

Criterion 6: Supporting Institutional Operations
Core Values: Commitment, Excellence, Accountability
Strategic Plan Goal 3: Enhance, Strengthen, and Advance College Operations

6C1 Key student and administrative support service processes

Services to students are the primary motivation of Richland Community College’s key processes. The Student and Academic Services Division incorporates the majority of primary student services functions. Other related functions are under the leadership of the Vice President of Finance and Administration and the Vice President of Economic Development and Innovative Workforce Solutions. The organizational chart included in *IC4* shows the responsibility flow for divisions and areas of the College. Enrollment Services has been designed as the conduit for prospective and current students; Teaching and Learning Support Services focuses on support for current students both in and out of the classroom. The Student Services Center, located just inside the main entrance of the College, is a “one-stop” location for many of the services available in the College. The primary functions housed in Student Services or nearby are outlined below:

Enrollment Services

Area	Responsibilities
Counseling and Advisement Services	Academic Advisors & Counselors (Personal & career counseling; registration; advisor training)
Student Success	PassPort academic workshops in study strategies and student skills; Success Net; support programs for at-risk students
Financial Aid & Veterans’ Affairs	Financial Aid (PELL and MAP), Coordinates with RCC Foundation and with external scholarship donors; Veterans’ Affairs
Registrar & Student Records	Student Information, Registration Information, Academic Files & Transcripts, Graduation & Degree Audits, Transfer Transcript Evaluation
Campus Life	Student Clubs and Organizations; Student Senate; Program Board
Admissions & Recruitment	Admissions and Student Records; Off-campus Recruitment and Registration at High Schools
Career Center	Student Job Placement on campus; internships; Career Exploration

Teaching and Learning Support Services

Area	Responsibilities
Learning Accommodations Services	Adaptive equipment, tutoring, other services for students with disabilities
Learning Resources Center	Bibliographic Instruction; Research; College Archives (Historical information for the College); AudioVisual (classroom technical support)
Student Learning Center	Peer tutoring, faculty tutoring, accessible equipment for students with disabilities
Testing Center	Placement testing; make-up testing; testing for other universities; CLEP and DANTES; testing for online courses
Student Support Services/TRiO	Targets transfer students and offers academic support, intrusive advising, and cultural opportunities

The 6-step admissions and registration process is outlined each semester for students in the Class Schedule distributed to District residences and also through the Richland website. This process includes admission information, placement testing, orientation options, advisement, and payment of tuition and fees. The student orientation program was recommended by a CIP team in Fall 2002 and piloted in Spring 2004, including presentations on student support services, a tour, and registration information. Over the last three months, the Director of Campus Life and the Director of Admissions and Recruitment have been reviewing Orientation and making plans to offer this general orientation online to accompany the orientation for online classes. Academic advising, career advising, and financial aid information are available year-round from full-time counselors, part-time Associate Advisors, faculty, and Financial Aid Specialists. In addition, a previous Early Alert program to assist students who may be in academic jeopardy in their courses has been replaced by a new student support program, Success Net; this program will be coordinated electronically through the new College portal, my.richland.

Student services processes were reviewed in a process mapping activity that occurred in 2007 and 2008. As a result, a tracking system was implemented to log why individuals were visiting Student Services, how long each student had to wait, and how long visits with staff lasted. This information is reviewed regularly to adjust staffing at peak times and to address other concerns.

Contracted services that directly impact students include custodial services, 24-hour security (including security for special campus events), bookstore, and food services (including cafeteria services, vending machines, and catering special events). These services must go through a bidding process as directed by Board Policy. The Vice President of Finance and Administration conducts focus groups of students and staff on a regular basis to determine special concerns in these areas, and the results are shared with the appropriate vendors.

Procedures are also in place for hiring personnel, including student workers, purchasing, and conducting other non-academic processes. Some purchases must have Board approval.

In the past two years, CIP teams have examined the processes related to student recruitment, front door service, adjunct faculty training, target market identification, and online education. Approved recommendations are being piloted or implemented, depending on budget availability and connections to the Strategic Plan priorities.

