

# **SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT**

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

## **FORT SCOTT COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

October 13, 2009



**Academic  
Quality Improvement  
Program**

The Higher Learning Commission NCA

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR FORT SCOTT COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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

**Category 1:** FSCC recognizes the importance of collecting and analyzing data and would benefit from implementing a systematic and comprehensive process that maximizes existing accountability measures from the Board of Regents and membership in the NCC Benchmarking Project. Faculty involvement in the process is an achievement that the college will want to sustain and build on to take assessment to the next level. A course level design system may assist in program and college level assessments and in building assessment tools.

**Category 2:** FSCC has identified three distinct areas which are a source of pride for the College. Each area (Endowment, Athletics, Continuing Education/Community Service) has made noteworthy progress over the past few years, and these successes strengthen the college's image, enrollment, financial status, and programs. Aside from athletics, it does not appear as if FSCC has a systematic process in place to determine its other distinctive objectives. FSCC may want to more actively lead the design and development of those processes by which non-instructional objectives are created and implemented. Further, it is unclear how input from external stakeholders is obtained and infused into its projects.

**Category 3:** The College may consider implementing direct measures of stakeholders' satisfaction to strengthen its current understanding of stakeholders' needs. As a college with 45% occupational programs and for which strong competition exists within Kansas, FSCC would be well served to attempt to determine needs of external stakeholders, particularly employers.

**Category 4:** FSCC's portfolio contains few processes and systems to ensure retention and development of current employees. This is noteworthy because nearly 50% of faculty and staff are part-time. The college would benefit from a sustained commitment to build upon the recent successes of the Employee Relations Committee, with a goal of institutionalizing systematic and comprehensive quality improvements. Organization of its planning processes, increased data collection, and evaluation of collected data are areas of further development that may lead to improvements in valuing people.

**Category 5:** FSCC's SOAR committee structure is a promising foundation for learning and communicating quality improvement processes. The college would benefit from expanding this

model to include more student and key stakeholder involvement. This system could also provide the framework or model for establishing a systematic continuous quality improvement processes in other areas of the college. Once these systems are in place and a culture of using data has been established, the college can become a data-driven institution.

**Category 6:** FSCC has identified various support services areas and needs in these areas, making some notable improvements, including its Crisis Management Committee and projects by Operations/Finance and Student Services in its food service and dormitory areas. However, it is not clear how these processes are aligned and how they provide an organizational support structure in which learning can thrive. By determining specific measures by which it can identify growth and achievement in its support services, the college can begin documenting and understanding how specific enhancements have impacted student achievement at FSCC. FSCC would benefit from implementing comprehensive processes to identify student, employee and other stakeholder support needs and expectations.

**Category 7:** FSCC currently collects data in many areas and the college has begun the process of using data for decision making. What is not clear is how FSCC analyzes and uses results (in other categories) to make improvements. A next step for the College may be to create a system to analyze and disseminate this information to manage its operations and measure its performance as an organization. There is no mention of technology training for individuals or for IT staff to keep current on technology changes nor was it evident that there was succession planning for IT staff without which the college may become vulnerable and jeopardize its IT structure and stability.

**Category 8:** In 2008 FSCC created a structure and began to develop a strategic plan, including a process to link planning and budgeting. The next step of developing action plans is scheduled for an all-college in-service day in Fall 2009. Through two Action Projects in Student Affairs and the Regent's Performance Agreement, FSCC has begun to report results. FSCC would benefit from maintaining this momentum and fully implement the strategic plan and align planning activities throughout the organization. With that in place, the college could further develop processes to measure performance, benchmark data and analyze results. Results could then be tied to strategies for improvements that will enhance FSCC's competitiveness.

**Category 9:** FSCC reports several changes to its processes to build and strengthen collaborative relationships. FSCC has an opportunity to be more deliberate about identifying

new strategic partners by creating consistent processes and structures. By determining more direct and indirect measures of performance results for these relationships, the college has an opportunity to use data to prioritize, build and sustain relationships that are important for the college in achieving its enrollment goals and accomplishing its mission.

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

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## **ELEMENTS OF Fort Scott Community College's FEEDBACK REPORT**

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

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

**Executive Summary.** Summative statements agreed upon by the Systems Appraisal Team based upon the institution's achievements and challenges in regards to each of the nine AQIP Categories. Strategic challenges for the institution are listed in detail within the Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis section of the Appraisal Feedback Report.

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

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

**Category Feedback:** The Report's feedback on each of AQIP's nine Categories specifically identifies strengths and opportunities for improvement. An S or SS identifies strengths, with the double letter signifying important achievements or capabilities upon which to build. Opportunities are designated by O, with OO indicating areas where attention may result in more significant improvement. Comments, which are keyed to your *Systems Portfolio*, offer brief analysis of each strength and opportunity. Organized by Category, and presenting the team's findings in detail, this section is the heart of the Report. At the end of the list of strengths and opportunities for each Category is the team's consensus assessment of the institution's stage of development on that particular Category. This section consists of a series of statements

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

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## STRATEGIC AND ACCREDITATION ISSUES

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

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

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

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

- It does not appear that FSCC has a systematic process to collect, analyze, and share information in order to make decisions. FSCC would benefit from implementing a comprehensive process that maximizes existing accountability measures from the Board of Regents and membership in the NCC Benchmarking Project. Once these systems are in place and a culture of using data has been established, the college can become a data-driven institution.
- There is a need to create and implement a systematic process for the assessment of student learning. The Assessment Team, along with other stakeholder support, can benefit from building on recent achievements by aggregating, synthesizing and using results to make course level changes. Faculty involvement in the process is an achievement that the college will want to sustain and build upon to take assessment to the next level.

- FSCC has an emerging process and systems in place for gathering information regarding student and stakeholder needs. Since the college already collects some data from current students, it now has the opportunity to analyze this information, review trends and select targets for improvement. Implementing such a model may help the college address major objectives, and enhance those characteristics that distinguish FSCC from other educational organizations.
- The portfolio does not include information regarding its multi-campus structure or the diversity of its student population. Both of these are factors to be considered in determining the needs of both current and emerging student populations. Efforts to gather information and respond to unique learning needs of various segments of its student and stakeholder populations could strengthen FSCC's academic offerings and support services.
- The AQIP Team and SOAR structure are promising systems. However, they have yet to be proven capable of sustaining themselves and driving performance improvement for the college. A next step for the college may be to create a system to manage its operations and measure its performance as a quality improvement organization.

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## USING THE FEEDBACK REPORT

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

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

lessons learned from this review in our planning and operational processes? How will we revise the *Systems Portfolio* to reflect what we have learned?

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

Within a year following the Systems Appraisal, an institution participates in another AQIP Strategy Forum, where the focus will be on what the institution has learned from its Appraisal (and from its other methods of identifying and prioritizing improvement opportunities, and what it has concluded are its major strategic priorities for the next few years. AQIP's goal is to help an institution to clarify the strategic issues most vital to its success, and then to support the institution as it addresses these priorities through Action Projects that will make a difference in institutional performance.

