as attending professional conferences, which help areas collect best practices information and improve.

Category Seven: Measuring Effectiveness

7P1 Select, manage, distribute data for programs and services
Historically the College, through its IR Office, has produced a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) report that was designed to monitor Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for our internal purposes and to monitor KPIs for our external audiences such as the IBHE. The KPIs were selected through a combination of accepted best practices, specific program data needs, available and accessible data, and external reporting requirements such as program review. The College, through its updated planning process described in the next section, has begun to phase out or more accurately morph the CQI report into one that emphasizes internal program review centered around KPIs relevant to answering five key questions: Why are we here?, What are we trying to accomplish?, How are we doing?, What does it mean?, and Where are we going?

In addition to the CQI and program review reports, the College collects a variety of data both on a systematic and ad hoc basis concerning institutional finances, student satisfaction and other attitudes, faculty course evaluations, grade reports, enrollment reports, personnel performance evaluations, career success and transfer rates, community programming needs, and HCC Foundation reports. These data are used as relevant on a program-by-program basis.

7P2 Select, manage, distribute data for planning and improvement
The data selection and distribution mechanisms for planning and improvement activities are essentially the same as those for programs and services noted above. The most recent strategic plan stretching from FY 2008-FY 2012 was developed through the IR Office and reported in November 2008. Again, the KPIs in this planning document represent responses to the College’s five questions listed above, responses to external stakeholders such as the IBHE, and responses to internal needs and best practices. Much more information about the overall planning process and KPIs can be found in sections 8P1 and 8P2.

In order to manage better the data needed to create these various indicators, the IR Office has begun development of a low tech data warehouse so pertinent data is pulled from the College’s PeopleSoft system and sent directly to IR. The distribution of these data is primarily accomplished through the IR Office. Hardcopy reports are available as well as electronic reports downloadable from the IR website. The IR Office will also create and distribute a variety of ad hoc reports or data sheets, referred to as “Occasional Nuggets from the Data Mines.” In sum, the IR website contains the following reports that may be used to assist in the planning process at the College level or lower: CQI, statewide performance indicators, HCC mission performance indicators, summaries of internal surveys such as the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) and Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), graduation data, AQIP Examiner data, IPEDS data, graduate survey reports, HCC fact book data, and more.

7P3 Collection, storage, and accessibility of data
From the perspective of the IR Office, individual units across the College may request data that are not contained in one or more of the routine or standardized reports listed above. While the five planning questions are deliberately and desirably non-specific, which allows units to answer in ways that best capture the uniqueness of their operations, this non-specificity can and does increase the volume of ad hoc data requests coming to the IR Office. This is especially true in the instructional areas. The consequence is that ad hoc data collection and dissemination conducted by the IR Office can be very labor intensive and time consuming. The longer term solution to this issue is to develop a data warehouse system that allows program reviewers, campus planners, and other consumers of data to query the data directly in a user-friendly way. This would free up the IR Office to be data interpreters and information producers rather than data gatherers and disseminators.

In terms of our hardware systems, our Information Technology (IT) unit maintains two data centers housed on campus along with many servers and several terabytes of storage capacity. We use PeopleSoft Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software system to maintain the bulk of our institutional data, including but not limited to recruiting, admissions, enrollment, graduation, employment, and the like. IT works with the IR Office and other entities to develop reports and queries utilizing this data and to extract data files for constituents as needed.

**7P4 Analyzing and sharing data**

While the College is able to generate a lot of data, often there is not a lot of analysis to accompany the data. The most typical type of analysis is to compare both historical trends and peer institution trends for our KPIs. To the extent that data analysis occurs, it is typically done on an ad hoc basis by the unit or area receiving the data. The Cabinet is the entity charged with making the most sense out of the most data, but again this is not necessarily done systematically. We have begun the process of asking units and areas to analyze data through our planning questions outlined in section 8P1. Specifically, the planning question “What does this mean?” should drive the process of data analysis.

Individual units do a better job of analyzing data to answer specific programmatic questions about such things as enrollment trends, student success trends, and student satisfaction trends. Additionally, over the past three to four years, our AQIP Campus Conversation Days have been opportunities for the College to share and talk about a variety of data reports such as the AQIP Examiner Report, the Student Satisfaction Inventory, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement, and student transfer data. As noted above, the IR Office posts several reports, including the CQI and Performance Reports, to its website, thus making it available to the campus.

**7P5 Comparative data**

The ICCB provides the College with comparative data that are used in our CQI reports. Also, most national surveys such as the SSI allow for gross comparisons with institutions of a similar size and region. The CCSSE allowed the College to join a consortium of Illinois schools administering the survey and enabled us to make aggregate comparisons with a number of institutions in Illinois. HCC is typically interested in comparing itself with a number of downstate community colleges roughly in our geographic area. This is especially helpful when looking at tuition comparisons. Several of these institutions are also in cities that house a larger
public or private four-year institution, which further makes them similar to our College. Furthermore, the ICCB provides the College with a list peer comparison schools determined by size and location. They are the schools whose data we tend to monitor most closely.

