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<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADR</td>
<td>Academic Department Review</td>
<td>CLC’s process for reviewing academic programs on a five-year cycle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASLC</td>
<td>Assessment of Student Learning Committee</td>
<td>CLC’s standing committee tasked with the development and assessment of student learning outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOT</td>
<td>Board of Trustees</td>
<td>The primary governing board for the institution. Includes seven elected voting members and one student member with an advisory vote.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLO</td>
<td>CLC Learning Outcome</td>
<td>CLC’s established institution-level student learning outcomes (formerly called General Education Learning Outcomes).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRF</td>
<td>Course Reference File</td>
<td>A file prepared for each course that serves as a “master syllabus,” providing a description of the course content and outlining the learning outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMC</td>
<td>Enrollment Management Commission</td>
<td>CLC’s standing committee tasked with addressing issues of student enrollment, retention, and persistence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCC</td>
<td>Governance Coordinating Council</td>
<td>A representative group within the governance structure that reviews ideas and directs them to implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>The college department primarily responsible for hiring, training, and evaluating employees. This department ensures execution of college personnel policy, manages employee benefits, salary structure, and classifies employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICCB</td>
<td>Illinois Community College Board</td>
<td>The state policy board and regulatory agency charged with administering the Public Community College Act through the Illinois community college system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEPR</td>
<td>Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Research</td>
<td>The college department primarily responsible for coordinating the college’s data collection, informatics, assessment, and accreditation activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NADR</td>
<td>Non-Academic Department Review</td>
<td>CLC’s process for reviewing non-academic departments on a five-year cycle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGA</td>
<td>Student Government Association</td>
<td>The official representative body of the CLC student population.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLETC</td>
<td>Teaching, Learning and Educational Technology Center</td>
<td>The college department primarily responsible for faculty training and professional development activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPDI</td>
<td>Workforce and Professional Development Institute</td>
<td>The college department primarily responsible for developing and administering non-credit professional development, businesses and government training, and youth-to-senior programming.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Key Groups at the College of Lake County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President’s Cabinet</td>
<td>President, Vice Presidents, Associate and Assistant Vice Presidents, Executive Directors, Chief of Staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provost Council</td>
<td>Provost, Assistant Vice President of Educational Affairs, Associate Vice President of Student Development, Deans, Assistant Director of Educational Affairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator’s Council</td>
<td>President, Vice Presidents, Associate and Assistant Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors, Administrative and Professional Staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Government Association (SGA)</td>
<td>Student body President, Vice President, Treasurer, Senators, and Student Trustee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance Coordinating Council (GCC)</td>
<td>Representatives from all of CLC’s commissions, councils, senates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senates (Faculty, Specialist, Classified)</td>
<td>Representatives from each of CLC’s respective employee groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Councils (Diversity, Health and Wellness, Sustainability)</td>
<td>Representatives from CLC’s governance groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment Management Commission (EMC)</td>
<td>Associate Vice President of Student Development, Dean of Enrollment Services, Provost, Deans, PR Representative, IEPR Representative, Faculty Representative, SGA Representative, Counselor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of Student Learning Committee (ASLC)</td>
<td>Assistant Vice President of Educational Affairs, Dean of Student Life, Faculty (n=8), SGA Representative, Assistant Director of IEPR.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Commission</td>
<td>Faculty (n=6), Counselor (n=1), Librarian (n=1), Deans (n=2), SGA Representatives (n=2).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Department Review (ADR) Committee</td>
<td>Assistant Vice President of Educational Affairs, Dean (n=1), Faculty (n=8), SGA Representative, Faculty Assessment Coordinator.</td>
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</table>
AQIP Quality Highlights Report
2016-2017

Overview

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) accredited the College of Lake County (CLC) in 1974 and admitted CLC to the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) pathway in 2002. Since it was admitted to the AQIP pathway, CLC has completed 37 action projects, submitted four Systems Portfolios (2006, 2008, 2010, and 2015), attended four Strategy Forums (2003, 2007, 2011, and 2016), and received one quality checkup visit. The HLC conducted a quality checkup visit at CLC in February 2009 and CLC’s reaffirmation of accreditation occurred in 2010. The HLC has scheduled CLC’s next comprehensive quality review for March 6-8, 2017 and, pending the results from this review, CLC anticipates reaffirmation of accreditation by the end of fiscal year 2017.

CLC is committed to the principles of continuous quality improvement as expressed in its core value of quality, which commits the institution to “ongoing continuous improvement and excellence.” College administration and the governance structure oversee improvement efforts on an ongoing basis. In this context, CLC has undertaken specific efforts to address feedback received from the HLC in its 2015 Systems Appraisal. In addition, the college initiated improvements as a result of its own review of the 2015 Systems Portfolio and through participating in the 2016 Strategy Forum. CLC summarizes its efforts over the past year in this report for consideration by the comprehensive quality review team in advance of its March 2017 visit.

Improvements since the 2015 Systems Portfolio

Through preparing the Systems Portfolio and careful review of the Systems Appraisal, CLC has undertaken initiatives to better articulate and improve its processes. This includes enhancements to documentation, data collection, and assessment throughout the college. Shortly after receiving the Systems Appraisal, the college provided HLC with its immediate response to the feedback. The response identified where the reviewers may have misunderstood information CLC presented, where CLC interpreted the writing instructions differently, and where the college agreed with the reviewers that CLC’s efforts warranted improvement. Since that time, CLC formed several inter-departmental working groups that prioritized its improvement efforts in order to address specific areas of concern noted by HLC in the Appraisal. CLC prioritized its initial focus on the strategic challenges, criteria for accreditation where core components were “unclear or incomplete”, and all other items in the AQIP categories said to be at a “reacting” maturity level. The college will address those areas regarded as “systematic” and “adequate” at a later point in time. This report documents major improvements CLC has made, or initiated, in each category since the submission of the 2015 Systems Portfolio.

This document first addresses initiatives related to the individual AQIP categories and then addresses strategic challenges and criteria for accreditation. CLC understands the connection between all three of these components and presents them as separate sections of this report for the sake of clarity and in an effort to avoid redundancy in our response. To enhance salience, the authors also include in-text references when addressing items across multiple sections of the report.

*Note: parenthetical page and section numbers refer to corresponding reviewer feedback in the 2015 Systems Appraisal.*

AQIP Category 1: Helping Students Learn (p. 16-29)

**Common Learning Outcomes (1P1)**

Since 2015, CLC has updated its institution-level learning outcomes, formally adopted the name CLC Learning Outcomes (CLOs)², aligned the CLOs to the CLC mission, and published the updated CLOs in the FY2017 catalog. Beginning in 2014, the college’s Assessment of Student Learning Committee (ASLC) led an improvement process to study the CLOs and update them per feedback from a variety of stakeholders, including: faculty, staff, employers, and businesses in Lake County. In addition, the ASLC developed the CLOs by taking into consideration the broader higher education context including research from the American Association of Colleges and Universities, peer community colleges, and Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). The process resulted in the adoption of eight CLOs. The ASLC has matched the new CLOs to the expectations held by faculty across the institution as well as by employers and community members who serve on CLC’s career advisory committees and businesses who hire CLC graduates. The ASLC will repeat the process of updating or confirming the CLOs every three to five years. Figure 1 presents the current CLOs.

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² CLC previously referred to the CLOs as “General Education Learning Outcomes” or “GELOs.” The change in nomenclature may have caused confusion for readers of the Systems Portfolio.
During the 2015-2016 academic year, the ASLC developed and published rubrics to correspond with each updated CLO. The CLO rubrics are central to two major activities at CLC. The first is conducting institution-level assessment projects each semester and the second is recommitting to the CLOs in the course reference files (CRFs).