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## CRITICAL CHARACTERISTICS ANALYSIS

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

### Item    Critical Characteristic

- O1a Fort Scott Community College (FSCC) founded in 1919 is a public, not-for-profit comprehensive Community College near Kansas City. It serves rural communities in East Central Kansas. The board is publicly-elected and operates the College under the rules and regulations of the Kansas State Board of Regents.
- O1b FSCC offers four types of two-year associate degree programs namely, Associate of Science Degree (AS), Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of General Studies (AGS), and Associate of Applied Science (AAS) as well as certificates which prepare students for immediate entry-level employment.
- O1c FSCC offers courses at varied locations across four counties and through distance education formats (interactive video, online, and hybrid). Courses are offered through traditional day classes, evening classes, and intersession courses between semesters.
- O1d Technology supports instruction through classroom design, computer labs and industry-specific software. FSCC has seven computer labs in areas ranging from the main campus, extension sites, and in dormitories.
- O2a FSCC has several associated organizations that assist in supporting the institution and the communities it serves. These include the MILL (Maximized Individualized Learning Lab), Endowment Association, the Alumni and Friends Association, and Gordon Parks Center for Culture and Diversity.
- O2b The College offers a range of Intercollegiate Athletics as a member of the NJCAA and KJCCC. FSCC also participates in the national Intercollegiate Rodeo Association.
- O2c FSCC has an articulation agreement with Pittsburg State University (PSU) called the Qualified Admissions Program that allows FSCC students to attend classes and take advantage of various student services and be involved in social activities as well.
- O3a FSCC currently serves 1,739 students with a nearly even split between full and part time students. Less than one-quarter (21%) are county residents. The majority of students are degree seeking with half seeking a two-year degree and the other half seeking a four-year degree.
- O3b FSCC has a number of competitors in Southeast Kansas including PSU and other community colleges and recognizes that the institution must remain competitive in the market.

- O4a FSCC has roughly 50% of its staff serving on a part-time basis with nearly twice as many part-time faculty as full-time faculty.
- O4b FSCC operates on a traditional organizational structure with less than the average budget in comparison to its peer institutions. The college values its reputation as an employer who cares about its employees.
- O5 FSCC, in light of the recent presidential and other leadership transitions, and various audit and site visits, has recognized the potential need for future-focused conversations. As a result, the College began to implement a comprehensive strategic planning process and shared governance structure that also includes more transparency.
- O6a FSCC held several events (Ellis Family Fine Arts Center and the College's first-annual Community Appreciation Day) that highlighted alignment of administrative goals around the mission and values.
- O6b FSCC has used its recent AQIP action projects to focus on process management with the intention of aligning its support processes with the college's mission and goals.
- O7a FSCC's IT department provides support to all extension campus locations as well as the main campus. The IT staff is responsible for monitoring, updating and backing up the servers in use with the overall system and for developing and maintaining all of its software applications for internal and external requirements.
- O7b The college's IT staff, along with designated personnel within the college, determines the best means of collecting and distributing the data and information.
- O7c FSCC uses the POISE (Jenzabar, PX) data management system to manage the technological infrastructure. The system is deployed at the main campus and supports all of the extension sites.
- O8a FSCC's spends more on the average per full time student because of its commitment to occupational and workforce programs. As a result of funding reductions from the state over several years the college reports operating on a more limited budget than other colleges in the region.
- O9a FSCC understands the importance of relationships within its community and market to assist in developing its programs. To that end, it maintains relationships with feeder

organizations (schools, etc.), matriculation institutions (schools that FSCC students will attend after completion), business and industry organizations that have occupational interests in programming, grant organizations, and consortium and legislative bodies.

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## CATEGORY FEEDBACK

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

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## AQIP CATEGORY 1: HELPING STUDENTS LEARN

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

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

***Item Critical Characteristic***

- O1a Fort Scott Community College (FSCC), founded in 1919, is a public, not-for-profit comprehensive Community College near Kansas City. It serves rural communities in East Central Kansas. The board is publicly-elected and operates the College under the rules and regulations of the Kansas State Board of Regents.
- 
- O1b FSCC offers four types of two-year associate degree programs: namely, Associate of Science Degree (AS), Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of General Studies (AGS), and Associate of Applied Science (AAS) as well as certificates which prepare students for immediate entry-level employment.
- O1c FSCC offers courses at varied locations across four counties and through distance education formats (interactive video, online, and hybrid). Courses are offered through traditional day classes, evening classes, and intersession courses between semesters.
- O1d Technology supports instruction through classroom design, computer labs and industry-specific software. FSCC has seven computer labs in areas ranging from the main campus, extension sites, and in dormitories.
- O2c FSCC has an articulation agreement with Pittsburg State University (PSU) called the Qualified Admissions Program that allows FSCC students to attend classes and take advantage of various student services and be involved in social activities as well.
- O3a FSCC currently serves 1,739 students with a nearly even split between full and part time students. Less than one-quarter (21%) are county residents. The majority of students are degree seeking with half seeking a two-year degree and the other half seeking a four-year degree.
- O9a FSCC understands the importance of relationships within its community and market to assist in developing its programs. To that end, it maintains relationships with feeder organizations (schools, etc.), matriculation institutions (schools that FSCC students will attend after completion), business and industry organizations that have occupational interests in programming, grant organizations, and consortium and legislative bodies.

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

| <i>Item</i> | <i>S/O</i> | <i>Comment</i>   |
|-------------|------------|--|
| 1P1a        | S          | FSCC has begun the process by creating an Assessment Team. This faculty-driven committee has identified seven college-wide student abilities, and they have identified outcomes criteria for three areas. The implementation process is in its early stages, beginning with data collection in Spring 2008.  |
| 1P1b        | OO         | The college will implement the above process in the spring of 2009 and each full time faculty will assess every student on at least one college-wide student ability in at least one course each semester. It is not clear how the data obtained in this manner will be collected, aggregated, integrated and used in a manner that will impact student learning outcomes at all three levels that the college has identified. |
| 1P1c        | OO         | While FSCC has an Assessment Team in place, it consists primarily of faculty, and it is unclear how the college gets input from other stakeholders, such as area employers and the community.  |
| 1P2         | OO         | FSCC reports no information regarding this element of the portfolio. Without processes in place to determine specific learning objectives, the college cannot produce results and improvements related to student learning.  |
| 1P3         | SS         | The Kansas Board of Regents has recently endorsed a new program design model, and FSCC has begun to utilize this model. Success in this new venture will be determined based on FSCC's ability to re-design courses and curriculum in hopes of expanding both enrollment and persistence into second-year courses.   |
| 1P4         | O          | FSCC reports no information regarding how it aligns and integrates its course and program offerings with student career needs and the employment market.   |

- 1P5            S        FSCC full time students have to complete placement tests (COMPASS or WRAT). Students who fall below the admissions criteria are mandated to either take the appropriate developmental classes or obtain written approvals for exemption from these courses.
- 1P6a           S        FSCC uses its recruitment and advising processes to alert students to the preparation required for programs and courses. Using the COMPASS test, the institution then places the learner on a degree plan and allows the learner to use the online student enrollment system (CAMPUS CONNECT) to proceed further.
- 
- 1P6b           O        It appears that new full-time degree-seeking students do not receive an orientation to college, other than the option to register for the one-credit College Orientation class. There is no mention of an orientation course for part-time students, even though they comprise half of the student. There might be an opportunity to increase student retention and success by offering additional orientation options, perhaps modeled on the College's orientation for occupational programs.
- 1P7            O        FSCC reports no information regarding how the College assists students in selecting programs that match their needs, interests, and abilities.
- 1P8            S        As enrollment has dramatically increased in developmental courses since 2002 (up 300.9%), FSCC has created a variety of initiatives to meet the challenge. Through the COMPASS test, FSCC is able to place students in developmental programs to prepare them for degree or certification programs. Further, FSCC offers GED and ESL programs for learners. The college also provides a resource center that houses computers with appropriate software to support development of learners.
- 1P9-12        OO       FSCC reports no information regarding these elements of the portfolio.
- 1P13a         S        FSCC has committed to a program review cycle.
- 1P13b         O        FSCC's program review cycle does not appear to solicit input from external stakeholders, such as employers, the community, or students. In

addition, it is not clear how the outcomes of this process are evaluated to make changes and improvements in programs or courses.

