

**Criterion 7: Measuring Effectiveness**

**Core Values: Accountability**

**Strategic Plan Goals 1 and 3: Enhance, Strengthen, and Advance Teaching and Learning and College Operations**

**7C1 Collecting and storing information and data**

The Administrative Information System (AIS) at RCC allows comprehensive collection of data and information accessible by everyone on campus. Each division has its own specialized menu, and individuals also have access to areas of the system that directly relate to his or her work situation. Student Services staff and counselors, for example, have access to student records and registration, while division secretaries may access course information for creation of the class schedule each semester but only have limited access to student information. Customizing the current system has allowed individuals and divisions to conduct basic research without the assistance of the staff in AIS, who can then concentrate on more specific and detailed research needs across the campus.

The Director of Data Processing is responsible for submission of various required MIS state reports directly from the system, along with IPEDS reports and other federally required information. The Assistant to the Vice President of Student and Academic Services is responsible for submission of many state reports including program reviews and performance reports as well as AQIP Annual Updates and the Systems Portfolio.

Individuals may also access components of this system through the Internet, allowing registration, grade submission, and access to other student information. Students access my.richland, an Internet portal for registration and records monitoring. My.richland is part of a technology upgrade currently in progress; both students and employees will have electronic access to more information and be able to complete tasks without having to come to campus.

In addition, all College personnel have access to the Intranet at two levels. Divisions and some individuals have secured file storage capabilities that may be shared only by permission, and some folders are accessible by the larger College community. On this drive the College committees and taskforces, for example, store minutes, agendas, and other materials for view by the entire College, a working version of the College Catalog is available for update, and forms such as travel and budget requests may also be accessed.

Several surveys listed in 7C2 are administered to students and staff throughout the year by various divisions, and the information is shared through meetings and reports. However, currently no clear and consistent method exists for tracking all reports and data collection, so some duplication may occur.

**7C2 Key institutional measures for tracking effectiveness**

Richland uses several methods to track effectiveness both in the classroom and institutionally. Administrators recognize that these efforts need to be better coordinated so that the information is available to more stakeholders and so that individuals know where to go to obtain this information. Currently, tracking effectiveness is done through the following means:

### Course and Program

- ❖ Classroom Evaluation (qualitative and quantitative)—cycle established for tenured and non-tenured full-time faculty and for adjunct faculty
  - Instructor preparation and presentation
  - Formal and informal evaluation methods
  - Laboratories and other clinical settings
  - Instructor availability outside of class

All courses have established course objectives, and multiple-section courses use the same objectives from a master syllabus, available to both full-time and adjunct faculty to use as a framework for courses. These syllabi are also available in division offices for students interested in learning about specific course content before registration. Occupational courses also have incorporated SCANS competencies as part of course and program development, and some faculty have been trained to use Worldwide Instructional Design System (WIDS) to create syllabi.

- ❖ Program Review
  - State Program Review on 5-year cycle established by State (occupational/technical, transfer, support services, developmental)
  - National Board Certification (health professions and automotive technology)
  - New program review (after one year; internal)

The Program Review process conducted for the State was designed by a Continuous Improvement Process Team. Deans and faculty are responsible for gathering and summarizing data, including program objectives and outcomes, enrollment trends, program costs, and other information. In addition, for Career and Technical Education programs, the Advisory Committee completes a survey on the program. The Review is used to determine gaps in the program, the unit cost and program revenues, and what changes should be made. The Assistant to the Vice President of Student and Academic Services coordinates this effort with a faculty member who led the CIP team. At the end of this review cycle in Summer 2009, the process will be reviewed and revised if necessary.

Programs with national certification are reviewed on a regular cycle to assure that they are maintaining standards. Faculty in each program and the dean have a process for ongoing data collection and internal review, and faculty participate in completing the application for recertification. In addition, faculty and deans in other areas such as welding and the Director of the Child Development Center are exploring the options for national or state certification as appropriate.

### Students

- ❖ Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (spring of even years)
- ❖ Faces of the Future Survey (fall of even years)
- ❖ Occupational Follow-up Survey (annual; graduates in occupational fields)
- ❖ Graduate Survey (annual)
- ❖ Course evaluations including tests, quizzes, written assignments, and lab work
- ❖ Student Senate surveys on co-curricular programs or activities

- ❖ Focus groups on topics of concern for students, including programs for the next academic year, proposed changes in policy, and input on documents such as the class schedule and College Catalog.