Through its participation in the Continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN), Richland has also become involved in the testing of a sustainability tool developed and piloted by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). A Sustainability Committee comprised of faculty and staff have used the instrument to examine campus sustainability practices; a CIP Team will then use the results to map a plan to improve sustainability efforts.

6C2 Key student and administrative support services reinforcing processes and systems

All of the processes described above connect directly to student support. Following students from initial interest to attending classes through career interest to coursework to graduation and beyond, academic and administrative support systems are coordinated to allow individuals a smooth passage through the academic process at RCC. Other important systems have been developed for program and curriculum development, program review, professional development for all employees, faculty teaching schedules, and human resources processes. While bumps sometimes occur as they will when personalities are involved, faculty, staff, and administrators

work to identify stumbling blocks and change the processes, whether those changes involve training, technology, or revising the system. The rights and responsibilities of students are used as guiding principles, as well as the College core values, mission, and vision.

In addition, processes related to institutional operations and collaborative relationships connect to student progress, making the campus a safe, secure place for academic success. The technology framework encourages access to information by all stakeholders, and public input has been encouraged through recent public engagement activities, including REACH. With the committee restructuring, committees and taskforces are paying more attention not only to the policies that exist but also to assuring that the policies and the procedures match.

Beginning in 2005, committees and stakeholder groups have reviewed all Board Policies and made appropriate adjustments, including updating titles, making technical changes, and assuring that procedures were clear. This review not only helped to assure that policies and processes match but educated employees on the importance of understanding policies that drive their work lives. With the final section revisions approved by the Board in May 2009, the Policy and Communications Committee is establishing a regular cycle for policy review and revision, and the process will begin again.

One underlying support service is provided by the Administrative Information Systems office. The staff oversee the data management system, Jenzabar, provide data mining support, and coordinate state information submissions. The current data management system is currently undergoing major revisions, so stakeholders have been meeting over the past several months to review processes for data input and retrieval and to examine the display of information for students and staff. Utilizing technology to reduce paper and other consumable use supports the push for sustainability, efficiency, and information access. This upgrading will continue and involve the website staff and others to assure consistency of information and to reflect the quality image of Richland.

6P1 Identifying support services needs of students

Information about support service needs of students is gathered from the following sources:

- ❖ Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey
- ❖ Faces of the Future Survey
- ❖ Directed background questions on the Placement Tests
- ❖ Student Senate meetings, open forums, and surveys
- ❖ State Reports, including Program Reviews and Performance Reports
- ❖ In-house surveys including Occupational Follow-up Survey, Satisfaction surveys in Student Services, Graduation Survey
- ❖ Vice Presidents' Teams, including Deans and Directors
- ❖ Division meetings
- ❖ Focus groups
- ❖ Student Mentors
- ❖ Judicial Board
- ❖ Continuous Improvement Process Team research
- ❖ Information from high school personnel
- ❖ Meetings with transfer personnel from four-year colleges and universities

Qualitative and quantitative data, including the 2007 Environmental Scan and the Institutional Data Book, and the 2008 Retention Study, are shared through committees and taskforces, division meetings, President's Cabinet, Institutional Effectiveness Group, and other meetings where stakeholders are present.

6P2 Identifying the administrative support service needs

Administrative support services are identified through forums, meetings, and materials gathered from

- ❖ Division meetings
- ❖ Vice Presidents' Teams meetings
- ❖ President's Cabinet
- ❖ Graduation Survey
- ❖ Employee Relations and Development Committee
- ❖ Institutional Effectiveness Group
- ❖ Quality Council
- ❖ Board of Trustees

The REACH public engagement initiative, described in 3P3, and the Strategic Planning initiative also identified support service needs for students, employees, and District residents. These and other initiatives will help the College plan for the future.

6P3 Managing key student and administrative support service processes day-to-day

With the shift to continuous improvement and adjustments to staff reporting lines, greater responsibility has been given to front-line supervisors and staff to manage and monitor day-to-day operations and customer service. Staff are able to discuss procedural concerns as they occur, and often changes can be made without discussion at a number of levels. With the concerted effort to remove procedure from Board policies in the just-completed review cycle, procedures may be adjusted without extensive review by non-related personnel. If the issue is one that affects multiple divisions, conversations occur with the appropriate Dean or Vice President, or at the Vice Presidents' Team meetings. For issues that affect the entire College, discussions occur at the Institutional Effectiveness Group meetings, at the Vice Presidents' Team Meetings, or at the President's Cabinet, all held twice a month. In addition, information sharing and training occur at the Fourth Friday Supervisors' meetings among Deans, Directors, and Vice Presidents. These regular meetings allow timely conversations about issues of the day and how to coordinate activities or address challenges.