- 1P14-17      O      FSCC reports no information regarding these elements of the portfolio.
- 1P18      SS      FSCC has implemented a course level assessment process that ensures every faculty member's participation. Additionally, an assessment rubric and external review process are being administered as recommended by the recent AQIP quality check up review. Program level assessments of student performance based on program outcomes are reported. Additionally, academic and occupational programs are also incorporating college-wide assessment of student abilities.
- 1R1      S      FSCC collects and analyzes data from COMPASS placement scores, and student retention, completion, and performance data.
- 1R2      O      FSCC does not present evidence that it tracks direct measures of student achievement for specific learning outcomes of math or writing courses. FSCC's data for student learning outcomes list percentages of students successfully passing a course. Pass rates are an indirect estimate of student learning. Direct measures of student learning, for instance, the use of rubrics to evaluate student writing, can provide more useful information on student learning. These data can assist FSCC in meeting student needs beyond the first-year experience and lead FSCC to develop program objectives that go beyond state requirements and offer distinctiveness to the institution.
- 1R3-5      OO      FSCC reports no information regarding these elements of the portfolio.
- 1R6a      S      FSCC's portfolio provides comparative data from a national benchmarking project.
- 1R6b      O      It is not clear how FSCC uses its participation in the National Community College Benchmarking Project and the Kansas Board of Regents to drive innovation and improvement.
- 1I1a      S      FSCC has begun to implement recommendations and suggestions from the previous AQIP process and its own self-reflection. The outcomes of

the above process have led to the creation of a comprehensive student assessment process that reviews and validates the data obtained over three consecutive semesters.

- 111b            O        FSCC has created a promising system to assess student learning. As the Assessment Team continues to implement and integrate the individual student assessment program into the campus culture, faculty and students can benefit from longitudinal evidence.
- 112            O        FSCC reports no information regarding this element of the portfolio.
- 

## **AQIP CATEGORY 2: ACCOMPLISHING OTHER DISTINCTIVE OBJECTIVES**

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

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

### ***Item    Critical Characteristic***

- O1a    Fort Scott Community College (FSCC), founded in 1919, is a public, not-for-profit comprehensive Community College near Kansas City. It serves rural communities in East Central Kansas. The board is publicly-elected and operates the College under the rules and regulations of the Kansas State Board of Regents.
- O2a    FSCC has several associated organizations that assist in supporting the institution and the communities it serves. These include the MILL (Maximized Individualized Learning Lab), Endowment Association, the Alumni and Friends Association, and Gordon Parks Center for Culture and Diversity.

- O2b The College offers a range of Intercollegiate Athletics as a member of the NJCAA and KJCCC. FSCC also participates in the national Intercollegiate Rodeo Association.
- O5 FSCC, in light of the recent presidential and other leadership transitions, and various audit and site visits, has recognized the potential need for future-focused conversations. As a result, the College began to implement a comprehensive strategic planning process and shared governance structure that also includes more transparency.
- O6a FSCC held several events (Ellis Family Fine Arts Center and the College's first-annual Community Appreciation Day) that highlighted alignment of administrative goals around the mission and values.
- O6b FSCC has used its recent AQIP action projects to focus on process management with the intention of aligning its support processes with the college's mission and goals.
- O9a FSCC understands the importance of relationships within its community and market to assist in developing its programs. To that end, it maintains relationships with feeder organizations (schools, etc.), matriculation institutions (schools that FSCC students will attend after completion), business and industry organizations that have occupational interests in programming, grant organizations, and consortium and legislative bodies.

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

| <i>Item</i> | <i>S/O</i> | <i>Comment</i>   |
|-------------|------------|--|
| 2P1a        | S          | FSCC has several commendable programs through which it serves significant stakeholders, including scholarships for students, the Ellis Family Fine Arts Center, alumni association, Endowment Association, athletic and activity programs, and the MILL. It also has an active capital campaign in support of ongoing building and development projects. |
| 2P1b        | OO         | While the institution has several recognized non-instructional means of support for its stakeholders, it does not describe the method used for designing and operating them.   |
| 2P2a        | S          | FSCC involves many stakeholder groups within the college in determining the goals and objectives of the athletic program.  |

- 2P2b OO It is unclear how FSCC chooses and prioritizes major non-instructional objectives for external stakeholders or who is involved in setting those objectives; it merely lists those objectives in the portfolio. Clearly delineated processes for choosing non-instructional objectives may ensure that the needs of external stakeholders are met. Involvement of a wide array of individuals in the selection process can ensure buy-in from key stakeholders.
- 2P3a S FSCC's portfolio identifies a multi-channel approach to communication in the areas of its distinctive objectives. The student service offices and the college website are identified as the resource for communicating with students regarding available scholarships; the Alumni Association sends newsletters and emails to update stakeholders. The SOAR (Shared Ownership And Responsibility) Committee appears to provide the necessary support between academic departments and the athletic coaches. Expectations will be communicated to student-athletes through a new "Athletic Orientation" in Fall 2009.
- 2P3b O FSCC portfolio did not clarify how the various dissemination methods specifically communicate the college's expectations to different stakeholder groups with regard to the identified objectives.
- 2P4 OO No reportable information is provided regarding how FSCC assesses and reviews the appropriateness and value of other distinctive objectives or who is involved in these reviews. A clear review process is necessary in measuring the effectiveness of these processes.
- 2P5a S The athletic department uses the SOAR committee structure and development of plans to achieve multiple goals. One example involves the use of the Academic Affairs SOAR Committee to develop a grade-check and attendance monitoring system that provides the coaching staff with information to monitor student progress while facilitating communication with the faculty regarding student behavioral or attendance concerns.

- 2P5b OO While the institution provides a generic description of its allowance for financing initiatives and objectives, FSCC does not provide any specific information regarding how it determines faculty and staff needs relative to its other objectives and operations.
- 2P6 O FSCC does not provide any information regarding how it incorporates information on faculty and staff needs in readjusting objectives or processes that support them.
- 2R1a S FSCC measures the success of its other distinctive objectives through the results of dollars raised and distributed through its Endowment Association. This element of the College has a major impact on scholarships awarded and various projects FSCC has implemented.
- 2R1b O FSCC has several measures under development including retention rates of students who participate in athletic programs. However, it is unclear how the college measures participants' satisfaction with Continuing Education/Community Service.
- 2R2a S FSCC has identified measures and performance results for the areas of endowment and continuing education and community service objectives. The intercollegiate athletics area reports a system under development for reporting student retention rates and an entrance and exit survey from all student athletes. Scholarships have reached over 340 students annually since 2007 and recent capital projects have included the construction of the Ellis Family Fine Arts Center. These achievements have resulted from the Endowment Association's fundraising efforts.
- 2R2b O While enrollment in developmental courses has seen a dramatic increase in the last eight years, and the activity at the MILL reflects this increase, FSCC does not report any tracking of these students beyond attendance, class, date, and activity. More internal research on those students who use this tutoring resource, such as success, retention, and persistence rates tied to specific learning outcomes could be assist the college in more efficiently meeting the needs of learners.

- 2R2c OO FSCC provides data regarding the MILL activities with some analysis. However, collection of data on other objectives, analysis, and drawing conclusions is lacking. By setting targets and establishing baseline data, FSCC could potentially provide better assessment of its other distinctive objectives.
- 2R3 O No reportable data is provided regarding how FSCC's performance of these processes compare with the results of other higher education organizations or other organizations.
- 
- 2R4 OO The FSCC portfolio does not include any descriptions of how data obtained through established processes would help the institution strategically, or enhance relationships with its community.
- 211a S FSCC has several notable improvements in this category, including the completion of its \$10.3 million fine arts facility which will lead to enhanced relationships in the community; positive changes in its athletic programs; and the partnership between continuing education and the Buck Run Community Center. The college feels that these improvements have resulted in greater influence in the community.
- 211b O FSCC does not provide any information regarding improvement in processes regarding endowments; rather, the completion of a project is cited.
- 211c OO FSCC provides limited information describing systematic and comprehensive processes and outcomes regarding other distinctive objectives.
- 212 O No reportable information is provided regarding how FSCC's culture and infrastructure help it select specific processes to improve and to set targets for improved performance results in Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives.