### Institutional

The College completes all mandated State performance reports using designated performance indicators, along with the required submission of reports for enrollment, financial aid, occupational outlook information, and other general areas, the AQIP Action Project Update and the Higher Learning Commission Annual Report as required. An Employee Survey is conducted regularly, and CIP Teams, committees, and other stakeholder groups administer various surveys. The *Institutional Data Book*, a rich source of information on students, faculty and staff, programs, and finances, is published annually in the spring by the Student and Academic Services Office and is also available on the College Website. The results of the Noel Levitz SSI and the Faces of the Future are used in a longitudinal comparison as well as in a national comparison. Comparison problems arise with all of these strategies since data is not all collected in the same way in all institutions.

### District

On an irregular basis, the College conducts a telephone survey of District citizens to gauge satisfaction with College programs, services, and fiscal responsibility. This survey was last conducted in the fall of 2003. In addition, the College coordinates REACH, a series of open forums on various topics described in *3P3*, to gather ideas on activities to support the Strategic Plan and plan for 2014. The Board of Trustees adopted recommendations created from this initiative in August 2004, and since that time citizens and community groups have been involved in REACH activities as a part of two Board of Trustees meetings annually. REACH recommendations have been incorporated into the Strategic Plan priorities and are used in planning other campus initiatives.

### **7P1 Selecting, maintaining, and using information and data**

Richland staff collects data and information on a routine basis for projects, reports, and analysis. The comprehensive Administrative Information System allows divisions and other units to create and review reports on a variety of topics, ranging from weekly student traffic in the Student Services Center to contacts in the local high schools to budget management. The AIS staff works to offer flexibility and self-control of these regular reports. When special reports or new requests are made, the AIS staff will work to assure that data is compiled and that the process to reconstruct the search is documented in order to repeat the same search for comparisons. As the College continues to improve its processes regarding data collection and use, administrators work to create a clear “path” so that others will be able to access the compiled data without duplication of efforts.

Since some data is useful to the entire College community, certain reports are compiled and distributed annually. For example, the *Institutional Data Book* and the *High School Follow-up Report* promote comparisons in areas such as student, faculty, and staff demographics, enrollment, finances, facilities, support organizations, high school enrollment trends, and research. The *Institutional Data Book* is available on the College Intranet, and both reports are available in paper version and housed in the Archives for access by anyone conducting research. The 2007 Environmental Scan, also available on the website, offers trend data in three sections: 1) an external scan of demographics and comparisons at the national, state, and Richland District level, 2) an internal scan of financial, human resources, and Foundation trends, and 3) a teaching

and learning section that offers trends in program enrollment and student and academic services. This section also offered Deans and Directors an opportunity to identify strengths and challenges for the next three years. The *Environmental Scan* was used by the Strategic Planning Team in preparing the *2008-2011 Strategic Plan* and by CIP Teams and other groups.

With the CIP training and implementation of a continuous improvement model, more College personnel are recognizing the importance of qualitative as well as quantitative research in order to make decisions. While these concepts are not wholeheartedly embraced, dramatic changes in attitude have occurred over the last two years, and data sharing is becoming the rule, not the exception. Continued emphasis in supporting recommendations with clearly analyzed data will move the College even further to a system-wide acceptance of this concept.

### **7P2 Determining needs of departments and units related to information and data collection, storage, and accessibility**

Evaluation of data collection and accessibility needs is ongoing. With the implementation of the new my.richland portal has come extensive review of data collection and access for both employees and students. The AIS staff is working with the webmaster and other technology staff to design a user-friendly system that increases efficiency and offers needed information. The AIS staff also monitors the availability of system upgrades and the need for greater storage capacity, and these needs are addressed in the equipment purchasing calendar, which is a part of the annual budget cycle. A general overview of the new portal was presented to all employees on Professional Development Day in April 2009; division focus sessions are in progress to assure that the portal meets the needs of each group. In addition, requirements for submission of information to federal, state, and other agencies are monitored to assure that local collection and distribution capabilities match these needs.

Requests for data are monitored to determine if divisions or areas might need access to the same information so that common reports can be added to the menus. For example, student contact information in the Student Learning Center mirrored information needed for a grant program, so with slight modifications both areas now use the same screens and some of the same report templates. Also monitored are the submission dates for federal, state, or other agency reports so that information is available to all who need it. Some responsibilities for reports have changed with the last institutional reorganization; a master list of reports is kept in the Office of the Vice President of Student and Academic Services facilitate data and information sharing. Attention is paid to confidentiality in all data collection and distribution; access is restricted to those whose job responsibilities require the information.

Richland has also purchased a data image scanning and storage system to migrate paper documents into electronic format. Student Services and Business Services staff have been trained and are utilizing the system as new documents are received; the next steps include training other office staff and planning to scan and store archived information to reduce the amount of paper and to increase access, particularly to necessary student academic files by counselors and advisors.