A cycle has been established where the ASLC assesses two CLOs at the institution-level each semester using the new rubrics. Based on this schedule, the ASLC assesses each learning outcome once every two years. So far, CLC has assessed the Writing, Reading, Critical Thinking, and Oral Communication learning outcomes. The ASLC plans to assess the Information Literacy and Technological Competency outcomes in spring 2017. An assessment of the Reading and Quantitative Literacy outcomes will take place in fall 2017. An assessment of the Writing and Diversity and Social Justice outcomes will take place in spring 2018.

The current assessment process, which began in 2015, invites faculty from across the college to use the CLO rubrics to assess existing assignments from their courses that correspond to a particular CLO. The ASLC collects information from each course through an online survey system that allows for efficient aggregation and analysis of results. After an analysis of results, ASLC develops an action plan for improvement, which the committee monitors until the plan is completed. While each department is encouraged to participate in the current institution-level process, the ASLC is developing a more integrated plan to promote departmental cooperation to ensure “students in all degree programs are assessed on their achievement of the CLOs” (Systems Appraisal, p. 16).

While CLC has a system for collecting assessment data as well as a comprehensive home-grown application for supporting department-level assessment plans, department action plans for improvement, and the five-year ADR reports, the college is reviewing commercially-available software systems to help with the systematic collection of assessment data. While the internally developed online tools for assessment planning are very useful in documenting and sharing assessment work, an externally supported system may allow for more robust and sustainable data analysis and reporting in the future.

The second activity for which the CLO rubrics are used is in supporting the process by which faculty recommit to the CLOs. An alignment project for recommitting all courses to the updated CLOs began in November 2016. The first intended outcome of this project is for the college to review every CRF alongside the newly published CLOs and ensure the correct CLOs align with the correct courses. The project will also emphasize the importance of documenting changes to the CRFs in the college’s curriculum software application (CurricuNet). The second intended outcome is to develop a curriculum map of degrees and certificates to determine where students encounter each CLO during their tenure at the college. The college will identify gaps and a faculty team will recommend improvements for how and when students encounter the individual CLOs during their studies. CLC plans to run this project from November 2016 to December 2017.

CLC recognizes the importance of aligning co-curricular activities with the updated CLOs. Representatives of student co-curricular units (i.e. Student Development and Student Success departments) serve on the ASLC, ensuring that these areas contribute to planning and participating in assessment projects, establishing targets, reviewing and analyzing results, and influencing improvements based on those results. The process for assessing CLOs for co-curricular areas is consistent with the process established for the academic programs. Each co-curricular area documents the CLOs to which it aligns and the college expects these areas to assess directly students’ achievement of those learning outcomes. These areas assess the achievement of the CLOs using the same rubrics and assessment schedule as the academic areas that are part of the institution-level assessment of CLOs. CLC assesses additional program-specific outcomes as part of the Academic and Non-Academic Department Review.

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2 CLO rubrics are available on the CLC intranet and public website (http://dept.clcillinois.edu/vpe/forms/CollegeofLakeCountyLearningOutcomes.pdf)
(ADR and NADR) processes. In addition, CLC began a new co-curricular transcript and credentialing effort in fall 2016 as part of The Right Signals grant awarded to CLC from 2016 to 2017 by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). The goal of the transcript and credentialing project ultimately is for students to have their mastery of CLOs in both academic and co-curricular environments documented and available to CLC as well as to employers and transfer institutions.

**Identifying Stakeholder Groups and Determining Their Needs (1P3)**

In fall 2016, CLC documented the process for identifying stakeholder groups and determining their needs. For this project, an external Six Sigma consultant worked closely with the college’s Workforce and Professional Development Institute (WPDI), Assistant Vice President of Educational Affairs, Provost, Associate Vice President for Student Development, Executive Director of IEPR, and President’s Chief of Staff. The project focused on identifying and meeting the needs of: community partners, area businesses, transfer institutions, and local high schools. The project allowed the college to express more adequately how it identifies and responds to stakeholder needs. Through this exercise, the college described these processes through flow-charts for each area and a detailed outline of the overall processes for identifying the needs of each stakeholder group. These visual and narrative summaries articulate processes that are repeatable and prescribe points for evaluation and improvement.

**Reviewing the Viability of Programs (1P3)**

While CLC’s 2015 Systems Portfolio documented several processes in place to review existing courses and programs to inform change or discontinuation, the Systems Appraisal suggested that the college could benefit from more clarity about the data and information that inform the assessment of program viability. In spring 2016, the Provost created an Academic Program Viability and Accountability Taskforce (Taskforce) to codify the metrics CLC uses to evaluate career programs and determine how well these programs are meeting the educational needs of CLC students as well as employers and other stakeholders. In addition, the Taskforce helped design the process for assessing the viability of career programs.

The Provost and Taskforce designed the career program viability review process to support continuous program improvement, clarify expectations for program performance, and increase dialog between department chairs and deans. The process begins with a review of data and information published in CLC’s annual Career Program Metrics and Career Program Viability reports. The Provost and Provost’s Council (Council) use these reports to identify programs whose viability may require further review; the Provost and Council largely base these decisions on overall viability scores reported in the Career Program Viability report. Once the Provost and Council identify a program for further review, a more detailed program viability assessment occurs. In this assessment, the dean and department chair discuss the department’s viability score and complete a qualitative viability rubric. The dean presents the results of the viability assessment to the Provost who works with the dean and department chair to determine whether to place the program under a formal two-year program viability review. Programs undergoing review develop an improvement plan to address specific areas of concern as noted through the program assessment process. At the end of the two-year review process, the Provost makes a final decision regarding the program’s future. Final decisions include removal from viability review, continued review with a new program improvement plan, program suspension, or program closure.

CLC formalized this process in fall 2016 and the college plans to monitor it closely over the next few years to identify areas for improvement. Furthermore, the Provost will commission a similar process to develop metrics and an assessment process for the college’s transfer programs in the future.

**Determining Goals for Retention, Persistence, and Program Completion (1P5)**

The Systems Appraisal suggested that CLC needs to be clearer in how it determines goals for retention, persistence, and completion. At the institution-level, CLC began publishing an Accountability Report in fall 2015 and created a corresponding electronic college Scorecard in spring 2016. The Scorecard is a series of tables and charts that present current and historical data related to the college’s strategic goals. The Accountability Report is an annual document that highlights the college’s progress toward meeting its strategic goals and objectives. The Accountability Report and Scorecard align with CLC’s strategic goals in an effort to increase awareness of the college’s history and progress in relation to key metrics including, but not limited to, retention, persistence, and completion. The Scorecard includes historic trends for CLC as well as peer comparisons, where available, and also presents targets for the college’s key metrics.

In fall 2016, the Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Research Office (IEPR) worked closely with several groups (e.g. Faculty Senate, Provost’s Council, Governance Coordinating Council (GCC), and Enrollment Management Commission (EMC)) to formalize processes for selecting and updating institution-level targets. In consultation with the Board of Trustees, CLC established principles of institutional target setting that focus on continually striving for improvement, particularly in areas of student retention, graduation, and transfer. For example, where the college’s performance is below peer average, it will strive to meet peer average; where it is at peer average, it will strive to become one of the leading institutions; and where CLC is among the leaders in its peer group, it will strive for national recognition.
The IEPR office is primarily responsible for 1) identifying targets for the institution-level goals each year based on the principles outlined above and 2) updating the Scorecard and Accountability Report to communicate progress toward the established targets. The President’s Cabinet is responsible for affirming and committing to the institution-level targets each year. Operational units, committees, and commissions are responsible for setting, establishing, and achieving specific short-term objectives to help the college advance toward its institution-level targets. The college selected the EMC to take principal leadership in establishing objectives for retention and persistence due to its broad representation from faculty, deans, institutional research, and the Enrollment Services department. This commission has the administrative leadership and technical competence to develop operational activities to move the college toward meeting the established goals.