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

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

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

***Item    Critical Characteristic***

- O1b FSCC offers four types of two-year associate degree programs: Associate of Science Degree (AS), Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of General Studies (AGS), and Associate of Applied Science (AAS) as well as certificates which prepare students for immediate entry-level employment.
- O1c FSCC offers courses at varied locations across four counties and through distance education formats (interactive video, online, and hybrid). Courses are offered through traditional day classes, evening classes, and intersession courses between semesters.
- O2a FSCC has several associated organizations that assist in supporting the institution and the communities it serves. These include the MILL (Maximized Individualized Learning Lab), Endowment Association, the Alumni and Friends Association, and Gordon Parks Center for Culture and Diversity.
- O2c FSCC has an articulation agreement with Pittsburg State University (PSU) called the Qualified Admissions Program that allows FSCC students to attend classes and take advantage of various student services and be involved in social activities as well.
- O3a FSCC currently serves 1,739 students with a nearly even split between full and part-time students. Less than one-quarter (21%) are county residents. The majority of students

are degree seeking with half seeking a two-year degree and the other half seeking a four-year degree.

O3b FSCC has a number of competitors in Southeast Kansas including PSU and other community colleges and recognizes that the institution must remain competitive in the market.

O9a FSCC understands the importance of relationships within its community and market to assist in developing its programs. To that end, it maintains relationships with feeder organizations (schools, etc.), matriculation institutions (schools that FSCC students will attend after completion), business and industry organizations that have occupational interests in programming, grant organizations, and consortium and legislative bodies.

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

| <i>Item</i> | <i>S/O</i> | <i>Comment</i>   |
|-------------|------------|--|
| 3P1a        | SS         | FSCC has established formal systems and processes to communicate and meet the needs of its current and prospective students. Through an established grant, "at risk" student needs are identified and addressed by an individualized education plan. Satisfaction surveys are administered after major college events and after the student's experience with the academic advising process.   |
| 3P1b        | S          | FSCC's Admissions Office engages in a variety of activities designed to meet the needs of prospective students, such as high school visits, campus tours, COMPASS placement tests, and interaction with discipline-specific faculty.   |
| 3P1c        | OO         | While FSCC collects data about their students and seems to perform some analyses, it is not clear how the institution collects and reviews the data in light of its constituent cohort groups. Further, the process for selecting a course of action based on these needs is not noted. Looking at the industrial landscape surrounding the college, surveying local employers regarding their needs in terms of future employees, and |

identifying areas where former graduates feel they are lacking specific skills, would allow FSCC to determine the needs of current and future students.

- 3P2            SS    FSCC reports a process that targets and identifies the needs of its prospective students early in high school and continues after admission and throughout their stay at the college. It begins with a relationship-building process with prospective students such as high school visits, mailings, Senior Days, activities associated with the SSS grant, student clubs/organizations, student advising, having a student activities coordinator, a Student Life Coordinator for the dormitories, a student union and a College Orientation class. The website provides much information including GIZMO, a link which provides students access to their student information.
- 3P3            O    The portfolio does not cite methods by which FSCC assesses the changing needs of its stakeholders, and does not provide specific information about the ways the college analyzes and selects courses of action relative to those changing needs.
- 3P4a           S    FSCC presents several ways in which the college builds and maintains relationships with area schools and the community. Additionally, the college offers concurrent credit classes and articulation agreements with local schools. FSCC volunteers also participate in local events such as the Fort Scott city-wide celebrations. FSCC seems to be successful in building relationships within the community that support the college. This, in turn, has provided the student base for the institution from both a short- and long-term point of view.
- 3P4b           O    FSCC does not reflect upon its methods for building and maintaining relationships with non-student stakeholders (industry representatives, grant organizations, local employers, other non-profits, government, community leaders, etc.).

- 3P5 O No reportable information is provided regarding how FSCC determines if it should target new student and stakeholder groups with its educational offerings and services.
- 3P6a S FSCC has a systematic process in place to handle complaints from students. The process allows for a variety of methods to lodge a complaint and allows for a grievance process if the student is not satisfied with the decision.
- 3P6b O While the college has a defined process to collect and record student complaints, it is unclear how the information is analyzed and shared within the college, not just the affected department, to improve process and service. Additionally, the college has an opportunity to categorize these data by complaint type to be able to identify specific areas for improvement.
- 3P6c OO There does not appear to be a process in place to handle complaints from stakeholders other than students.
- 3R1a S FSCC has recognized the limitations of relying on anecdotal information and describes a variety of direct and indirect techniques by which it assesses student and stakeholder satisfaction. As part of a national benchmarking consortium, FSCC has the capacity to compare itself with similar institutions.
- 3R1b O While FSCC identifies a variety of methods to determine student satisfaction, it does not address satisfaction of other stakeholder groups, e.g., the community, and particularly employers. As a college with 45% occupational programs, employer satisfaction would seem crucial. It is also unclear how the college seeks feedback from prospective students or measures the success of outreach efforts. The college might consider a more formal survey of prospective students, both those who do enroll and those who choose not to enroll.
- 3R2a S As part of a Student Support Services grant, the college reviews student satisfaction in its tutoring services, advising services, course availability,

and mentorship program. These students express high levels of satisfaction in tutoring helpfulness and tutor ratings, advisor helpfulness, knowledge and usefulness, and scheduling and class availability. There may be a benefit to comparing the SSS survey results to satisfaction and performance of the overall student population.

3R2b      O      FSCC's portfolio includes performance results for student satisfaction by providing data from the Trio SSS survey and academic advising results. Because it is not made clear what proportion of the student body SSS students represent, it is not possible to determine whether the results represent the student body as a whole. FSCC has an opportunity to strengthen the data pool by including more direct methods of assessing student satisfaction.

3R3      O      While FSCC provided some results, it is not clear whether they show relationship-building with stakeholders. Data show that the number of students receiving scholarships has decreased and attendance figures at Senior Days are stagnant. More importantly, attendance figures alone do not provide a robust picture of the relationship between FSCC and its students. Data regarding satisfaction with events, how informative participants found the events to be, how instrumental the event was in their decision to enroll at FSCC, number of Senior Day attendees who decided to enroll at FSCC, and number of students who enrolled at FSCC after attending a tour, as well as information regarding relationships with current students -- clubs, activities -- would provide a richer picture of the impact of these activities. FSCC has an opportunity to implement a process for improving its current systems for understanding the needs of key student and stakeholder-groups, and to determine how it will communicate its results.

3R4-3R5      O      FSCC does not provide results for stakeholder satisfaction and building relationships with stakeholders.

3R6a      S      FSCC provides results from several measures that show its performance as compared with other institutions of higher education. FSCC compares

selected student success outcome measures with national benchmarks. The APR project provides data regarding FSCC students who transfer to Pittsburg State and Emporia State Universities. FSCC's student loan default rates are below those of most other community colleges in Kansas.