A CIP Team has addressed the technology needs for online student support services, and changes will be implemented beginning Summer 2009. These changes include offering a new student e-mail system, the ability to submit admission information, and the ability to complete financial aid online. These and other opportunities are available with the implementation of the new portal system.

### **7P3 Determining needs and priorities for comparative information and data**

Decisions regarding comparative data are made dependent upon the requirements for a particular study. Goals for a study or report will set the parameters for data, including the benchmark information required, the length of the study, and the complexity of the issue being studied. Staff responsible for the reports review regularly collected data to determine if changes in parameters are needed and whether additional or new sources for the data should be tapped. Requirements set by external monitoring agencies such as the ICCB, AQIP, or grant sources also determine the scope and criteria for data collection.

External information is accessed when available, including comparative data provided by the ICCB, IBHE, Noel Levitz, and ACT/Faces of the Future.

### **7P4 Analyzing information and data regarding overall performance**

Administrators and supervisors use available data and information to determine how programs, projects, and support services address key performance issues and components of the Strategic Plan. Regular reports such as the *Institutional Data Book*, AQIP Annual Updates, ICCB Performance Reports, CIP Team Project Reports, and others mentioned throughout the Systems Portfolio are generally available in print or electronic versions, including previous reports to use for comparison. Critical data also reviewed on a regular basis include information for development of and changes in class schedules, enrollment information that might drive immediate marketing adjustments for registration, and responses to surveys of faculty and staff for new training ideas. Employees have two important trend resources, the *Environmental Scan* and in the *Institutional Data Book*, to gain a longer view of changes in certain areas of the institution.

Work will begin in June 2009 on the creation of a Balanced Scorecard for Richland. Plans are to have the institution-level Scorecard available for posting by Summer 2010. Identification of key institutional measures will occur first and include input from the Board of Trustees, President's Cabinet, and appropriate deans.

### **7P5 Aligning department and unit analysis of information and data**

Under the direction of the Vice President of Student and Academic Services and the Vice President of Economic Development and Innovative Workforce Solutions, the academic Deans monitor enrollment, persistence, and retention data for all programs and academic services. In addition, the deans responsible for career and technical education programs review occupational follow-up surveys and other exit information to determine whether students are meeting designated outcomes. All course master syllabi include outcomes determined by faculty. The Business and Technology Division has also used WIDS in program development and revision. Deans use enrollment data from previous semesters in planning class schedules each semester, and data is also shared at the VP Team meetings to determine changes. Counselors also meet with Deans in this planning process to share information gathered in student advisement meetings in order to determine additional needs or changes.

In the current project to develop institutional/cross-curricular student outcomes, data and information analysis will also be used to develop rubrics and set some baseline data. Deans and Directors in all areas are responsible for connecting the Strategic Planning goals to the budget;

data and information are used for justification of requests for budget increases, and this information is available when final budget decisions are made to ensure that any new monies are spent in areas that support institutional goals and priorities.

The Program Review documents also facilitate analysis of information on a 5-year cycle by including enrollment and unit cost analysis trend data. These documents are available in electronic format for access by appropriate deans and faculty.

#### **7P6 Ensuring effectiveness of information system(s) and related processes**

The Administrative Information Systems staff and the Technical Services staff work collaboratively to determine necessary institutional upgrades to the current system. The AIS Office works on mainframe requirements and data collection. The College uses Jenzabar/CARS software for institutional data collection, and with the implementation of the my.richland portal adjustments are in progress. Students have access to enrollment information, unofficial transcripts, degree audits, and financial aid information; with the previous access option, WISE-1, some of this information was only accessible by coming to campus. Increased attention is being paid to reduce data input problems to ensure that the information is correct and that the collection parameters can be repeated for comparisons in the future.

The Technical Services Office focuses on the hardware and software needs of the students and staff. This area is responsible for installing and upgrading classroom, lab, and staff computers and peripherals, and the staff works with the division Deans and area supervisors to ensure that staff and faculty have the equipment and software necessary for teaching and learning. With the expansion of wireless capabilities to the entire campus, students and staff may access information anywhere. Deans, faculty, and Technical Services staff monitor technology needs for programs; with the constant change in software used in industry, upgrading or changing software in classrooms has become a budget priority each year.

The College is conscious of the need to maintain confidentiality of information at all levels. All individuals, both employees and students, receive a separate identification number with no connection to social security numbers. Each individual has a log-in and password for his or her office computer, for CARS, and for my.richland. Each person's menu for CARS is customized to support job requirements for data access. Students also have a single sign-in for e-mail and my.richland accounts. Each semester, students may request that their personal information not be accessible on the College system; their data is protected except when required for collective submission of information without specific social security numbers or other identifying information. FERPA training is presented to all employees, and reminders are sent each semester on what is considered open directory information.