Other departments use the institution-level targets to inform the development of department-specific goals and college-wide initiatives, which will be included as part of the updated non-academic department review (NADR) process beginning in fall 2017. During the NADR process, IEPR will work with each department to develop assessment plans and department-specific metrics that the department will use to assess its efforts toward meeting the institution-level targets that align with the department’s mission.

The college also collects and reviews retention and persistence data for key student groups (e.g. developmental education students, athletes, TRIO participants, minority students, veterans, etc.) on an ongoing basis. Appropriate departments and committees monitor this information and develop action plans targeted toward improving retention and persistence among these specific student groups. When warranted, CLC also commissions AQIP action projects to identify ways to increase retention and persistence of a key student group (e.g. the Male Student Success Initiative conducted in 2010-11) or of students in general (e.g. the Barriers to Completion initiative conducted in 2011-12). Each department or committee aligns its goals and metrics with the larger institution-level goals and targets as guided by the EMC and IEPR.

**AQIP Category 2: Meeting Student and Other Stakeholder Needs (p. 29-39)**

**Identifying Key Student Groups (2P1) and meeting changing student needs and supporting student subgroups with distinct needs (2P1)**

In the Systems Portfolio, CLC presented several examples of how the college previously identified key student groups; however, the Systems Appraisal indicated the college would benefit from providing clearer descriptions of the specific processes used to identify key student groups. The HLC’s feedback inspired the college to review many processes closely in order to better communicate and document them. The process for identifying key student groups is one example of a process that the college has explored in detail since receiving the Systems Appraisal.

The Enrollment Management Commission (EMC) has been, and continues to be, the primary group tasked with identifying key student groups for the college. This group is, in part, responsible for reviewing data and setting goals to identify areas for improvement as related to enrollment, retention, and completion of key student groups at CLC. Each fall, the EMC reviews data provided by IEPR and develops and adjusts its committee goals to align with the college’s strategic goals, industry best practices, and the needs of key student groups (as identified through demographic analyses). To develop these goals, EMC first reviews enrollment and retention projections from IEPR. These are econometric models that assume retention based on historic trends, current and historic economic conditions, and status-quo interventions by the college. The EMC then sets goals with its understanding of how revised targeted interventions and strategic allocation of available resources realistically could affect enrollment, persistence, and completion.

In fall 2015, EMC established goals to 1) increase the market share of high school graduates, 2) mitigate enrollment declines among white, non-Hispanic students (the college’s largest ethnic demographic), 3) continue the growth trajectory of Hispanic credit students (the college’s second largest and the county’s fastest growing ethnic demographic), 4) reverse the downward trend among black, non-Hispanic students (to enhance student access and success among this demographic), and 5) work toward increasing the college’s graduation and completion rates by enhancing student per-semester credit-hour accumulation and term-to-term retention.

Other groups on campus focus more narrowly on working with key student groups outside the scope of enrollment and retention efforts; these groups closely align their efforts with the goals established by the EMC. For example, the college’s Diversity Council (Council) also reviews data and research provided by IEPR on an annual basis to identify existing and emerging student groups. The Council uses this information to recommend actions that enhance the college environment for these students and increase their success; for example, the Council has sponsored learning activities and recommended mandatory training that better prepares faculty and staff to meet needs of a diverse student body and to adhere to anti-discrimination law. Recent examples of key groups with distinct needs include undocumented and transgender student groups. Once identified, Diversity Council develops its own committee goals to address the needs of these particular students. Other groups with similar
missions focus on addressing the needs of student athletes, international students, military service members/veterans, and LGBTQ students.

All campus groups receive research support from IEPR in order to determine the needs of their particular student demographic, which they use to inform their committee goals and initiatives. Once the college identifies a key student population and understands the group’s needs, it develops a standing office or committee to continue reviewing data, identifying goals to address student needs, and working to improve student success. Additionally, CLC has adopted many of its past AQIP projects in order to research and address the needs of key student groups with distinct needs. For example, the college developed its Coaching for Academic Success initiative through an AQIP project to address the needs of students needing developmental coursework (a majority of incoming students), and a past project that identified and addressed the needs of African American and Hispanic men resulted in developing the Men of Vision student group.

**Communicating the Availability of Non-Academic Support Services (2P1)**

Since receiving the Systems Appraisal, CLC has expanded its efforts for communicating the availability of non-academic support services to students. Starting with New Student Orientation (NSO), students receive a tour of the college that highlights key student service areas and as well as the variety of services offered. All students receive weekly student e-newsletters that include information about upcoming programs and available services. Additionally, CLC shares information through a common program calendar on the CLC website as well as on the student portal (MyCLC). Several support areas (e.g. Student Government Association, Career and Job Placement Center, and Coaching for Academic Success) offer in-class presentations to reach students directly. Other support areas send regular updates to faculty, who include statements in their syllabi or Blackboard pages or make in-class announcements. Additional efforts include transfer and career fairs, physical and electronic bulletin boards around campus, and events on campus (e.g. bake sales, information sessions, activity fairs, speakers, etc.).

Through this broad collection of efforts, CLC is confident that it is doing everything possible to ensure information about non-academic support services is “communicated broadly to the entire student population” (Appraisal, p. 31). The college periodically assesses satisfaction and awareness of support services through surveys such as the in-house student feedback survey, NSO student survey, and point-of-service surveys in specific departments. Each department conducts and reports on assessments of student awareness, use, and satisfaction as part of the five-year ADR and NADR processes. Additionally, the college publishes and reviews annual reports for support services through the governance system, Provost’s Council, and/or President’s Cabinet to ensure the college is meeting student needs. CLC regularly measures retention, persistence, and term grades of students that use non-academic support services and is confident that the college is applying resources effectively to ensure that these services are benefitting students.

**Initiatives Targeting Student Retention, Persistence, and Completion (2P2)**

In the 2015 Systems Portfolio, CLC presented several examples of its initiatives for helping students persist and complete (e.g. Coaching for Academic Success, Jump Start, Accelerating Your College Success, tutoring services). The Systems Appraisal made it clear that CLC could benefit from more detailed documentation regarding the processes by which the college adopts these initiatives. Many of these initiatives emerged from AQIP projects and include research, data collection, and peer benchmarking through the college could benefit from documenting this information consistently for all programs. CLC recognizes the need to document more thoroughly the processes by which the college develops and implements new initiatives and understands the importance of including the data and information used to guide such decisions.

CLC expects that new initiatives will document their history, processes, and outcomes in a manner similar to established programs and departments (e.g. process manuals, flow charts, etc.). Once the college adopts an initiative and it becomes a standing program, the new program will conduct periodic assessments in order to maintain accountability and demonstrate continuous improvement. Part of this process includes identifying goals and targets that align with departmental and institution-level metrics such as retention, persistence, sustainability, and completion.

