaboration in the planning process, the college realizes an opportunity exists to implement a Strategic Planning Team that complements the work done in concert with the OIR&E. In addition, JJC has the opportunities to define its culture and assess its infrastructure while using data and results to modify its planning processes, to develop and validate its performance measures, to evaluate its subsequent performance, and to identify additional areas for improvement, By capitalizing on what it learned from recent reviews and efforts, JJC can develop measures that enable it to evaluate the performance of its planning processes, to highlight results

and specific areas for improvement, and to build a systematic and comprehensive planning process for continuous improvement. The College continues to recognize the need to improve its planning process. Other institutions can benefit from information that JJC may share about its history of improvement given its origins as "the nation's first community college" (2009 Systems Portfolio, p. 14, Critical Characteristic Item O1).

**AQIP Category 9: Building Collaborative Relationships:** This category examines your institution's relationships – current and potential – to analyze how they contribute to the institution's accomplishing its mission. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to identification of key internal and external collaborative relationships; alignment of key collaborative relationships; relationship creation, prioritization, building; needs identification; internal relationships; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Joliet Junior College** for Category 9.

*JJC has a value of collaboration along with a state mandate to collaborate, which drives their focus on partner development. However, the college recognizes the supporting processes are reactive and need to be more integrated. As an example, the college recognizes the need to create priorities within its vast array of collaborative relationships with business, government, and other organizations.*

**9P1, SS.** JJC has established a close and continuous relationship with the educational institutions from which it receives students and employs two full-time and one part-time recruiter for the 32 local high schools. JJC hosts an annual breakfast for high school counselors, and produces an electronic journal titled Inside Scoop targeted towards these counselors. JJC's expanded relationships with high schools have led to an increase in dual-credit enrollment from 1857 in 2007 to 12,086 in 2011. JJC's focus on Discover JJC and an increase in recruitment visits contributed to this increase.

**9P2a, O.** JJC identifies numerous relationships with other organizations and institutions, but does not identify processes for creating, prioritizing, and building these relationships. Identifying or creating these processes could help JJC to improve the existing processes, or to create a systematic process of continuous improvement for relationship development that could have a significant positive impact at the college.

**9P2b, S.** JJC has established articulation agreements with senior institutions that involve tuition freeze, concurrent advising, orientation programs, etc. to ensure student and graduate transition to

other institutions. JJC also has formed collaborative, consortia relationships with area four year colleges for obtaining grants. Working with projects and activities with economic development groups allows JJC to ensure that specific economic needs are met. JJC has provided information and communication links regarding transfer and employment opportunities to its students and other key stakeholders.

**9P3, S.** JJC has developed relationships with outside services to students that are beyond the expected. One area is providing student housing services for their students. JJC has partnered with a private student housing company that has built and manages student housing on JJC property. The new partnership has provided affordable housing for both in-district and out-of-district students. In addition, JJC has forged relationships with community-based organizations for child-care services and made referrals to students in need of services. Another example is the Illinois Secretary of State Volunteer Literacy Grant. JJC recruits, trains, and deploys individuals to help students in need of extra support. Organizations providing services to students were focused on the Foundation, alumni, and philanthropic collaborations. These are important; however the college may be able to expand its services to students by expanding relationships to other organizations that support student success.

**9P4, S.** Representatives from the private sector sit on JJC's Program Advisory Boards, providing input on trends within their business and industry, offering ideas on curriculum to improve student learning, and advising on student program outcomes. JJC provides services to employers such as Work Keys testing and job listing services in Career Services and Job Fairs. JJC also has a program that works with local businesses to provide online/virtual career coaches for students.

**9P5, S.** JJC has built relationships with numerous associations, agencies, consortia, and organizations in the community that support the values and mission of the college, enhance instruction (ie. automotive program new car and state of the art equipment donations), and provide services to students (ie. new student housing complex).