- 3R6b      O      FSCC's results for the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey have been consistently below those for other Kansas Community Colleges on all items shown. The College would benefit from reviewing these items and selecting a course of action to improve student satisfaction. FSCC provides data from the national benchmarking project. While the data indicate how well students in developmental classes performed in comparison to other community colleges in the area, it does not capture the needs of FSCC students, provide data from its newly instituted processes, or discuss how results are communicated.
- 3R6c      OO      No results are provided regarding measuring performance of processes related to understanding stakeholder needs other than students.
- 311a      S      FSCC has implemented its Campus Connect system and Gizmo that provide online access to grades, class schedule, transcripts, financial aid, and online enrollment.
- 311b      O      While FSCC notes that its process and performance for understanding students' and other stakeholders' needs are systematic and comprehensive, the institution does not share evidence of how its culture and infrastructure help the college select specific processes to improve and to set targets.
- 312      O      Based on data from previous sections, there is no evidence of improvement or targets set for improved results.

## **AQIP CATEGORY 4: VALUING PEOPLE**

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

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

***Item Critical Characteristic***

- O1a Fort Scott Community College (FSCC), founded in 1919, is a public, not-for-profit comprehensive Community College near Kansas City. It serves rural communities in East Central Kansas. The board is publicly-elected and operates the College under the rules and regulations of the Kansas State Board of Regents.
- O4a FSCC has roughly 50% of its staff serving on a part-time basis with nearly twice as many part-time faculty as full-time faculty.
- O4b FSCC operates on a traditional organizational structure with less than the average budget in comparison to its peer institutions. The college values its reputation as an employer who cares about its employees.
- O5 FSCC, in light of the recent presidential and other leadership transitions, and various audit and site visits, has recognized the potential need for future-focused conversations. As a result, the College began to implement a comprehensive strategic planning process and shared governance structure that also includes more transparency.

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

| <b>Item</b> | <b>S/O</b> | <b>Comment</b>  |
|-------------|------------|---|
| 4P1a        | S          | FSCC clearly defines job descriptions for each employee, and the appropriate Dean adjusts these descriptions as necessary. These adjustments are made in consultation with other Kansas Community Colleges and the Kansas Human Resource Community College representatives.                   |
| 4P1b        | O          | It is not clear if FSCC has a process in place for developing hiring credentials based on institutional needs for positions within the organization.  |
| 4P2         | O          | It does not appear that a system is in place to prescreen candidates beyond minimum requirements. Screening instruments beyond minimum skills can help ensure that only the most qualified candidates are interviewed.  |
| 4P3a        | O          | In 2007 FSCC implemented a process for recruiting, hiring and retaining employees. The next step for the college is to evaluate the effectiveness of this process in hiring faculty, staff and administrators who are engaged and productive in meeting the goals and mission of the college. |
| 4P3b        | O          | While FSCC has a process for recruiting and hiring employees, it does not describe strategies to retain employees. FSCC may benefit from a recruitment strategy that is broader than just advertising.  |
| 4P3c        | O          | While FSCC acknowledges that the feedback on its hiring processes has been instructive, the portfolio does not identify any formal processes by which feedback is gathered. FSCC has an opportunity to develop a process to gather feedback to reveal actual trends.                          |
| 4P4         | O          | FSCC has an opportunity to develop a process to orient employees to the college's history, mission and values.  |
| 4P5a        | S          | FSCC has a planning process for faculty and staff that reviews needs and budget requirements. During the spring semester, the Human Resource Director directly engages faculty and the college President in determining potential personnel changes for the upcoming school year.             |

- 4P5b OO The FSCC portfolio did not clarify whether the decision process to fill positions includes staff. It is unclear how plans for personnel changes are made beyond faculty annual reviews.
- 4P5c O The portfolio describes a plan for reviewing non-tenured faculty members, but no standing committee or systemic process is cited that anticipates needs-based changes in personnel.
- 4P6a S FSCC reports instituting processes for new employees and employees who leave the college. Additionally, the Kansas state worker's compensation insurance carrier has provided the necessary information to develop and improve processes regarding employee safety.
- 4P6 O Beyond preparing for new employees to start work, it is unclear how FSCC designs work processes and activities to enhance productivity and employee satisfaction.
- 4P7-4P8 O No reportable information is provided regarding how FSCC ensures the ethical practices of all employees or determines training needs. The college might benefit from aligning its training with short- and long-range organizational plans, in order to strengthen its instructional programs and services.
- 4P9a S FSCC appears to place a strong emphasis on professional development, and it requires adjunct faculty to complete six additional hours of training beyond their degree requirements. The college intends to expand these professional development sessions to all employees and include strategies to support long-term professional growth and contributions of employees to the College.
- 4P9b O While FSCC has budgeted funds for professional development, it may realize more benefit if some of the training decisions are selected by employees and coordinated centrally rather than at division levels. This may provide more opportunities to provide development targeted towards overall college goals.

- 4P10a S FSCC has a regular schedule of evaluations for all faculty, staff, and administrators.
- 4p10b O There is not an assessment process of the evaluation system to identify how FSCC uses employee evaluations or aligns this system with instructional and non-instructional programs or services.
- 4P11a S FSCC regularly analyzes compensation and benefits packages in relation to the general community and other Kansas Community Colleges, and recognizes its compensation is not competitive. However, a new benefits package including enrollment in the state health insurance program has proven to be attractive to employees and job candidates.
- 4P11b O The FSCC report includes employee's compensation but no information is provided on employee recognition or rewards.
- 4P12a S The college established an Employee Relations Committee that serves as a vehicle for employees to identify issues and submit suggestions for improvements to the working environment. In the first eighteen months, twelve ideas were forwarded to the AQIP team.
- 4P12b O The college could benefit from developing a process to determine and analyze key motivational issues for employees.
- 4P13 O FSCC reports no information regarding these elements of the portfolio.
- 4R1a S Last year FSCC implemented an employee satisfaction survey, and almost half of all employees responded. The portfolio contains the results from last year's survey. FSCC intends to administer this survey annually, analyze data, communicate results and make improvements.
- 4R1b O It is unclear how FSCC will systematically use the information from the employee satisfaction survey to make any needed changes.
- 4R2a S The Administrative Council has already met to analyze results and plan their next steps, and the Employee Relations Committee will do so in the fall 2009 semester.

- 4R3a S FSCC implemented a SWOT analysis during a campus-wide meeting in 2008 that identified several critical areas for improvement. Suggestions to rejuvenate student involvement/activities were immediately implemented.
- 4R4a S The Employee Relations Committee used data from peer colleges in its recommendation to increase paid holiday leave for classified staff.
- 4R4b O While FSCC provided a specific example of an improvement in time-off benefits given to staff, it did not present a holistic comparison of the performance of its process for valuing people to other organizations within higher education and outside of education.
- 4I1a S The Employee Relations Committee established an employee retirement policy, a procedure for recognizing employee service, a classified sick leave pool for faculty, a holiday celebration dinner and website for forms and other documents. These improvements indicate that the college is engaged in supporting and valuing its employees.
- 4I1b S FSCC has taken several steps to enhance communication and employee recognition. The President's monthly meetings with various employee groups provide a venue for ongoing communication. The college can build upon this foundation to create a culture that sets and achieves targets for valuing people.
- 4I2 S Increased communication and four separate meetings a month with the president and employee groups (faculty, professionals, directors, and professional staff) demonstrate that FSCC has begun to create processes to set and achieve targets that will enhance its commitment to valuing employees.