Ultimate responsibility for monitoring day-to-day activities rests with the Vice President of Finance and Administration, the Vice President of Student and Academic Services, and the Vice President of Economic Development and Innovative Workforce Solutions, who report to the President. Issues related to policies are taken to the appropriate committee or taskforce, and CIP Teams have also been developed if the issue needs broad study across stakeholder groups. Information is disseminated through meeting minutes posted on the College Intranet and through meetings of divisions and support areas. In addition, the College community receives information through broadcast e-mail, *I-Mail*, memos from various divisions, and division meetings. General planning information is also presented at All-College meetings held at least twice per year.

6P4 Using information and results

With the adoption of AQIP and continuous improvement, the College community has shifted in its attitudes about using data to help make informed decisions. While some divisions have consistently made data-driven decisions, all areas are expected to utilize data and stakeholder input to support recommendations. Participating in extensive continuous improvement training has helped more individuals understand what is required in making an “informed decision” and that making a recommendation must be supported by information beyond just past practice or anecdotal information.

Using the instruments and methods for data collection outlined in *6P1* and *6P2*, divisions, committees, taskforces, and other planners determine appropriate support services changes. For example, based on the results of three CIP teams, a new tuition payment plan option was instituted, and new student and employee orientation programs were implemented. The new processes have matured since institutionalization and have undergone review and adjustment, supporting the last step in the Continuous Improvement model.

The College also strives to connect changes and improvements to the Strategic Plan, monitoring both short-term and long-term results. Annual Priorities connected to the Strategic Plan are based on trends as well as current events in the District and economic issues including local taxes, state funding and federal initiatives. Regular reports are made to the Board of Trustees and are available to the College community.

6P5 Measures of students and administrative support services processes

As described earlier, the College uses a number of instruments to collect information on support services and satisfaction. In addition to the All-College Employee Survey, the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory, and the Faces of the Future Survey, Graduate Surveys, Occupational Follow-up Surveys, and other satisfaction information are gathered by individual divisions and shared in the planning process.

6R1 Results for student support service processes

Over the last few years, information from the Strategic Plan process, the Continuous Improvement Process training, and other initiatives has led to several changes in processes for student services. The reorganization of Student and Academic Services allows for clearer lines of communications and operation for students to enroll, to take courses, and to graduate and throughout their academic career at RCC to receive academic support services. Recent initiatives include

- ❖ Revision of New Student Orientation (called SOAR)
- ❖ Increased training in academic advising for staff and faculty (occurs each semester and includes program updates from Deans and Directors)
- ❖ Increased access to career exploration activities and interest inventories, with extensive training for advisors and financial aid staff
- ❖ Early Alert, offering support to students in academic difficulty in classes (transitioning to Success Net in summer 2009 based on faculty and staff input)
- ❖ Expanded services for students with disabilities, including increased academic support services like tutoring and self-paced classes (recently moved to new location to handle increased traffic and to expand services)

- ❖ Remodeled Student Services Center with added access to computer terminals and WIFI capabilities (entire campus now with Wi-Fi access, addition of laptops and tablet PC's for student use in the Learning Resources Center)
- ❖ Increased technology training for students in online and technology-enhanced courses (new learning management system implemented in Summer 2009; new training program implemented as students enroll in summer and fall online courses)

Analysis of the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory and the Faces of the Future data will lead to additional areas to include in the Strategic Plan for the coming years. In general, the College already recognizes challenges in academic advising, student engagement in extracurricular activities, and online education opportunities and access.

6R2 Results for administrative support service processes

As with student support processes, academic support services have also been affected by the reorganization and with the implementation of continuous improvement. Cross-training for support staff in the one-stop concept implemented in the Student Services Center has increased knowledge of paperwork requirements for admission, registration, and graduation, and customer service training has also led to greater employee satisfaction with knowledge about the College. The personal performance plan for non-faculty has been revised by the Employee Relations and Development Committee (ERDC) to incorporate essential job functions, job connection to Strategic Plan and Core Values, and training goals; ERDC will evaluate this revision after the first cycle ends in 2010.