**9P6, S.** JJC recognizes the value of community collaborations to resource acquisition and diversification efforts and it affirms its plans for pursuing professional development and enhancing community visibility. The college has adopted processes that allow continuous communication between the partnership groups and the college, and the college incorporates that information into its strategic and operational planning processes. Environmental scanning, program advisory councils, surveys, and Board meetings ensure that their partnerships are

meeting the varying needs of those involved. JJC could further capitalize on this process by engaging institutional partners during the planning process to develop common goals and better understand the needs of the partner institution. JJC could then create measures that specifically target the needs identified by their partners.

**9P7, O.** JC identifies cross-training and a collaborative bridge program as examples of creating and building relationships between and among departments within the institution. Although a few examples of collaboration are cited, there appears to be a need for greater connections throughout the institution. JJC has an opportunity to identify and implement a process to intentionally build relationships and to enhance communication and linkages between and among departments. Relationships are more than cross-training and working together. Departments and units could help develop a process where seamless integration occurs as departments are able to better identify and understand each other's needs.

**9R1, S.** JJC uses many measures for collaborative relationships, which ensures the relationship is meeting its intended purpose. These include dual-credit enrollment, high school yield, transfer rates, number of graduates in career programs, donations, graduate surveys, and community surveys. These results provide valuable information for identifying best practices and identifying future opportunities for improvement.

**9R2, S.** JJC uses the increase in activities and projects, the numbers of students and outside partners involved in the activities, and the numbers of students hired by outside partners to give evidence of the positive results. Dual-credit enrollment at JJC has increased dramatically in the last five years. The college also identifies other data showing that many area businesses have employed JJC graduates, and that transfer to 4-year institutions has increased. The college could benefit from applying the lessons learned from these best practices to foster success in other areas of the college.

**9R3, OO.** The College stands to benefit from in-depth analyses of existing data through which it can identify and develop measures that give direction and insight to the process of forming, implementing, and evaluating community collaborations. Currently they do not track any external data for benchmarking purposes. The college has an opportunity to improve in this area by linking the performance results with its processes for Building Collaborative Relationships and comparing those linkages to the results from other higher education institutions and/or those organizations outside higher education.



**9I1, O.** JJC recognizes it needs to communicate and integrate its processes for Building Collaborative Relationships so that it becomes systematic and comprehensive. The college can begin closing the loop by identifying future needs for data based on the results from analyses of current data and by linking those results to specific processes. JJC and other AQIP institutions can benefit from a model of quality improvement that demonstrates how structures, processes, and interactions across them generate results and improvements in relation to intended outcomes. It remains unclear whether JJC is able to separate inputs from outcomes and routine operations from proactive strategies in the context of developing, implementing, and evaluating collaborative relationships with the community. As a next step, JJC can benefit from a review of the procedures in pursuing community engagement classifications, as articulated by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and in the centralization of processes such as those involving grant applications.

**9I2, O.** JJC's culture of strategic planning and quality improvement could help build specific processes to improve and to set targets for improved performance results in Building Collaborative Relationships. Improvement in this area could help JJC identify new areas for relationships, ensure relationships meet the needs of its partner institutions, and ensure that the partnerships are serving JJC as effectively and efficiently as possible. The college identifies targets for internal processes; an opportunity exists to identify targets for building external collaborative relationships. In addition, it has the opportunity to identify how its culture and infrastructure help it to select these specific processes to improve.

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## ACCREDITATION ISSUES JOLIET JUNIOR COLLEGE

The following section identifies any areas in the judgment of the Systems Appraisal Team where the institution either has not provided sufficient evidence that it currently meets the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation* (and the core components therein) or that it may face difficulty in meeting the *Criteria* and core components in the future. Identification of any such deficiencies as part of the Systems Appraisal process affords the institution the opportunity to remedy the problem prior to Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

*No accreditation issues noted by the team.*

**5P1 & 5P2. HLC Core Component 1.A *The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.***

JJC indicates that review of the mission and vision occurs as an annual part of the strategic planning process and is included as part of the plan. The revision and discussion involves both internal and external stakeholders. Every three years the mission and values of JJC are reviewed by the Board of Trustees, college administration, faculty and staff, members of the community, and other area stakeholders. Leadership at JJC sets direction by aligning departmental operational plans directly with the institution's strategic plan, which is aligned to the mission and values. This alignment is then used to drive requests for resources. Leaders also align employee performance goals with the strategic plan to ensure that all employees are working to fulfill the goals of the strategic plan.