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## **AQIP CATEGORY 5: LEADING AND COMMUNICATING**

*Leading And Communicating* addresses how your institution's leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide your institution in setting directions, making

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

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

***Item Critical Characteristic***

- O1a Fort Scott Community College (FSCC), founded in 1919, is a public, not-for-profit comprehensive Community College near Kansas City. It serves rural communities in East Central Kansas. The board is publicly-elected and operates the College under the rules and regulations of the Kansas State Board of Regents.
- O4b FSCC operates on a traditional organizational structure with less than the average budget in comparison to its peer institutions. The college values its reputation as an employer who cares about its employees.
- O5 FSCC, in light of the recent presidential and other leadership transitions, and various audit and site visits, has recognized the potential need for future-focused conversations. As a result, the College began to implement a comprehensive strategic planning process and shared governance structure that also includes more transparency.
- O6b FSCC has used its recent AQIP action projects to focus on process management with the intention of aligning its support processes with the college's mission and goals.

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

| <b><i>Item</i></b> | <b><i>S/O</i></b> | <b><i>Comment</i></b>   |
|--------------------|-------------------|---|
| 5P1                | O                 | Although the college mission is reviewed annually, it is unclear what systematic process is in place to revise it. A periodic review of the |

college's mission and vision would allow FSCC to stay aligned with its students and community.

- 5P2a S The president shared a workplan for the college at an all-staff workshop. The elements of the workplan align well with the goals included in the mission statement.
- 5P2b O In 2007 FSCC's President outlined opportunities for growth, but the process by which college leaders align future directions with mission and values is unclear.
- 5P3a S FSCC is responding to the feedback report for its last Systems Portfolio, by establishing the SOAR committee and a cross-functional system of shared governance, as well as joining the Kansas Study and Community College Benchmarking Project.
- 5P3b O FSCC does not address how its strategic directions take into account the needs and expectations of current and potential students and key stakeholder groups.
- 5P4a S Over the last two years FSCC has implemented a variety of capital projects, strategic plans, and other awards, grants and activities to expand services and opportunities for students and other stakeholders.
- 5P4b O FSCC reports its historic entrepreneurial spirit as the driving force behind some of its existing educational partnerships. However, in order to enhance its focus on student needs and learning, the college would benefit from identifying new partnerships and programs to increase its student enrollment and create programs that are relevant to the immediate needs of the community it serves.
- 5P5a SS The SOAR system and its various committees established by FSCC is a comprehensive system of decision making for the college regarding policies and procedures. The AQIP team oversees the SOAR process. The use of this system is a significant opportunity for the college to identify and establish a systematic and sustainable continuous quality improvement process.

- 5P5b            O        Although much information is given about the structure, purpose, and procedures involved in SOAR committees, some of them are yet untested and no information is given regarding how those that have been in operation have performed. It is unclear how the scope of responsibility for decision-making at the committee level is defined. For example, it is not specified whether the AQIP Committee is empowered to make a final decision or whether the recommendations must be approved at a cabinet or presidential level. Also, the ground rules indicate that committees focus on policy level decisions, but some of the accomplishments of SOAR committees seem to be more operational than policy level.
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- 5 P6a            S        FSCC has increased its self-evaluative process by examining the effectiveness of its activities after each event, for instance, registration. This reflective act helps manage improvements on a consistent basis. Also, the SOAR structure facilitates employee involvement, and posting of agendas and minutes on the College website provides for sharing of information.
- 5P6b            O        FSCC is in a position to use state (Kansas Study) and national (NCCBP) comparison data to measure its performance. As the college drills down into the data, it will be ready to use this information in decision-making.
- 5P7             S        FSCC reports several strategies that have been identified and designed to help communicate a shared vision and values. With the exception of confidential or sensitive information, the president shares with the College all the information that is communicated to the Board of Trustees on a weekly basis. Likewise, the SOAR Committee communicates on a bi-monthly basis with the AQIP team and the college.
- 5P8-5P10       O        The structure and process of the various components of the college's communication structures appear to be in the early stages of implementation. The college has an opportunity to use these channels to create and maintain a culture of shared mission and values.

- 5R1            O        FSCC would benefit from developing and implementing direct measures of leading and communicating.
- 5R2            O        FSCC's Fact Sheet appears to be designed for use in levy presentations. The college may benefit by expanding the data elements to present a more comprehensive picture of the college that could be used for multiple purposes, both internal and external. It is unclear what is included in the Annual Report and who receives these documents.
- 5R3            O        FSCC reports and disseminates data from the Kansas Study that indicate lower instructional costs than its peer institutions. Further development of its assessment of student learning would enable FSCC to determine the quality of teaching and learning as related to cost per student.
- 511            S        While the SOAR project is still in its early stages, FSCC reports a growing synergy that is emerging within the institution. Each SOAR Committee, for instance, has implemented new activities that advance the mission of the college. Likewise, many of the changes within the practices of shared governance and strategic planning are the results of these committees and their engagement with internal and external stakeholders.
- 512            O        FSCC has an opportunity to take the outcomes of the SOAR structure to the next level by using the same model in other areas, such as helping students learn. This could capitalize on current momentum by establishing a universal process for implementing and sustaining continuous quality improvement in all areas of the institution's operations.

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## **AQIP CATEGORY 6: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS**

*Supporting Institutional Operations* addresses the variety of your institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student support, administrative support, identification of needs, contribution to student learning and accomplishing other distinctive objectives, day-to-

day operations, use of data, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

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

***Item Critical Characteristic***

- O1a Fort Scott Community College (FSCC), founded in 1919, is a public, not-for-profit comprehensive Community College near Kansas City. The board is publicly-elected and operates the College under the rules and regulations of the Kansas State Board of Regents.
- O1c FSCC offers courses at varied locations across four counties and through distance education formats (interactive video, online, and hybrid). Courses are offered through traditional day classes, evening classes, and intersession courses between semesters.
- O1d Technology supports instruction through classroom design, computer labs and industry-specific software. FSCC has seven computer labs in areas ranging from the main campus, extension sites, and in dormitories.
- O4b FSCC operates on a traditional organizational structure with less than the average budget in comparison to its peer institutions. The college values its reputation as an employer who cares about its employees.
- O5 FSCC, in light of the recent presidential and other leadership transitions, and various audit and site visits, has recognized the potential need for future-focused conversations. As a result, the College began to implement a comprehensive strategic planning process and shared governance structure that also includes more transparency.
- O6b FSCC has used its recent AQIP action projects to focus on process management.
- O7a FSCC's IT department provides support to all extension campus locations as well as the main campus. The IT staff is responsible for monitoring, updating and backing up the servers in use with the overall system and for developing and maintaining all of its software applications for internal and external requirements.

- O7b The college's IT staff, along with designated personnel within the college, determines the best means of collecting and distributing the data and information.
- O7c FSCC uses the POISE (Jenzabar, PX) data management system to manage the technological infrastructure. The system is deployed at the main campus and supports all of the extension sites.

**Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as [Institution]'s most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 6, Supporting Institutional Operations.**

| <i>Item</i> | <i>S/O</i> | <i>Comment</i>  |
|-------------|------------|---|
| 6P1a        | S          | FSCC employs a variety of methods to identify the needs of its students, including the Noel-Levitz survey, a student complaint system, student exit surveys, and other in-house surveys from various areas.   |
| 6P1b        | O          | While FSCC indicates it does receive feedback from alumni and friends, it does not appear to have a systematic process in place to identify the needs of stakeholders other than students.  |
| 6P2         | S          | FSCC has a variety of methods to identify administrative support needs of faculty, staff, and administrators. These include an on-line system for work orders, travel requests, and the Help Desk; employee surveys; and divisional meetings and monthly meetings with the president. The use of the SOAR committee provides additional input from college personnel.   |
| 6P3a        | SS         | FSCC established a Crisis Management Committee in 2007. The committee meets regularly and, in conjunction with the Fort Scott Police Department, has identified and communicated a set of policies and procedures covering various aspects of campus safety. This committee has also placed the Crisis Procedure Manual on the Employee Information page of the FSCC website. In addition, an Alert messaging system has been implemented, which has the ability to contact designated individuals using cell phone, land-line phones, and email. |