The work of two recent CIP teams also connect to administrative support services. One team has been developed to use the results of the STARS evaluation developed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) to streamline procedures. A second team has developed a usage and marketing template for one of the off-campus sites, addressing procedures to assure that services offered at that and other locations meet the high standards of the institution.

Finally, long-range facilities planning will continue in order to meet program needs. The 2007 Facilities Master Plan shows a change in focus with the growth of the physical footprint of the College to the north to incorporate Progress City, the site of the biannual International Farm Progress Show, and the RAMP document submitted to the State is regularly adjusted based on changing demands. Information from REACH, from the Strategic Plan, from conversations with Richland's partners, and from internal discussions at all levels will help in shaping Richland's physical vision.

6R3 Comparing results

Comparisons to other AQIP institutions occurs through a number of venues. Participation in the AQIP Colloquium, attendance at sessions at other conferences, and discussions at the CQIN Summer Institutes allow Richland staff to determine progress and set new goals. Having over 80% of the full-time faculty and staff trained in continuous improvement is at least anecdotally higher than other community colleges, and the methods for examining and altering the committee structure seems to be a "best practice" directly related to this change in College culture. Monitoring of the integration of continuous improvement practices will continue.

Richland is also involved in establishing a consortium of Illinois AQIP institutions; the participants have already discussed how to utilize this collaboration to establish benchmarks for comparisons. A listserv has been created and housed at Richland to facilitate conversations throughout the year.

611 Improving current processes and systems for supporting institutional operations

With the new system in place for participation and decision-making and with the recent reorganization, individual divisions are more easily able to collect information and address concerns and challenges as they occur. Decision-making at the lowest possible levels is new to many people, and learning when they can make changes and when they need to seek approval continues. Work is underway to determine what new teams might need to be formed, and examination of the current committee structure is also occurring this semester with results to be presented to the College in January. The process for strategic planning is being adjusted to allow the divisions to create their tactical work plans based on the institutional strategies, offering more flexibility in what the divisions deem important.

Accomplishments include

Planning	Improvements
Accreditation	Adoption of AQIP and continuous improvement
Continuous Improvement	Training of over 80% of full-time faculty and staff
Strategic Planning	Board approved Spring 2008
AQIP Action Projects	New Action Projects created Spring 2009
Public Engagement	REACH initiative ongoing at locations throughout the District
ICCB Reports	Consolidating responsibility for reports and data collection with Student and Academic Services Office

612 Setting targets and priorities and communicating results

Priorities for each year are established based on the Strategic Plan. The current Plan is available on the College website at http://www.richland.edu/system/files/improvement/strategic_plan_08.pdf. Priorities are also placed on the website for easy review, and regular updates are made to the Board of Trustees and included in *I-Mail*. Following are strategies from the 2008-2011 Strategic Plan that relate to *Supporting Institutional Operations*:

Goal	Strategy	Areas Involved
Teaching and Learning	Expand opportunities that provide basic student technology training.	Deans, Director of Online Learning, Operations and Technical Support
	Implement a comprehensive retention plan to reduce attrition.	Enrollment Services, Teaching and Learning Support Services
	Develop and offer new programs and courses to meet regional and global workforce needs.	Deans, faculty, Operations and Technical Services (space and equipment)
	Alternative scheduling	Deans, Director of Online Learning, faculty, CIP Team

Collaborative Relationships	Create and foster partnerships for new or expanded educational and training opportunities for employment.	Vice Presidents, President, Deans
	Conduct REACH activities in outlying communities and with target audiences.	Marketing; College community; Board of Trustees
College Operations	Develop a long-range staffing plan.	Human Resources, Deans, Vice Presidents, President
	Strengthen grant-writing efforts to support strategic initiatives.	Deans, Vice Presidents
	Increase recruitment of diverse faculty and staff.	Human Resources, Deans, Vice Presidents
	Conduct a Major gifts campaign.	Foundation, President, College community