**4P7 HLC Core Component 2.A *The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows fair and ethical policies and processes for its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.***

JJC has clearly defined ethical practices in the Board Policy Manual and Employee Handbook. When an employee does not meet the standards for ethical practice it is the responsibility of the immediate supervisor to take action and remedy the situation.

JJC states that it holds all employees to high ethical standards. Board policies have been updated to include workplace harassment and civility, retaliation, nepotism, whistleblower protection, employee discipline, and criminal background checks.

**1P4 & 1P12. HLC Core Component 3.A. *The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.***

JJC has processes in place for responding to all stakeholders needs for designing programs and courses that are relevant, meet goals, address student needs, as well as meet higher education requirements for level of challenge. As an example, JJC regularly conducts strategic planning to provide focus for academic programming needed by district stakeholders. After development, JJC has processes in place to evaluate credit, non-credit, and dual enrollment programs.

**1P4 & 1P13. HLC Core Component 4.A. *The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.***

The five year program review conducted by the faculty and staff of the program, includes comparing outcome results, cost effectiveness and whether or not it addresses student needs. Major curriculum changes are processed through JJC's curriculum committee. The process is transitioning from a compliance process to an improvement process. The process is starting to align with the budget process.

**8P6 HLC Core Component 5.A. *The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.***

Joliet Junior College has provided no direct evidence of support for Core Component 5A. It is unclear

how resources are allocated to support current educational programs. While the Three-Year Financial Plan plays a role integrating the annual planning cycle with the college's Academic Quality Improvement Program and aligning the financial resources necessary with strategic planning objectives, the plan lacks clarity in its treatment of the first, perhaps foremost, strategic goal of the institution: to increase student success and completion. Included in this goal are priorities to improve data collection, provide orientation and advising to all students, develop a master schedule of courses, provide specialized transitional programs, and increasing technological resources. JJC does indicate that they are currently developing a process for aligning department plans to financial resources, which seems to be in process for an extended period of time.

An opportunity attached to 8P4 in the 2009 Systems Portfolio, for instance, refers to a strategic planning process in need of linkages demonstrating how academic programs interface directly with students, faculty, and departments. Furthermore, the opportunity statement for 8R4 from that same Portfolio encourages JJC to improve its programmatic and departmental planning processes by helping employees to gain clarity between planning and actions, to understand how their work is guided by administrative processes, and to compare the institution's measures of effectiveness and performance to those tracked by many other higher education organizations. Taking the current and recent Portfolios into account, it appears that JJC is unable to effectively provide substantive evidence of how it supports Core Component 5A, and immediate action can prevent escalation of this matter to a future level at which it can become an accreditation issue.

**5P3 & 5P8. HLC Core Component 1.B. *The mission is articulated publicly.***

New employees are provided with information regarding the strategic plan through the orientation process. For external stakeholders JJC communicates its mission through its website and other publications. Evidence exists affirming JJC articulates its mission to the public.

**1P6. HLC Core Component 2.B. *The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.***

The college has a solid communication and marketing process in place which allows for transparency with students regarding appropriate preparation required to meet the program objectives. JJC uses its website, printed materials, and presentations as channels to communicate with students and the public. Recruiters, counselors and advisors assist students in navigating college processes.

**1P1 & 1P2. HLC Core Component 3.B. *The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.***

JJC has defined and assesses student learning outcomes (SLOs). The JJC General Education Core curriculum courses and major courses conform to the Illinois Articulation Initiative's (IAI) requirement to

measure student outcomes that are aligned with the IAI prescribed outcomes. To get to this point, JJC conducted an inventory, created indicators and rubrics, and is currently pilot testing those rubrics.