- 6P3b O It is not clear if the college has plans to evaluate how the Crisis Management system has contributed to the enhancement of physical safety and security on the campus.
- 6P4 S FSCC describes a series of key processes and details how it manages them to ensure they are addressing identified needs through satisfaction surveys, usage data, and the implementation of relevant software.
- 6P4 O It is not evident, based on the information provided, how quickly some of the above processes are used to identify and respond to changing needs on a day-to-day basis.
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- 6P5a S The AQIP Strategic Budgeting Process, documented in Category 8, has added transparency and opportunities for employee input.
- 6P5b O While FSCC provides examples of knowledge sharing, it does not describe how it documents support processes that encourage knowledge sharing, innovation, and empowerment.
- 6R1a S FSCC identifies a number of measures it uses to assess student, administrative, and organizational support services.
- 6R1b O Although outcome numbers are maintained for many key support services, the college would benefit from expanding data collection and analysis to identify trends and patterns to make adjustments or set targets.
- 6R2, 6R3 O While FSCC does cite measures, these measures are lacking in breadth and depth necessary to provide meaningful and useful results. Many are merely counting occurrences of attendance or number of students receiving loans; the satisfaction survey results given have a narrow focus. Having a well-designed and operating system to identify the effectiveness of support services may ensure that such services directly and positively impact learning at FSCC.
- 6R4 O FSCC has reported the ways in which the information collected is used to improve services. It may be beneficial for the college to assess the effectiveness of the system in achieving that end.

- 6R5      O      No comparative results are provided for FSCC's processes for supporting organizational operations.
- 6I1      O      There does not appear to be a systematic process in place for improving supporting student services.
- 6I2      O      No reportable information is provided regarding how the culture and infrastructure of FSCC help it select specific processes to improve and to set targets for improved performance results in supporting organizational operations.

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### **AQIP CATEGORY 7: MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS**

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

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

***Item      Critical Characteristic***

- O1a      Fort Scott Community College (FSCC), founded in 1919, is a public, not-for-profit comprehensive Community College near Kansas City. The board is publicly-elected and operates the College under the rules and regulations of the Kansas State Board of Regents.
- O1c      FSCC offers courses at varied locations across four counties and through distance education formats (interactive video, online, and hybrid). Courses are offered through traditional day classes, evening classes, and intersession courses between semesters.

- O1d Technology supports instruction through classroom design, computer labs and industry-specific software. FSCC has seven computer labs in areas ranging from the main campus, extension sites, and in dormitories.
- O4b FSCC operates on a traditional organizational structure with less than the average budget in comparison to its peer institutions. The college values its reputation as an employer who cares about its employees.
- O5 FSCC, in light of the recent presidential and other leadership transitions, and various audit and site visits, has recognized the potential need for future-focused conversations. As a result, the College began to implement a comprehensive strategic planning process and shared governance structure that also includes more transparency.
- O6b FSCC has used its recent AQIP action projects to focus on process management with the intention of aligning its support processes with the college's mission and goals.
- O7a FSCC's IT department provides support to all extension campus locations as well as the main campus. The IT staff is responsible for monitoring, updating and backing up the servers in use with the overall system and for developing and maintaining all of its software applications for internal and external requirements.
- O7b The college's IT staff, along with designated personnel within the college, determines the best means of collecting and distributing the data and information.
- O7c FSCC uses the POISE (Jenzabar, PX) data management system to manage the technological infrastructure. The system is deployed at the main campus and supports all of the extension sites.

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

| <i>Item</i> | <i>S/O</i> | <i>Comment</i>  |
|-------------|------------|---|
| 7P1a        | S          | FSCC's process for reporting consistent results designates members of its IT department and Instruction Office to serve as reporting personnel. These individuals advise multiple departments in the use of standardized data and processes, promoting the effort to use similar datasets so that |

multiple reporting units provide consistent results. This process meets the requirements of both the Kansas Board of Regents and FSCC's own standards for its strategic planning process.

- 7P1b      O      There is no indication of a process or a system in place to assess student learning outcomes at the course, program, or institutional levels. Category one describes an emerging process for identifying and assessing common student learning outcomes. Additionally, descriptions of program level assessments in some occupational programs areas are included. It is not clear how faculty from the various disciplines take ownership in collecting, analyzing, and using data to enhance student learning outcomes.
- 7P1c      S      FSCC uses a software system to identify optimum room assignments, allowing the college to maximize its resources. In addition, since the college is funded based on enrollment, it has developed historical data for class trends, which also aids in scheduling.
- 7P2a      S      The SOAR and AQIP process are integral elements of the college planning process and are benefitting the college by creating a channel for standardizing and disseminating data. Being involved in the SOAR process appears to be having a positive effect on employees, as high satisfaction levels in the spring 2009 employee survey were reported. Examples include items concerning how well employees feel they are informed of matters affecting FSCC and the level to which they feel included in the decision-making process.
- 7P3a      S      The college is sensitive to external reporting needs and sources. These assist in developing reporting and measures of success or areas needing improvement.
- 7P3b      O      FSCC appears to rely primarily on external reporting requirements (Perkins Grant, IPEDS, etc.) to determine departmental needs. Beyond this, the portfolio does not describe a process by which departments and other units are proactively requesting data collection and analysis from

IT. Though these collaborations occur "on occasion", according to the response to this question, the college can determine more opportunities to maintain and improve its technical support and documentation with a formal system to solicit information between departments and IT.

7P4      OO      The college has not addressed the process for collecting, analyzing and sharing measures of overall college performance. It is unclear if key performance measures have been defined.

7P5a      S      FSCC participates in several state-mandated comparative studies with other post secondary schools in the region and also in the National Community College Benchmark project. By participating in the Kansas Core Outcomes Project, the college is in a position to develop core competencies and outcomes for determining needs and establishing priorities based on comparative data.

7P5b      O      While FSCC has several available resources for accessing comparative data, the portfolio is not clear regarding the process the college uses for determining a need for comparative data. The college would benefit from a systematic approach to analyzing comparative data and developing action plans based on results.

7P6      O      No reportable information is provided regarding how FSCC ensures that department and unit analysis aligns with its organizational goals for instructional and non-instructional programs and services nor how this analysis is shared.

7P7      S      FSCC has invested resources in its IT department, doubling the staff over the last four years in spite of budget challenges. The college has used the same administrative computing system for over twenty years, providing stability and reliability. The IT department has implemented security procedures to protect the system and has aided departments in more accurate data entry through the development of edit checks.

- 7R1      OO      While FSCC notes a few measures, it lacks a comprehensive set of measures to assure effectiveness of its information and knowledge management system.
- 7R2      OO      The portfolio does not explain or provide any measures or results as evidence that information and knowledge management are rigorously evaluated.
- 7R3      O      No reportable outcomes are given regarding how the results for FSCC's performance of its processes for Measuring Effectiveness compare with the results of other higher education organizations or organizations outside of higher education.
- 7I1a      S      FSCC has expanded the capacity of the IT department by two staff. This provides more support for the institution and for the stability of the technology infrastructure.
- 7I1b      O      The college does not address the overall effectiveness of its measurement processes or the technology to support those processes. Additional staffing in the IT Department positions FSCC to develop systems to collect, analyze, and disseminate performance measures at the organizational level.
- 7I2      O      No reportable information is provided regarding how the culture and infrastructure of FSCC help it select specific processes to improve and to set targets for improved performance results in Measuring Effectiveness.

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## **AQIP CATEGORY 8: PLANNING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

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

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

***Item Critical Characteristic***

O1a Fort Scott Community College (FSCC), founded in 1919, is a public, not-for-profit comprehensive Community College near Kansas City. It serves rural communities in East Central Kansas. The board is publicly-elected and operates the College under the rules and regulations of the Kansas State Board of Regents.