#### **7P7 Measures of effectiveness of system**

The College uses a number of measures for determining the effectiveness of its systems. The recent review of all Board Policies has led to process mapping and revision of problem areas. Several divisions are also creating procedures/systems manuals to assure consistency in operations. The President's Cabinet reviews general institutional systems, and appropriate divisions and areas also review institutional survey results. User surveys have driven previous changes in the data management system, and the AIS staff continue to modify user menus and to conduct needed training as changes occur.

The Vice Presidents of SAS and EDWIA and the academic deans review transfer results when available. External reviews also occur when reports are submitted to ICCB, IBHE, licensure agencies, and grant monitoring agencies; feedback on measurements is disseminated to the appropriate division. When changes in the type of information required for these reports is altered, the data and information collection systems are also adjusted and noted so that trend changes will also reflect changes in these requirements.

### **7R1 Evidence that system for measuring effectiveness meets institution's needs**

The College has used its data collection system for many years with positive results. The continuity of staff in the AIS Office has ensured that information is collected in the same way and that reports are submitted in a timely manner. The College staff have expressed satisfaction with the availability of data and the response time from the AIS staff, although the demands on this office and on the Technical Services office sometimes require reprioritizing requests. All AIS staff are able to respond to data requests, assuring that if someone is gone others can meet requests requiring fast response.

With availability of the *Institutional Data Book*, the *Environmental Scan*, and other data on the Intranet, College personnel is able to use the same data in reports and presentations, giving a clear, consistent message about the College's effectiveness.

### **7R2 Comparing results**

The College has had a long history of success in student transfer and occupational training. Employer surveys show that graduates have the needed skills for employment. Transfer institutions share that Richland transfers meet or exceed the GPA levels of native students. This information, however, is difficult to obtain because of institutional regulations. When appropriate, the College uses external information gathered by the ICCB, IBHE, and IPEDS to compare student success, fiscal soundness, and overall achievement. Again, while this information is available, care is taken to assure that the data parameters match so that the comparisons make sense. In addition, the College uses data provided through national surveying such as the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory and the Faces of the Future. Illinois AQIP institutions are discussing ways of sharing data for comparative purposes. This conversation will continue at a fall meeting currently being arranged.

### **7I1 Improving current processes and systems for measuring effectiveness**

Richland continues to address data collection and research challenges and opportunities. With the current organizational alignment, committee structure, and continued emphasis on continuous improvement, the College is identifying new ways to systematize data collection and streamline processes for communication of research results.

- Education on available research must intensify. This training will reduce duplication of efforts and assure that data is consistent—sometimes the numbers seem to contradict when in actuality the parameters for the data collection were not the same. This education will rely on the use of a central, accessible storage location, such as the College's Intranet or the Archives.
- While some areas understand the need for quantitative support for recommendations and decisions, others are sporadic in when and how they use data.

- Information from the ICCB and other agencies is available, but many individuals do not know what data has already been collected.
- The parameters for CIP Team research must be clearly defined so that employees will be comfortable using the data, particularly surveys of other institutions and best practices gathered from literature reviews.
- The College needs to clarify student outcomes in all programs as well as institutional/cross-divisional outcomes for all degree-seeking students.
- New employees need training to use the CARS institutional data collection system effectively and efficiently.

## **7I2 Setting targets for improvement and priorities and communicating**

- **Creation of an Institutional Balanced Scorecard:** Initial conversations have occurred with the Board of Trustees at two retreats, and the President's Cabinet has also worked with a consultant on laying the framework for the Scorecard. This activity will identify the first "layer" of areas to be measured, determine benchmarks, and communicate this information to the College community.
- **Implement strategies for target groups identified through Retention Study:** the goals will be to maintain the 80% retention rate for *All Students* and to increase retention rate for four lowest target groups by 5%.
- **Use results of Persistence Study to develop strategies:** When the Persistence Study is completed in the next two months, stakeholders will have four target populations for which to develop strategies to transition students from one semester to the next, particularly from first semester to second semester.
- **Implement the next phase of the Program Review for analysis:** Develop and implement a Program Review Board to analyze data collected in annual Program Reviews.
- **Create a central collection point for data and communicate how to access data:** This step will be facilitated by the new web portal through the creation of a user group.
- **Maintain the levels of training on CIP processes at 80% or higher.**

The College will continue to develop and test its systems to assure that information and data are collected and disseminated effectively. As the College community moves forward in continuous improvement, the area of measuring effectiveness will become more clearly defined and institutionalized.