**1P2 & 1P18.** HLC Core Component **4.B.** *The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.*

Evidence of commitment resides in form creations, personnel recruitments, agreement executions, and academic program review cycles. JJC is making systematic and comprehensive improvements to help students learn. JJC has begun a large number of initiatives and processes to improve campus life, measure student learning, and gather assessment data.

**5P5 & 5P9.** HLC Core Component **5.B.** *The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.*

JJC has started an Action Project and is confident that it will clarify the institution's governance and administrative structures and processes. JJC's president is starting a year-long leadership development program known as the Program for the Advancement of Leadership of Managers (PALM). Administration will be trained by external facilitators, and will then share that information with the entire college. JJC conducts PACE surveys to measure leadership, its perception, and communication at the college. Strategic planning development and implementation occurs through committees and ad hoc groups that collaborate to fulfill goals.

**1P4 & 1P10.** HLC Core Component **1.C.** *The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.*

JJC has created an advisory board representing high schools and career centers, has adopted multiple locations and delivery methods, and serves a diverse and geographically distributed student body with flexible satellite locations. The institution also uses environmental scans to monitor the education and labor force. JJC also serves the needs of its students by sustaining a Veterans Alliance group, offering some programs in Spanish, creating an Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, and an office of Student Accommodations and Resources to serve students with disabilities.

**5P2.** HLC Core Component **2.C.** *The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.*

JJC has an elected Board of Trustees composed of seven members and a student trustee. This board meets twice per month to set policies and procedures for the institution. The board works with administration to establish a budget and goals for the institution. Table 5.1 identifies the roles of leadership in setting directions and aligning JJC's mission, vision, values, and commitment to high performance. The role of the governing board could be articulated more clearly.

**4P2 & 4P10** HLC Core Component **3.C.** *The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.*

JJC has not addressed Core Component 3C but has the opportunity to demonstrate that it has a sufficient number of qualified employees to service its programs and student services. Evidence does exist in the overview that JJC employs over 1600 full and part-time employees. Evidence exists in 4P2 and 4P10 affirming processes are in place to screen applicants for credentials, skills, and values.

Specific enhancements to the hiring process have been made since JJC's last portfolio submission in 2008. These enhancements include:

- Conducting criminal background checks for all full-time employees, adjuncts, part-time employees,
- Student workers and all volunteers according to Board policy approved in 2009.
- Conducting additional in-depth background checks for certain areas, such as the Child Care Center, Nursing Department, and Campus Police.
- Conducting psychological testing for Campus Police.
- Conducting fitness-for-duty screening for specific areas that require physical requirements
- Using an online credentialing organization to certify credentials and warehouse records of new hires.
- Incorporating JJC's core values in new-hire orientations and revised job descriptions.
- Adding core job competencies needed for each entry level through senior management.
- Approving the Inclusion Plan 2013-2015 by District 525 Board of Trustees.
- Developing an online format for training search committees.

**3P1. HLC Core Component 4.C. *The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.***

JJC has adopted multiple tools and programs that demonstrate its attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates including the Enrollment Management and Retention Plan for 2011-14, in which it has established five retention goals that focus on increasing the success of developmental learners, assisting first generation and underrepresented students with financial aid literacy awareness, successful transition to JJC, early-intervention programs, and preparing students for transition for further education or the labor market once they leave JJC. The first year of that plan has been implemented. The college also has a New Student Orientation program, annual strategic plans, placement testing, annual CCSSE assessments, Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventories and more.

**5P2 & 5P6. HLC Core Component 5.C. *The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.***

Evidence exists affirming the institution's engagement in systematic and integrated planning. Every three years the mission and values of JJC are reviewed by the Board of Trustees, college administration, faculty and staff, members of the community, and other area stakeholders. Leadership at JJC sets direction by aligning departmental operational plans directly with the institution's strategic plan, which is aligned to the mission and values. This alignment is then used to drive requests for resources. Leaders also align

employee performance goals with the strategic plan to ensure that all employees are working to fulfill the goals of the strategic plan. Internal and external data are gathered centrally through the ICCB, and are distributed and used for planning and goal setting within the divisions.