**Student Complaints (2P4)**

Based on insights gained through preparing the Systems Portfolio as well as from feedback in the Systems Appraisal, CLC conducted a thorough review of its processes for collecting, analyzing, and reporting student complaints. From July to October 2016, Educational Affairs, Student Development, and IEPR staff worked with a Six Sigma consultant to document existing processes related to handling academic and non-academic complaints. This process-mapping project resulted in greater clarity about existing processes as well as identifying strengths and areas for improvement within the existing complaint processes. This project also resulted in publication of flow charts and process manuals that provide documentation about the systematic complaint process, which spans multiple departments. This helps ensure that well-established processes are repeatable and easily explainable to key stakeholders. In October 2016, IEPR began working to extend the process for collecting, documenting, and analyzing student complaints to the Administrative Affairs area. Through this initiative, CLC is working toward a more integrated system for handling student complaints that includes all departments.
CLC began implementing changes in fall 2016 to enhance its collection, analysis, and reporting of student complaints. These changes will enable the college to provide a complete history of aggregated data about student complaints, including the number of complaints made by type as well as the resolution type and time frame to resolve each complaint, for the next Systems Portfolio. This information will inform the college about widespread issues it needs to address. Recent and future improvements include but are not limited to:

- Development of an electronic student complaint form accessible through the CLC website.
- Creation of a standard template for collecting and reporting student complaints across multiple academic divisions and student service areas.
- A more consistent scheduled review of complaint logs by the area Vice Presidents and leadership of the college (e.g. Provost’s Council, President’s Cabinet).
- A review of vendor systems (e.g. Lighthouse, Maxient) to allow for more aligned and mechanized collection of complaints across the college and better capabilities for data collection and analysis.

Building and Maintaining Relationships with Partners (2P5)

In fall 2016, a Six Sigma Black Belt consultant helped CLC document the process for building and maintaining relationships with partners. The consultant worked closely with the Workforce and Professional Development Institute (WPDI) to document its processes for working with the area business community. The consultant also worked closely with the Assistant Vice President of Educational Affairs to document the processes for working with career program advisory committees. The Provost and Associate Vice President for Student Development provided information regarding the process for working with transfer institutions. The consultant worked with the Executive Director of IEPR and the President’s Chief of Staff regarding the college’s process for working with area high schools through the High School Alliance. The college selected these processes because they are central to CLC’s goal to enhance student success. The project resulted in the creation of process flow charts for each area and a detailed report outlining the overall processes for identifying and confirming partners as well as for evaluating and maintaining partnerships. CLC provides further detail in the section of this report related to “Identifying Stakeholder Groups and Meeting Their Needs.”

AQIP Category 3: Valuing Employees (p. 39-44)

Ensuring Sufficient Numbers of Staff to Provide Student Support Services (3P1)

When the Systems Portfolio was submitted, CLC missed an opportunity to detail the ways in which it ensures sufficient numbers of staff are acquired in order to provide student support services. The Systems Appraisal highlighted this omission. The college reviews staffing levels and identifies staffing needs for student support areas primarily through the ADR and NADR processes. As part of these processes, CLC expects department directors to account for current staffing levels and identify the number and type of staff they anticipate needing in the future in order to accomplish their departmental goals. The information reported through these review processes is used as evidence to support budget requests for the upcoming year(s) and as justification for requesting new or replacement positions through HR. CLC conducted a more thorough audit of internal staffing levels (as compared to ICCB benchmark staffing levels) during the budget process for fiscal year 2017 in order to identify areas where additional personnel resources may be needed in order to meet student needs. CLC also implemented a new employee category, Part-Time Flex, which provides a trained and professional contingent workforce designed to meet changing student and operational support needs in “real time.”

In addition, CLC also implemented a new employee time and absence management reporting system in 2016. The system requires non-exempt staff to report their working time through an online system and also requires all staff to submit absence requests online. Staff members submit absence requests directly to department directors and managers for approval. This new system allows directors and managers to more sufficiently monitor staffing for a given day or time period in order to make adjustments (e.g. approving overtime, acquisition of temporary staff) to ensure appropriate staff levels are maintained in order to meet student needs. The new process also allows for more efficient observation of seasonal requests for time off or health leaves to help directors plan staffing and workflow.

Aligning the Evaluation System with Institutional Objectives (3P2)

In the 2015 Systems Portfolio, CLC indicated that it was reviewing the existing employee evaluation process in order to better align the process with the college’s mission and values. Since the Portfolio was submitted, HR revised the evaluation process to require employees at all levels of the college (excluding employees covered under a collective bargaining unit such as faculty and police union staff) to describe how they demonstrate their commitment to CLC’s key initiatives of student success, wellness, diversity, sustainability, and “enabling a culture of innovation, excellence, and continuous improvement.” Employees describe their impact on each of these initiatives and identify personal goals for the upcoming evaluation period that align with
the college’s key goals. Furthermore, employees are required to participate in at least two events (e.g. committees, seminars, speakers on campus, training sessions) related to the college’s key initiatives of student success, diversity, sustainability, and wellness.

Along with changes to the evaluation process, HR activated a training module in PeopleSoft that allows employees to track their own progress throughout the year in meeting the training requirements associated with the institutional goals. The new module also allows staff to document training related to their professional skills. During the evaluation process, CLC expects managers and supervisors to communicate the way that an employee’s individual goals relate to the overall goals of the department as well as the college’s general goals. The college designed this new process to encourage participation in training and development activities and to enhance awareness of and appreciation for the alignment between individual, departmental, and institutional goals and initiatives.

CLC also made additional changes to the employee evaluation process to include 1) a new schedule for evaluations that aligns the evaluation cycle for all employee groups and 2) a new electronic form for completing and submitting the evaluations. In the past, the process, forms, and timeline for each employee group were different; now there is greater consistency across groups as well as a more automated process for collecting and reviewing submitted evaluations.

**Promoting Employee Satisfaction and Engagement (3P2)**

The Systems Appraisal suggested that CLC needed to be more clear about its efforts in regard to the frequency, analysis, and reporting of employee climate surveys for the future. It is true that the college had not conducted these surveys on a regular cycle in the past and that the results included in the Systems Portfolio were limited and inhibited the college from considering historic trends as well as peer comparisons. In response to the Appraisal and awareness gained through preparing the Portfolio, CLC has developed a plan for conducting surveys to assess and address employee satisfaction and engagement on a more consistent basis.

The first step in this process is to adopt a formal survey cycle and identify survey instruments that allow the college to monitor internal trends and to benchmark itself against national or peer norms. In spring 2016, CLC administered its own in-house climate survey that asked a customized set of questions to address specific areas of interest for the college. CLC plans to administer the in-house climate survey on a consistent schedule in the future, which will allow the college to monitor change over time and provide flexibility to assess emerging needs related to the college goals and objectives. CLC plans to alternate between using the in-house climate survey and participating in the nationally recognized *Chronicle of Higher Education’s* “Great Colleges to Work for” survey. CLC selected the “Great Colleges” survey due to the survey’s low cost to the institution, face-validity in regard to the relevance of areas assessed, and availability of national and peer comparison data. The college plans to conduct the “Great Colleges” survey for the first time in spring 2017. In addition, the college administers an annual internal Operations Survey each fall to assess employee use and satisfaction with the college’s operational areas (e.g. HR, IT, Business Services, Food Service, IEPR, Facilities, etc.). CLC has conducted the Operations survey for several years, which provides trend data for departments to use in their planning efforts.

CLC distributes survey results throughout the campus and departments, committees, and individuals use the information in a variety of ways. Senior departmental management, HR, the Diversity Council, and Faculty Senate review the results most closely in order to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement. Once CLC receives the results of the spring 2017 “Great Colleges” survey, the college will form a cross-functional ad hoc committee to review the survey outcomes and discuss any identified strengths and areas for improvement. The college will celebrate its strengths and address any areas for improvement in order to enhance employee morale, engagement, and alignment to CLC values. The ad hoc committee will share its findings with relevant departments and committees for further implementation or action and will share the general survey results with the larger college community through the IEPR intranet page.