_HCC Peer Comparison Schools provided by the ICCB:_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution Name</th>
<th>Institution City (all Illinois)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black Hawk College</td>
<td>Moline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Central College</td>
<td>East Peoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln Land College</td>
<td>Springfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parkland College</td>
<td>Champaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richland College</td>
<td>Decatur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock Valley College</td>
<td>Rockford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwestern Illinois College</td>
<td>Belleville</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The IPEDS data systems allow us to create comparison schools from across the country and compare a limited set of data elements from those schools. Finally, HCC recently joined the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP) which has already established commonly accepted performance indicators and benchmarks for community college effectiveness in a variety of areas.

**7P6 Data and goal alignment**

The State of Illinois periodically promulgates a state-wide strategic plan for higher education within the State. The IBHE plan, called the Public Agenda, was adopted in 2008. For community colleges, the ICCB adopted a plan called the Promise Revisited in 2006. These state-wide goals, along with the College’s published Mission and Values statements, comprise the foundation upon which the College’s comprehensive planning and institutional effectiveness model has been designed. This model requires that unit, program, department, and even individual goals align with State goals and the College’s Mission, Values, and institutional goals by revolving around the five key questions outlined in section 8P1.

Performance data is collected and analyzed in the preparation of various internal and external reports that are produced upon a regular schedule. Program, department, and unit level reports, as well as College-wide reports, are included in the materials that accompany Board of Trustee meetings. These are distributed prior to those meetings. In addition, many of the reports are posted online – for example, on the College’s AQIP web pages or the web pages of the College’s Office of Institutional Research.

**7P7 Data accuracy, reliability and security**

Many different systems are in place to secure and back up all computerized systems. For example, an extensive scheme of back-up jobs replicates data to tapes and remote disks to protect it. Security administration varies by system, but generally, College unit or area heads are engaged in helping to define and decide roles and permissions for employees who must log in to the system.
The following is one way to envision the security system at the College. First, IT has responsibility for authentication, which means making sure users are who they say they are. This is typically accomplished through password policies and general identity management strategies. Second, IT assists with authorization rules, which means the data owners help decide to what users should and should not have access once they are logged in or authenticated to any particular system. Third, we realize that security is actually much more complex than described above, since there are many types of security, such as physical, host, perimeter, and so on. The IT department strives to adhere to best practices in the industry for implementing many different security mechanisms, such as firewalls and intrusion detection, in order to protect the College’s data.

Reliability of the data depends largely upon the accuracy of data entered into the systems. IT engages in regular discussions with constituents about data entry standards, rules for the sharing of data across units or departments and similar topics. Accuracy is also ensured through implementation of functional best practices, such as double entry accounting systems and regular system audits.

The timeliness of the College’s data gathering is sometimes an issue for some data. We do not have an overall system linked to a calendar. Consequently, our IR Office sometimes simply works department by department to ensure that data needed for a variety of the reports listed above are procured.

7R1 What measures of performance do we collect and analyze regularly?
While the College has data related to a myriad of indicators and measures as referred to in the sections above, it may not be accurate to state that we have a true system for information and knowledge management. We are exploring data warehousing software that may help us both develop and implement more robust systems in these areas.

Some examples of the kinds of performance measures that we do regularly collect and analyze can be found below.

Common Institutional Indicators (C) are those that apply to every Illinois public college and university

Mission Specific Indicators (M) are selected by each institution to reflect its unique purposes

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) collects and reports data for each of the community colleges based on various state reports submitted by the colleges throughout the year.

Policy Area 1: Higher education will help Illinois business and industry sustain strong economic growth through its teaching, service, and research activities.

1C1: Percent of degree/certificate recipients either employed or enrolled in further education within one year of graduation.
1M2: Number of individuals receiving customized training through Business & Industry Center.

Policy Area 2: Higher education will join elementary and secondary education to improve teaching and learning at all levels.

2M1: Annual number of students completing requirements for initial teacher certification by certificate area.

Policy Area 3: No Illinois Citizen will be denied an opportunity for a college education because of financial need.

3C1: Net price of attendance for undergraduates who apply for aid by income quintile, after MAP, Pell, SEOG and institutional grant aid are subtracted.

3M2: Number of enrolled students who receive state (ISAC) grants.

3M4: Number of enrolled students who receive federal (Pell) grants.

Policy Area 4: Illinois will increase the number and diversity of citizens completing training and education programs.

4C1: Completions by race/ethnicity, disability status and gender.