**3P3 & 3P5. HLC Core Component 1.D. *The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.***

The mission statement, which appears in the AQIP Systems Portfolio (November, 2012) as "JJC enriches people's lives through affordable, accessible, and quality programs and services. The college provides transfer and career preparation, training and workforce development, and a lifetime of learning to the diverse community it serves" (p. 8), demonstrates indirect evidence of the institution's commitment to the public good. JJC also demonstrates its commitment to the public good through its involvement with stakeholder groups and by monitoring demographic and economic patterns in the community.

Joliet identifies many stakeholder groups and their needs through meeting and strategic planning, and serves their needs through outreach to the community.

The college has a variety of methods to connect with the public including the Foundation boards, alumni, high school counselors, business and industry, and advisory committees. Table 3.1 lists many opportunities available at JJC for students and members of the community that exhibits its service to the public good. JJC monitors the needs of the area through many contacts and programs that also demonstrate its commitment to Core Component 1D and the development of new educational centers (Frankfort, Romeoville), programs (Veterans Center), and other new programs.

**1P11. HLC Core Component 2.D *The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.***

Policies, documents, and processes affirm the commitments of institution to freedoms and pursuits. As an example, article 8 of the contractual agreement between JJC and faculty details academic freedom as it relates to faculty. Relevant excerpts include: "By academic tradition and by philosophical principle an institution of higher learning is committed to the pursuit of truth and to its communication to others," "A college or university is an institution of higher learning. Those within it have as a first concern evidence and truth rather than particular judgments of institutional benefactors, concerns of churchmen, public opinion, social pressure, or political proscription," and "But to be true to what they profess academically, individuals and institutions must remain intellectually free and allow others the same freedom." Common syllabi incorporate students' rights and protect free speech and inquiry.

**1P7 & 1P15. HLC Core Component 3.D. *The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.***

At JJC, counselors review student preparation and new student orientation helps guide students to appropriate classes and programs. Tutoring assistance aids in effective teaching and learning, and the faculty are offered regular professional development opportunities.

**7P2 & 7P4. HLC Core Component 5.D. *The institution works systematically to improve its performance.***

JJC outlines a process where the institution's mission and quality improvement efforts drive planning which in turn drive priorities, evaluations and identification of data. Evidence exists that suggests JJC is working systematically to improve its performance. However, efforts to develop and document that evidence appear to be reactive and process intensive essentially in need of direct linkages to results and improvements. For instance, 7P4 states processes for analyzing information and data to improve performance are described in Category 8 and includes statements in Category 7 that refer reviewers to Category 8 raising concerns about the JJC's ability to convert planning processes into outcome assessment and performance improvement. Overall, it is unclear whether JJC learns from its operational experiences and applies that learning to improve its effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability.

As they pertain to opportunities for organization learning, reviewers report finding evidence of planning and improvement efforts that can help JJC to gain a broader and deeper perspective on areas for improvement, to conduct statistical analysis on existing data in order to identify future data needs, and to share results from those analyses throughout the institution. Below are reports of evidence found in various planning processes and improvement efforts.

JJC participated in the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP), which gathers information regarding student performance and goal attainment, course retention and success rates, market penetration, cost per credit hour, and other important performance metrics. Along with the NCCBP, JJC uses other sources of data such as CCSSE Survey results, PACE Survey results, and the JJC Institutional Data Book. The college is in the initial stages of determining the best way to share and utilize the findings by involving faculty, staff, and administration throughout the process.

The Model of Institutional Effectiveness articulates a systematic process the college follows to improve performance. The college relates that model to its planning processes, ICCB, and AQIP. JJC's culture of strategic planning and quality improvement appears ready to select specific processes for improved performance results in measuring effectiveness. Results from CCSSE, PACE, NCCBP, and the JJC Institutional Data Book are helping to inform those processes.