Since this is the first time the college will conduct the “Great Colleges” survey, the ad hoc committee also will assess the survey’s validity and usefulness to the institution. The committee will recommend whether CLC should officially adopt this survey as the regular assessment of employee satisfaction and engagement or whether the college should pursue other options for long-term data collection and analysis. Once a primary external employee climate survey is determined, CLC will begin to set goals and targets for employee satisfaction and engagement that the college will assess on a more consistent schedule. CLC expects to establish a long-term plan by spring 2018.

**Ensuring Instructors are Current on Instructional Content in their Disciplines (3P3)**

In the Systems Portfolio, CLC did not clearly articulate its process for ensuring that instructors are current on instructional content in their disciplines. Based on the Systems Appraisal and in conjunction with the release of HLC’s *Guidelines for Determining Qualified Faculty*, the college conducted a major audit in 2015-16 to assess instructors’ teaching credentials. As part of this audit, instructional departments reviewed the minimum qualifications necessary for a faculty member to provide instruction effectively in each discipline and to be compliant with the HLC’s guidelines. Educational Affairs documented revisions
to the minimum qualifications and published the revisions on the CLC intranet. Once the departments verified the minimum qualifications, the college conducted a thorough review of instructor credentials to ensure each instructor’s credentials are relevant to the discipline(s) in which they teach and that each instructor is current with regard to subject matter content and instructional expertise. Educational Affairs notified instructors who did not meet the minimum qualifications for their discipline (approximately 2.5 percent of instructors) and gave these instructors a set time period in which they were required to submit documentation verifying their credentials. Instructors who could not verify their credentials developed plans to receive the required credentials in order to be eligible to teach classes at the college after September 1, 2017. The college will continue to screen all new hires and will make hiring decisions based on the minimum qualifications identified and published through this initiative.

CLC also expects faculty to participate in professional development opportunities in order to remain current on college policies and initiatives as well as in instructional content in their disciplines. Per the faculty contracts, faculty return to work one week prior to the first day of classes in the fall and spring semesters in order to participate in professional development activities. While faculty are not required to attend a minimum number of activities, the HR, IEPR, and TLETC departments reviewed data for faculty conference attendance, enrollment in credit courses, and participation in TLETC activities to assess faculty participation in past professional development activities. Through this project, CLC found that approximately 80 percent of the college’s full-time instructional staff participated in at least one professional development activity in 2013-14. CLC will continue to review this information in the future as an ongoing process to ensure faculty members are participating in professional development training opportunities.

Two major processes currently exist to monitor faculty participation in professional development opportunities. One is through a collective bargaining agreement provision where faculty members have individual amounts allocated for both credit bearing and conference-type experiences. Deans become involved in screening proposals from both full-time and adjunct faculty to ensure relevancy to contract parameters as well as to the discipline and general teaching and learning. A second process is through ADR in which departments are able to identify goals related to faculty professional development. The action plan that results from ADR captures discipline specific professional development goals related to the evidence documented in ADR.

Alignment of Professional Development Activities with Institutional Objectives (3P3)

While CLC discussed its programs for supporting professional development in the Systems Portfolio, the Systems Appraisal noted that it was unclear whether CLC aligns its professional development activities with its institutional objectives. Since receiving the Appraisal, CLC has reviewed its processes for aligning professional development with institutional objectives and made several improvements. First, HR has activated a new module in PeopleSoft where employees are expected to document and track their own training and development activities and managers are able to monitor their employees’ professional development activities more closely. As part of the new process for entering training and development, employees are required to indicate the strategic goal of the college that primarily relates to the development activity in which they engaged. This step in the process emphasizes the importance of aligning professional development with institutional objectives for staff and managers. Managers can aggregate the information for individual employees as well as for their departments as a whole to determine where to recommend or require staff development on key strategic goals that align with departmental goals and initiatives.

In addition to the ability to document training activities based on their alignment with the college’s strategic goals, CLC also made recent efforts to align training offered by HR, the TLETC, and the New Faculty Institute (NFI) directly with the college’s strategic goals.

AQIP Category 4: Planning and Leading (p. 44-51)

Revisions to Governance Structure (4P2)

As noted in the Systems Portfolio, CLC conducted an AQIP project in 2015-16 to review and revise the shared governance system. Employee survey feedback indicated there was dissatisfaction with the existing system, which prompted a cross-functional AQIP committee to conduct thorough analyses and research on best practices and peer comparisons. Research suggested that employees were mostly dissatisfied with 1) the time it took recommendations to progress through the governance structure, 2) the lack of transparency in how the college made decisions through governance, 3) limited participation in committees and senate, and 4) a general sense of confusion about the process. Through the AQIP project, CLC developed a new governance structure and process that allow for greater efficiency, participation, communication, documentation, and collaboration. CLC implemented a new governance structure (presented in figure 2) in fall 2016.
Under the new structure, there is a central commission (Governance Coordinating Commission, GCC), which is comprised of representatives from 1) key operational areas of the college, 2) councils oriented toward strategic goals, 3) student government, and 4) employee senates. The college removed the President’s Cabinet from the central governance structure to encourage greater employee participation and the freedom for employees to express ideas that they might otherwise be hesitant to present in front of Cabinet members. Now, the GCC presents ideas to the President’s Cabinet after relevant groups within the governance structure have had a chance to research and vet them.

Staff at all levels may formally propose improvement ideas to GCC through an automated intake system; the system also allows any employee to view all the ideas staff submitted to the GCC and allows the college to track progress or decisions on each idea. The GCC’s Governance Screening Forum (Forum) is a subcommittee that reviews ideas submitted through the intake system. The Forum provides feedback regarding any new ideas or initiatives that could potentially affect college policy or processes or those that may require feedback or cooperation from several areas of the college prior to implementation. The Forum is comprised of various key employee groups and councils that represent strategic values of the institution, such as diversity, sustainability, and wellness. Under the new process, these key groups have input in the beginning stage of the process as well as throughout the vetting, feedback, and implementation stages. Once the Forum has determined that the idea is in fact a governance issue, the idea then progresses to the GCC to determine the most appropriate area(s) of the college to involve in researching or implementing the idea. The GCC assigns all projects to a specific area of the governance system to serve as a champion of the project and ensure follow-through. Projects are thoroughly documented and tracked as they move through the steps from request to final approval by the President’s Cabinet and, ultimately, to implementation.

The revised governance process enables the institution to receive input from all members of the college community and to routinely identify and respond to opportunities and threats in a collaborative and efficient manner. The new system also encourages more involvement and promotes innovation and continuous improvement by providing a more streamlined system for employees to share their ideas, voices, and work. CLC plans to re-assess the governance structure and process in a few years to determine whether the modifications have resulted in greater employee engagement and satisfaction.

**Developing Leaders (4P3)**

Although CLC documented its leadership training efforts in the Systems Portfolio, the Systems Appraisal suggested that the college “would benefit from developing a leadership training plan for all potential leaders within the institution.” In response to this feedback, CLC will implement succession planning as a means to prepare future leaders of the college to step into leadership roles. The new succession planning effort will include components of a Ph.D. cohort program and a new administrator institute. Additionally, as a way to develop faculty leadership, the college plans to develop a department chair institute. CLC will have these programs in place by the end of fiscal year 2018.
Since receiving feedback from HLC, CLC has also improved its efforts toward continued development of new and existing leadership. For example, CLC incorporated a leadership emphasis in the annual performance evaluation for Administrative and Professional staff. The evaluation for these groups includes items to assess supervisory skills and commitment to the evaluation of subordinates in order to identify areas for improvement that are addressed through monthly manager training sessions as needed. In early 2016, CLC also updated its training for new supervisors to provide a more intensive program for new leaders. In addition to the above, CLC conducts monthly meetings for Administrators and Professionals that covers various institution-related topics and communications. Recurring surveys, such as the college Operations Survey and President’s Survey, provide valuable feedback about the effectiveness of college leadership. The college has several years’ worth of data from these surveys that department and college leaders use to identify areas for improvement.