4M1: Number of students enrolled by race/ethnicity & gender.

Policy Area 5: Illinois colleges and universities will be held accountable for providing high quality academic programs and the systematic assessment of student learning outcomes while holding students to ever higher expectations for learning and growth.

5C1: Extent to which institutional quality and effectiveness are recognized by graduates through alumni surveys.

5C2: Pass rates on professional/occupational licensure exams relative to state and/or national averages.

5M1: Occupational graduate placement in employment or continuing education.

Policy Area 6: Illinois colleges and universities will continually improve productivity, cost-effectiveness and accountability.

6C1: Cost of instruction per credit hour by student level and as a percent of weighted sector average by level.
6C2: Administrative and support cost per credit hour (all levels) and as a percent of sector average.

6C3: Percent of first-time, full-time degree-seeking freshmen who complete their degree within 150% of catalog time, or are still enrolled or transferred.

6M7: Credit hours generated (total).

7R2 Evidence that measuring effectiveness system meets our needs
While we do have some specific examples that demonstrate how data, information, and analysis have informed our decision-making and thus meet our needs, as we’ve alluded to above, our goal is to systematize this across the campus to a much greater extent than we do now.

Some examples of instances when the system has met our needs include the following:

**Buildings Campaigns:** The College’s decision to expand its physical space was based in part on enrollment and financial projections as well as on comparisons with other similar institutions with respect to such indicators as square foot per student.

**Student Enrollment Processes:** The College revamped the student enrollment processes based on reviews of student satisfaction data, best practices at other institutions with respect to enrollment and retention, and the changing demographics of our student body (more traditional and more full-time students, for example). The College now engages in a full orientation program for enrolling students (SOAR). (see section 1P6)

**Academic Support:** Several units in the Academic Support Center, such as Testing and Tutoring, Instructional Development, the Library, and Disability Support Services have formulated performance indicators based on their respective unit level missions derived from the College Mission and Values; used existing data or generated their own to evaluate performance; and have shared results internally and made changes (for example, hours, programming, holdings) in order to improve their services.

7R3 How do results compare with other institutions?
As noted in section 7P5 above, we do have the ability to compare many of our performance indicators at the College or unit levels with those of other institutions either at the aggregate level, such as all two-year colleges nationally, or with specific institutions. As part of our program review process, the College is encouraging more and more units and areas to compare performance measures with those of other institutions, but not all units engage in these comparisons yet. For example, the College compares all of the KPIs listed in 7R1 with the institutions listed in 7P5. While we have no external validation we are doing better or worse than one or more of these schools, we are able to review the raw numbers and comparison group averages in order to make our own internal evaluations about how we are doing. Also, as a second example, our nursing program is able to compare results of its licensure exams with other comparison groups.
Reviewing the KPI data that relate to such things as costs, transfer performance, employment rates, and diversity of the student body, we generally feel we are performing at or above our comparison group means over most of the indicators.

**7I1 Recent Improvements**
The College’s recent participation in the NCCBP noted above in 7P5 will enable us not only to compare our data with those of other community colleges but also will allow us to share results internally and use them across the College to enhance decision making.

The IR Office will soon have a single database or low tech warehouse containing most of the relevant data elements needed to create the KPIs across the campus and across many units. This will mark an improvement over the current system of managing several separate databases in order to capture the necessary data elements.

The College anticipates that regularized participation in national surveys such as the SSI and the CCSSE will help us continue to gather data about student attitudes and behaviors and help the College compare its results with those of other institutions.

**7I2 How do culture and infrastructure support targets and improvement?**
The College has had a Continuous Quality Improvement orientation since its first days, and CQI is clearly reflected in our core values as presented in our Overview. Consequently, the culture of the College is very supportive of this.

The bureaucracy of the College is relatively flat for a college of our size, which allows us to be creative and flexible in our processes. The downside of this is that sometimes our formal systems lag behind our flexible processes. Several of our systems could be tightened up or otherwise improved. For example, data is used all the time in a variety of decision making situations, but some of the data must be generated on an ad hoc basis rather than being routinely and readily available for immediate analysis to support decision making.

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**Category Eight: Planning Continuous Improvement**

**8P1 What are your key planning processes?**

During fall 2007, HCC adopted a planning model that integrates institutional, statewide and accreditation perspectives and can be applied throughout the College. The planning model is based on Five Key Questions:

1. **Why are we here?** The College’s Mission and Values provide the answer to this question and the foundation for all planning. These are, in turn, influenced by both the Community College Act and statewide higher education goals.

2. **What are we trying to accomplish?** The College’s **Operational Goals** are stated at the highest level in the Goals and Purposes associated with the Mission. They direct the ongoing activities of the College and are monitored by appropriate performance indicators.

3. **How are we doing?** A variety of regular institutional, state and accreditation reports...