O3b FSCC has a number of competitors in Southeast Kansas including PSU and other community colleges and recognizes that the institution must remain competitive in the market.

O5 FSCC, in light of the recent presidential and other leadership transitions, and various audit and site visits, has recognized the potential need for future-focused conversations. As a result, the College began to implement a comprehensive strategic planning process and shared governance structure that also includes more transparency.

O6b FSCC has used its recent AQIP action projects to focus on process management with the intention of aligning its support processes with the college's mission and goals.

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

| <b><i>Item</i></b> | <b><i>S/O</i></b> | <b><i>Comment</i></b>  |
|--------------------|-------------------|--|
| 8P1a               | S                 | In 2008 FSCC initiated its current strategic planning process which reflects its goal of shared governance rules and regulations of the Kansas State Board of Regents. |
| 8P1b               | O                 | While FSCC is implementing planning and budgeting processes, the college has an opportunity to strengthen the integration of these processes.                          |

- 8P2a S FSCC intends to determine short- and long-term strategies through its planning and budgeting processes, performance agreements with the Kansas Board of Regents, and AQIP Action Projects.
- 8P2b OO The portfolio does not provide enough information to discern what strategies have been developed to achieve either short- or long-term goals.
- 8P3a S FSCC acknowledges that its strategic planning process is not yet fully developed. An in-service day has been scheduled, which will engage employees in the development of action plans. As a result of feedback in April 2004, the college identified, implemented, and assessed two action projects: student orientation course and student exit survey.
- 8P3b O It is not clear how the college's strategic planning and budgeting, performance agreements with the Kansas Board of Regents and AQIP Action Projects are aligned with the mission and vision of FSCC.
- 8P4a S The college has created the AQIP Team and SOAR Committees which will have oversight for the coordination and alignment of its emerging planning processes, organizational strategies, and action plans, and to embed qualitative improvements into the college's culture and operations.
- 8P4b O FSCC currently has several processes related to planning and selection of goals; the college may realize benefits from a stronger alignment into one process.
- 8P5-8P8 OO While FSCC has not addressed these questions in its portfolio, they are important elements for an effective planning process.
- 8R1 O FSCC has identified measures related to its performance agreements and Action Projects. Now the college has an opportunity to establish measures related to the strategic planning and budgeting processes, and to collect and analyze data to evaluate their effectiveness.
- 8R2a S FSCC has included results from the student exit survey, student orientation and performance agreement.

- 8R2b      O      It is unclear how the college analyzes results, especially when actual outcomes are lower than baseline, to develop strategies for improvement. The college might also benefit from analyzing trends over time and comparative data from other institutions.
  
- 8R3-5      O      FSCC did not address these questions.
  
- 8I1      O      The new strategic planning and budgeting processes are inclusive and transparent and are beginning to yield improvements and increased employee ownership. Future gains will be realized as FSCC builds upon this critical structure and moves forward using data to identify opportunities and action plans to achieve continuous improvement.

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#### **AQIP CATEGORY 9: BUILDING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS**

*Building Collaborative Relationships* examines your institution's relationships – current and potential – to analyze how they contribute to the institution's accomplishing its mission. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to identification of key internal and external collaborative relationships; alignment of key collaborative relationships; relationship creation, prioritization, building; needs identification; internal relationships; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

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

***Item    Critical Characteristic***

- O1a    Fort Scott Community College (FSCC), founded in 1919, is a public, not-for-profit comprehensive Community College near Kansas City. It serves rural communities in East Central Kansas. The board is publicly elected and operates the College under the rules and regulations of the Kansas State Board of Regents.
  
- O2a    FSCC has several associated organizations that assist in supporting the institution and the communities it serves. These include the MILL (Maximized Individualized Learning

Lab), Endowment Association, the Alumni and Friends Association, and Gordon Parks Center for Culture and Diversity.

- O2c FSCC has an articulation agreement with Pittsburg State University (PSU), called the Qualified Admissions Program, that allows FSCC students to attend classes and take advantage of various student services and be involved in social activities.
- O3b FSCC has a number of competitors in Southeast Kansas, including PSU and other community colleges, and recognizes that the institution must remain competitive in the market.
- O6a FSCC held several events (Ellis Family Fine Arts Center and the College's first-annual Community Appreciation Day) that highlighted alignment of administrative goals around the mission and values.
- O9a FSCC understands the importance of relationships within its community and market to assist in developing its programs. To that end, it maintains relationships with feeder organizations (schools, etc.), matriculation institutions (schools that FSCC students will attend after completion), business and industry organizations that have occupational interests in programming, grant organizations, and consortium and legislative bodies.

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

| <i>Item</i> | <i>S/O</i> | <i>Comment</i>  |
|-------------|------------|---|
| 9P1a        | S          | FSCC has built a myriad of partnerships and collaborative relationships with educational and other organizations from which it receives its students. The college is the only higher education member of the governing board for Greenbush. |
| 9P1b        | O          | While FSCC notes several relationships currently in place, it is not clear how the college creates, prioritizes, or builds relationships with others.   |
| 9P2a        | S          | FSCC participates in the Kansas Core Competency project, which consists of representatives from both two and 4-year institutions. The focus is to promote discussion and collaboration among institutions of                                |

higher learning, to strengthen curricula and identify common learning outcomes.

- 9P2b SS FSCC has strong industry relationships with John Deere and Harley-Davidson.
- 9P2c O It is unclear how the college prioritizes and manages partnerships with other employers. Strong, consistent interactions with additional employers would strengthen not only the academic curriculum but also provide opportunities for students through internships, post-graduation employment, etc.
- 9P3 O FSCC does not provide information about how the college creates, prioritizes, and builds relationships with the organizations that provide services to its students.
- 9P4b O FSCC does not provide information regarding how it creates, prioritizes, and builds relationships with the organizations that supply materials and services to the organization.
- 9P5a S FSCC is aware of the importance of building and maintaining relationships with external agencies, including the Kansas Board of Regents, Southeast Kansas SYSTEM, and area communities. Additionally, several academic departments host competitions each year that bring large numbers of community members of various ages to the campus.
- 9P5b S FSCC has used several strategies to keep the community aware of the college. The Community Appreciation Day is a noteworthy example of ways in which the college works to strengthen its community relationships.
- 9P6 O FSCC does not provide information about how the college ensures that its partnerships and collaborative relationships are meeting the varying needs of those involved.
- 9P7a SS FSCC's primary vehicle for input from the college community is the Shared Ownership and Responsibility team. SOAR, a shared governance

system, and its six committees play a major role in building relationships between and among departments via its cross-functional teams.

- 9R1 O Results are provided for the Qualified Admissions Program as well as total amounts of grant awards. However, the institution lacks a holistic set of measures for its relationships.
- 9R2 O While the amount of grant funding received is notable for a college of this size, the impact of grant activities on student learning and other services is not provided. FSCC would benefit from developing quantifiable markers of its key collaborative relationships
- 9R3 O Except for admissions data, FSCC does not regularly collect and analyze information that could benchmark collaborative relationships with both internal and external partners.
- 9I1a S As part of the new strategic plan to increase transparency and shared governance, FSCC has increased efforts to communicate its activities and intentions to its stakeholders and area communities.
- 9I1b O FSCC has made several improvements, including SOAR and AQIP committees, in building collaborative partnerships in the past few years. However, the college has yet to create systematic processes and outcome measures that document the value of its collaboration activities.
- 9I2 O The portfolio does not explicitly discuss how the culture and infrastructure have been improved at FSCC.