**Ensuring Legal and Ethical Behavior (4P4)**

In preparing the Systems Portfolio and considering feedback from the Systems Appraisal, CLC recognized several opportunities to clarify and expand on its efforts to communicate and assess ethical and legal behaviors among all employee groups. In fall 2016, the HR, IT, and Finance departments each worked with a Six Sigma consultant to map processes for ensuring integrity within their respective areas. The project resulted in documentation of key processes as well as a greater understanding for the college’s policies and practices in regard to maintaining ethical and legal compliance.

As mentioned in the Systems Portfolio, CLC implemented a mandatory employee training program in fiscal year 2016 to 1) communicate key policies and procedures related to legal and ethical compliance and 2) measure employees’ familiarity with these policies and procedures. The first round of training required all faculty and staff to complete modules related to FERPA, HIPPA, sexual harassment, fraud prevention, bystander intervention, Campus SaVe Act, Title IX, and employee diversity. All staff and faculty completed the required training modules and were in compliance by summer 2016. New employees are required to complete the initial compliance training modules as part of their orientation training. Existing employees are required to complete annual refresher training modules each year in order to maintain compliance. In fiscal year 2017, employees must complete refresher training in Title IX and FERPA.

CLC monitors employee compliance with training requirements at the departmental level (by supervisors) as well as at the institutional level (by the Employee Relations Manager). In fiscal years 2015 and 2016, 98 percent of college faculty and staff completed the comprehensive compliance training. Sanctions are in place for any employee who fails to complete the required training by the end of the fiscal year. By requiring this training, HR is ensuring that staff members at all levels of the institution are aware of the college’s legal and ethical policies and practices. Furthermore, in January 2017, state law will require newly elected and appointed members of the Board of Trustees to complete leadership training (per Public Act 99-0692) that will include modules related to legal and ethical compliance.

CLC’s primary mechanism for ensuring employees are in compliance with mandatory training is through tracking reported violations. While CLC has always maintained a whistleblower phone line for employees, students, and community members to report violations of college policies and non-compliance with legal and ethical expectations, HR has spent the past year researching outside vendors to maintain a more comprehensive anonymous reporting system. Outside systems will allow the college to collect and respond to reports and complaints more efficiently and will also allow the college to keep track of the number and type of reports submitted. As part of the new collection and response system, CLC will develop a new process that includes regular review and analysis of the data gathered through the system, which will help the college more effectively identify and track any areas in which ethical and legal practices are not being followed. HR expects to make a decision and implement a new system by 2018.

**AQIP Category 5: Knowledge Management and Resource Stewardship (p. 51-56)**

**Sharing Data and Information to Support Planning and Process Improvement (5P1)**

The Systems Appraisal noted that while CLC had made strides in sharing data and information to support planning and process improvement through the development of a Scorecard and Accountability Report, the college needed a more formal and systematic process for determining which data and information to report as well as for analyzing data to ensure the college achieves its strategic goals. In response to this feedback, IEPR has worked with the President, President’s Cabinet, and Board of Trustees over the past year to develop a more formal process for identifying and sharing data and information about the college’s progress toward meeting its strategic goals.

At the institutional level, IEPR works closely with college leaders to identify the best metrics to assess the college’s progress toward meeting its strategic goals. College leaders largely base these decisions on knowledge of industry standards, peer benchmarks, state data reporting requirements, and internal reporting capabilities through the Data Warehouse and PeopleSoft. Existing metrics are reviewed each year to ensure they continue to meet the college’s needs for data and
information; existing metrics may be modified and additional metrics may be added over time as data capabilities improve across the college and peer reporting agencies (i.e. IPEDS, ICCB, VFA). The college created a Scorecard to share data and information about each of the identified metrics. As noted in section 1P5, the Scorecard is a series of tables and charts that present current and historical data related to the college’s strategic goals. IEPR updates the Scorecard annually to track progress and revise institution-level targets as needed. All employees have access to the Scorecard though the IEPR intranet page.

In fall 2016, CLC enhanced its efforts to identify institution-level targets for each of the metrics reported in the college Scorecard. Departments, groups, and individuals across campus align targets for their own goals and metrics to the larger institution-level goals and identify the ways in which their efforts contribute to the college’s overall progress. Academic and non-academic departments identify goals and targets through the ADR and NADR processes. Additionally, key departments such as Information Technology (IT), Finance, and Facilities identify their own goals and targets as part of their annual strategic planning reports. Individuals identify their own goals and actions through the employee evaluation process. Through these processes, CLC has developed a more integrated approach toward achieving its strategic goals.

In addition to the Scorecard, IEPR publishes and distributes an annual Accountability Report that identifies recent progress made toward achieving the college’s established targets. Each month throughout the year, the Executive Director of IEPR presents segments of data and information from the annual Accountability Report to the BOT. These monthly presentations inform the BOT, President’s Cabinet, administrators, faculty and community about the college’s current standing and recent progress for each metric as well as of any recent initiatives or efforts the college has made to improve the college’s performance. In addition to these monthly presentations, IEPR houses electronic copies of the Accountability Report on its website to ensure constant availability and access to the data and information. Departments, committees, and individuals across the college are encouraged to refer to this information when identifying goals, targets, and activities for their respective areas.

Alignment of the Budget and Strategic Plan (HLC Strategy Forum, 2016)

CLC’s annual budget document devotes approximately 15 pages to demonstrating how financial planning aligns with CLC’s strategic priorities. Still, through the 2016 AQIP Strategy Forum, CLC leaders recognized the need to review the CLC budget process on a continual basis to ensure the process aligns with the college’s strategic plan and engages affected constituents in a timely way. CLC developed an AQIP project for the 2016-17 AQIP cycle to accomplish these goals. The Aligning CLC’s Financial and Strategic Goals project kicked off in September 2016 and is focused on 1) assessing the alignment of CLC’s strategic goals with the annual budget, 2) developing a transparent budget process that will link the budget to the strategic goals, 3) creating a charter for relevant financial committees to ensure budget decisions are made with strategic goals in mind, and 4) expanding the budget timeline to allow for more input and flexibility to respond to input. As part of this project, the AQIP team plans to develop a rubric that CLC can use to assess the alignment of current budget items with the college’s strategic goals in order to assess how well aligned budget requests are with the strategic plan. In addition, the AQIP team plans to survey employee groups about their understanding and satisfaction with the current budget process in order to inform future improvements to the process. The college expects to complete this project by fall 2017.

This project is particularly important for CLC given the current budgetary issues in Illinois and declining enrollments over the past few years3. The outcome of this project will allow the college to make better decisions about budget allocations and assessment of budget cuts in the future.

AQIP Category 6: Quality Overview (p. 56-58)

Aligning the Systems Portfolio, Action Projects, Quality Check-up, and Strategy Forums (6P1)

CLC has developed a new process for identifying and selecting annual AQIP projects based in large part on the feedback provided in the Systems Appraisal. The college designed this new process to incorporate innovative ideas from the college community more effectively with lessons learned through the preparation of the Systems Portfolio, quality check-up, and strategy forums when developing action projects. Under the new process, the GCC invites the college community to submit AQIP project proposals through its online intake system as described in section 4P2. Additionally, IEPR develops a list of proposed projects that directly align with feedback from the most recent Systems Portfolio, Appraisal, strategy forum, AQIP projects, and quality check-up. The GCC sends a master list of projects through the shared governance structure for review and comment. Governance groups send their feedback back to GCC for final consideration and selection of the college’s three annual AQIP projects. Once selected, GCC sends the projects to the President’s Cabinet for affirmation and the college updates the Board of

3 In February 2016, HLC asked Illinois public colleges to discuss their solvency in light of the state’s budgetary standoff. The college replied by stating that the situation was serious, but the college has contingency plans to address the situation, had no intention to close programs, and had no need to engage in mass reduction in labor force. CLC continually monitors it financial situation and sees no substantial change in condition since responding to the HLC’s inquiry.
Trustees. CLC expects the new process to result in AQIP projects that more directly respond to key areas for improvement in an effort to move the college from a state of “reacting/systematic” to “aligned/integrated” over the next accreditation period.