Figure 7.1 and Table 7.1 indicate that data are available and inform JJC's strategic plan, align with the college's mission and provide evaluation information. In addition, data are available to inform AQIP processes, including the portfolio categories and Action Projects. Figure 7.2 describes a systematic assessment cycle of performance improvement.

**1P11. HLC Core Component 2.E. *The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.***

The college articulates policies and procedures that allow its community to acquire, discover and apply knowledge responsibly through the student handbook and college catalog. This is also supported by the Student Code of Conduct and in contractual language for the faculty. A number of processes exist to

evaluate effective teaching including classroom evaluations, student evaluations, formal assessments, and general research. JJC is also developing a virtual Teaching and Learning Center for full- and part-time faculty. Common syllabi incorporate students' rights and protect free speech and inquiry.

**4P7 HLC Core Component 2.E. *The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.***

At JJC all employees are held to a high standard for ethical practices. When such standards are not met, the situation is promptly addressed by the employee's immediate supervisor, and action is taken to remedy the situation. If the situation involves serious violations, the Director of Human Resources is consulted, along with the appropriate vice president, to discuss the next steps for corrective action. Such situations are used as learning experiences when appropriate so that ethical behavior is reinforced. If necessary, termination may occur.

**1P16. HLC Core Component 3.E. *The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.***

The college has a wide range of extra/co-curricular activities. Opportunities for participation include a wide range of clubs, sports, service learning projects, theatre productions, choir and band, and an honor society.

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## **QUALITY OF SYSTEMS PORTFOLIO FOR JOLIET JUNIOR COLLEGE**

Because it stands as a reflection of the institution, the *Systems Portfolio* should be complete and coherent, and it should provide an open and honest self-analysis on the strengths and challenges facing the organization. In this section, the Systems Appraisal Team provides Joliet Junior College with constructive feedback on the overall quality of the portfolio, along with suggestions for improvement of future portfolio submissions.

*Upon starting this portfolio review, the team was excited to be reviewing the nation's first public community college's systems portfolio. Besides being first community college, Joliet Junior College (JJC) was also one of the first institutions accepted into the AQIP in 2000. Besides the AQIP, JJC is also a member of the Continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN). This is a network of mostly community colleges that focuses on quality improvement and the sharing of best practices.*

*The team quickly learned that JJC had recently undergone a dramatic change in institutional leadership that had taken its focus off AQIP for a period of time. The team found it interesting that succession planning had been identified as an opportunity by the last review team, and lack of it eventually created a major problem for the college. As the review progressed, the team began to understand that the current*



*systems portfolio for JJC lacked consistency across categories. Whether this was due to the styles of different writers, or from a lack of understanding of the new criteria and process was not clear. In some cases the questions were answered thoroughly, while in other cases the answers provided did not seem relevant to the questions being asked. The most troublesome were instances where JJC did not provide evidence for accreditation embedded in the categories where required. In most cases the team was able to find it in other places, but this lack of attention to detail made it difficult for the review team to verify that JJC does meet all of the Criteria for Accreditation.*

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## **USING THE FEEDBACK REPORT**

AQIP reminds institutions that the Systems Appraisal process is intended to initiate action for institutional improvement. Though decisions about specific actions rest with each institution, AQIP expects every institution to use its feedback to stimulate cycles of continual improvement and to inform future AQIP processes.

Some key questions that may arise in careful examination of this report may include: How do the team's findings challenge our assumptions about ourselves? Given our mission and goals, which issues should we focus on? How will we employ results to innovate, grow, and encourage a positive culture of improvement? How will we incorporate lessons learned from this review in our planning and operational processes? How will we revise the *Systems Portfolio* to reflect what we have learned? How an organization interprets, communicates, and uses its feedback for improvement ought to support AQIP's core values, encouraging involvement, learning, collaboration, and integrity.

AQIP's goal is to help an institution to clarify the strategic issues most vital to its success, and then to support the institution as it addresses these priorities in ways that will make a difference in institutional performance.