**Re-Affirm CLC’s Commitment to AQIP Pathway and Continuous Quality Improvement (6P2)**

Since preparing the most recent Systems Portfolio and receiving HLC’s feedback, the college re-committed to the principles of continuous quality improvement (CQI) and the AQIP Pathway. CLC has made conscious efforts over the past year to communicate the importance of CQI across all areas of the college and to incorporate the principles of CQI and the AQIP pathway more effectively into the college’s processes and actions. As this report demonstrates, CLC has targeted many of its efforts over the past year toward specifically addressing issues identified through the Appraisal. As part of this effort, employees across the college have gained a renewed understanding and respect for the principles of process mapping, assessment, data collection, analysis, and improvement. IEPR will continue to work as an ambassador for CQI principles on behalf of the college and plans to work over the next five years to incorporate these principles fully across all areas of the college through AQIP projects, ADR and NADR, and organizational strategic planning efforts. In addition, IEPR plans to develop and offer training sessions focused on CQI and strategic planning to inform employees about best practices and college policies and expectations for these activities.

**Addressing Strategic Challenges**

In the Systems Appraisal (p. 4-6), HLC noted five overarching strategic challenges that “could affect the institution’s ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning, and overall quality improvement goals” (p. 4). CLC presents its recent efforts to address these strategic challenges in the sections that follow:

**Strategic Challenges 1 and 2: Reporting of performance measures (p. 4-5)**

Since receiving the Systems Appraisal, each CLC division has made a concerted effort toward improving its operations through systematic data collection, analysis, and reporting. The college acknowledges the need for continued improvement in these areas and is working toward better communication, training, and oversight of evaluation efforts in order to ensure all departments and individuals across the college are aware of the importance for data-informed decision-making and planning. Over the past year, CLC’s efforts have primarily focused on addressing key areas for improvement as noted in the Appraisal. IEPR has worked closely with leadership across the college to identify better data collection and reporting methods and to incorporate data analysis and review into departmental processes. Through addressing these issues in relation to the key areas addressed in the Appraisal, staff at all departments and levels have gained experience in developing metrics and assessment methods that are more in line with HLC expectations.

Moving forward, departments will incorporate what they learned over the past year into the rest of their departmental processes. CLC revised the ADR and NADR processes to place greater emphasis on the need for departments to develop and maintain documented processes that include relevant evaluation methods and rely on the systematic review of data to inform change. Along with these evaluation methods, departments will include relevant peer and industry comparisons whenever possible in order to establish performance targets and encourage improvement and innovation. CLC expects all areas to improve in their performance measurement efforts within five years (i.e. the length of one ADR or NADR review cycle). The college’s efforts in this area will ensure that it is able to report more concrete data in the next Systems Portfolio rather than relying on anecdotal evidence, as reviewers noted in the Systems Appraisal.

**Strategic Challenge 3 and 4: Lack of strategic perspective in decision-making; lack of repeatable, measurable processes moving toward established targets; processes are not documented or systematic (p. 5)**

In response to these strategic challenges, CLC has emphasized the importance of ensuring that essential processes are repeatable. To this end the college employed a Six Sigma consultant in fall 2016 to establish, modify, and document key processes across several areas. This initiative revealed that while many areas have processes to guide their work, most areas were not formally documenting their processes. As a result of this initiative, departments now have formally documented sustainable processes as well as plans for reviewing and modifying existing policies as part of the NADR process. Additionally, as part of this effort, each process now emphasizes systematic data collection and analysis as part of an ongoing effort toward assessment and improvement. Once departments have had a chance to collect baseline data, they will be able to establish formal targets for process improvement that they can incorporate into their strategic planning and decision-making efforts.

**Strategic Challenge 5: High School curriculum is not representative of college curriculum; ensuring dual credit faculty credentials and dual credit courses follow college curricula (p. 5-6)**

The Systems Appraisal suggested that CLC should review its dual credit processes in regard to 1) ensuring dual credit faculty have the appropriate credentials and 2) ensuring dual credit courses align with college curricula. Over the last four years, the college has invested significantly in building processes and procedures for dual credit to ensure all instructors and courses follow the same systems that internally delivered college-level courses follow. In order to ensure faculty who are teaching dual
credit courses have the appropriate credentials, dual credit faculty are required to 1) meet the same minimum qualifications to teach that all other faculty in the department meet, 2) apply through the same PeopleAdmin system that all faculty use to submit their application and resume/vitae, 3) be observed and evaluated in the same manner and following the same schedule as all adjunct faculty, and 4) attend professional development activities at the college to ensure they are connected to the department and updated regularly on any curriculum or departmental changes.

In order to ensure dual credit courses are meeting the college’s standards, courses that are approved as dual credit are required to 1) demonstrate that the learning outcomes for the dual credit course match the college’s CRF, 2) adopt any mandatory department-level assessments (e.g. common final, portfolio, etc.) and instructional resources (e.g. textbook, software application, etc.) that are connected to the course being taught, and 3) use equivalent instructional equipment and supplies that are required in the discipline. The college documents these elements through a formal memorandum of understanding between the college and the high school. CLC’s College Readiness and Dual Credit department oversees processes associated with dual credit instructors and courses in conjunction with the corresponding academic division and departments offering dual credit coursework.

Criteria for Accreditation and Core Components

As part of the CQR visit, HLC reviewers assess the college according to how well it meets the core components of HLC’s five criteria for accreditation. A soft-review of these components was included as part of the Systems Appraisal in 2015 (p. 11-13). CLC addressed any areas in which reviewers found the college’s evidence to be “unclear or incomplete” and the sections that follow document the college’s recent improvements in these areas:

Criterion 3: Teaching and Learning – Quality, Resources, and Support (p. 12)

Component 3. A: The institution’s program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (p. 64)

As mentioned in CLC’s response to address Strategic Challenge 5, all courses offered by the college follow the same quality of instruction and curricula regardless of mode (on campus, online, or hybrid) or delivery location (internal or external). The college ensures this by requiring all faculty to meet the same standards required to teach particular courses and by requiring all courses to follow the established CRF. In response to the HLC’s release in October 2015 of the Guidelines for Determining Qualified Faculty, CLC completed a comprehensive audit of faculty teaching credentials in 2016 that included a review of transcripts and professional development activities for all full-time, adjunct, and dual credit instructors. Educational Affairs held all instructors to the same standards for their respective disciplines and applied the same sanctions for instructors not possessing the minimum required teaching qualifications. CLC reviews the CRF for each course whenever a department makes a change to the curriculum based on changing requirements for accreditation, feedback from advisory committees, or updates to remain current in a discipline. Additionally, departments are encouraged to reflect on whether they need to review and update their CRFs as part of the five-year ADR process.

CLC uses course outcome data (e.g. grades, success and passing rates, and learning outcomes) as a primary means for determining whether there are differences in the quality of instruction across different modes of instruction. The college requires faculty and academic leaders to review student success data by delivery mode (i.e. on campus, online, or hybrid) as part of the ADR process. Upon analysis of the data, departments document improvement efforts associated with these modes of delivery in their action and assessment plans. Similarly, the Dual Credit and College Readiness department closely monitors (through an annual Dual Credit Report as well as ad hoc data requests) the outcomes of students who complete dual credit courses as compared to those who take internally delivered courses. Dual Credit staff members discuss any differences in course outcomes with deans and faculty in the relevant departments to investigate the source of the difference and work to ensure greater consistency in student outcomes. CLC also uses supplemental data, such as Student Ratings of Instruction and other indirect surveys like CCSSE, to monitor quality of instruction issues related to the course content, faculty classroom management, lab and classroom environments, technology support, etc.

Criterion 4: Teaching and Learning – Evaluation and Improvement (p. 13)

Component 4. B: The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning (p. 70)

As detailed in CLC’s response to category 1P1, assessment of student learning has been a long-standing faculty led initiative at the institution level and currently is the responsibility of the ASLC. The ASLC monitors and recommends improvements to our systematic process for assessing the recently updated CLOs of Critical Thinking, Oral Communication, Writing, Reading, Information Literacy, Quantitative Literacy, Technological Competency, and Diversity and Social Justice. Under the process, the ASLC assesses two CLOs at the institution level each semester based on faculty and staff scoring of student
artifacts on common rubrics created by the ASLC. All academic departments as well as all co-curricular areas under the purview of Student Development conduct these assessments.

After the ASLC runs an assessment, the committee analyzes the results and shares with the college community through CLC’s public website and intranet as well as through all-faculty meetings and division or department meetings. Based on the analysis of results, the ASLC develops an action plan to influence student learning and teaching effectiveness. The ASLC monitors the action plans each year to ensure the college makes progress toward its goals before the ASLC runs the next assessment two years later. As this cycle repeats, the college will have evidence of whether the action plans influenced improvement of student learning. The ASLC conducted an assessment of the Writing outcome in 2014-15, the Reading outcome in 2015-16, and the Critical Thinking and Oral Communication outcomes in fall 2016. The ASLC will assess the Information Literacy and Technological Competency outcomes in spring 2017, the Quantitative Literacy and Reading outcomes in fall 2017, and the Writing and Diversity and Social Justice outcomes in spring 2018.

At the department level, assessment of program-specific learning outcomes is a special focus of the five-year ADR process; however, departments update their assessment plans annually and make revisions throughout the five-year period between ADR reports. Each summer, departments update their assessment plans with the results of the previous academic year. Faculty members enter this information in the online tools available through the intranet. Anyone with access to the intranet can view the information. Academic deans review each department’s progress and report the results to Provost’s Council. When faculty members return for the next academic year, the deans meet with each department to evaluate progress and plan for the upcoming year. In fall 2016, the ASLC co-chairs, along with IEPR staff, worked with all department chairs to reinforce the college’s expectations for assessment of student learning outcomes at the department level, provide specific examples of successful efforts at CLC for department level assessment, and to outline the resources dedicated to supporting faculty in their assessment efforts.

Criterion 5: Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness (p. 13)

Component 5. C: The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning (p. 73)

As detailed in CLC’s response to category 4P2, CLC completed an AQIP action project in fall 2016 that resulted in a revision to the college’s governance system. The changes to the governance structure and process allow for greater participation among employees at all levels of the college as well as for increased transparency, efficiency, and coordination among areas of the college. The new governance system allows the institution to engage in more strategic, systematic, and integrated planning by ensuring the college considers all ideas and projects through a broad representation of employee groups and departments. The GCC serves as a representative body that reviews and provides feedback on all proposed projects prior to referring the project to key areas of the college for implementation. By having a single body that reviews and considers all projects, the college is in a better position to notice redundancy in projects as well as to ensure all relevant issues related to personnel, facilities, technology, finances, and student success are considered prior to the initiation of a project. CLC expects the new process to result in more integrated decision-making across the college that can, in turn, better inform strategic planning efforts.

Component 5. D: The institution works systematically to improve its performance (p. 74)

While the Systems Appraisal suggested CLC is “in its infancy” (p. 74) in regard to the use of data to inform decisions, CLC has made great progress over the past year to more firmly establish its commitment to data-informed decision making. As noted in section 5P1, the Scorecard and Accountability Report are the college’s primary mechanisms for reporting and tracking performance toward meeting its strategic goals. CLC established institution-level targets in fall 2016 and departments and individuals across the college have begun aligning their own goals and actions to the college targets. The connection between institution- and department-level metrics and targets will result in more systematic and strategic planning and allow the college to monitor its performance more consistently and establish action plans for addressing areas in need of improvement. The ADR and NADR processes serve as the means by which departments identify and report on their progress toward meeting their own goals as well as how their goals align with the college’s overall mission. Similarly, the recently revised employee evaluation process requires staff members to align their own goals and actions to departmental and college-level goals and targets. Through all of these processes, CLC is able to document and review its efforts toward continuous quality improvement.
Additional Improvements to Note

In addition to the numerous improvements that emerged from preparing the Systems Portfolio and from feedback received in the Systems Appraisal, which CLC has documented throughout this report, the college has also made additional substantial improvements aimed at improving college processes, student success and satisfaction, and fiscal responsibility over the past year. The following section presents a few of the major initiatives CLC would like to reviewers to note in advance of their visit.

Marketing, Research, and Innovation

In fall 2016, CLC began considering means by which it can better capitalize on the talents in its offices of Public Relations and Marketing, IEPR, Information Technology, and Workforce and Professional Development (WPDI) in order to promote cross-functional collaboration that will enhance the college’s marketing, research, and innovation efforts. The college is compelled to do so by the recognition that 1) enrollment at the college is declining, 2) competition from online educational services is growing, and 3) local community leaders report that CLC that it is one of the best kept secrets in the county. Combining the efforts of these cross-functional areas would provide valuable information for the college’s Enrollment Management Commission to use in its efforts toward achieving the college’s goal of “maximizing educational opportunity” through increasing enrollment and external partnerships.

The college began exploring this avenue by developing a strategic marketing plan that is rooted in marketing strategy, informed by research analytics, and supported by innovative and customized educational offerings from WPDI. The second step in this process will involve determining how best to align the work of these functional units without diminishing their capacities to provide essential services. The solution to this challenge may come from closer collaboration among these units (i.e. through task-team efforts), writing new objectives into department leaders’ annual goals, or forming standing committee with accountable leadership. Any of these outcomes may be in place by the time the reviewers visit the college this spring.

Welcome and One Stop Center

In fall 2016, CLC opened a new Welcome and One Stop Center at the Grayslake Campus. The new center consolidates all major student service functions into a single point of service. The center combines the admissions and recruitment, registrar and records, financial aid, and advising and counseling departments into a single location. In addition, staff (referred to as Generalists) have been cross-trained in these essential student service functions in order to provide quick and reliable service to students. The new model makes it faster and easier for students to receive assistance. Data from past student surveys indicated that students were frustrated by the amount of time, effort, and confusion that resulted from having to visit multiple departments to receive assistance. CLC expects the new model to improve efficiency as well as overall student satisfaction with these services.

Budget

The state budget issues in Illinois continue to be a source of concern for CLC, as is the case for all state-funded agencies in Illinois. While CLC has been more fortunate than some of its peer institutions, the college has taken the possible loss of state funding very seriously and has implemented several initiatives in the past year to ensure its fiscal security. One of the most substantial initiatives is the creation of a budget taskforce tasked with identifying opportunities for cost savings that will have the least amount of impact on student services or college operations. Additionally, the college has built its current budget with contingencies in place to account for the uncertainty in the amount of state funding it will receive in the future. CLC continues to explore opportunities for grant funding and foundation donations that will help offset the costs of any lost funding from the state. These initiatives have enabled CLC to be confident in its ability to meet its financial obligations without a substantial impact on students or the community.