



College of Lake County
Systems Portfolio

AQIP Category EIGHT:
Planning for Continuous Improvement

AQIP Category EIGHT: Planning for Continuous Improvement

Context for Analysis (C)

8C1 Institutional vision

The college conducted a “Preferred Futures” conference in 1998 and “Preferred Futures II” in 2000. Each conference was designed to generate discussions about the future of the College of Lake County. The conferences included both community and college representatives. While the activity was well received and generated some excellent discussions, the conference did not yield a vision for the future. Rather, a list of activities and priorities was generated.

Currently, the college does not have a vision statement or an expressed/documentated vision for the next 5-10 years. However, the college is reviewing the current method for how it develops strategic goals, objectives, and activities.

8C2 Short- and long-term strategies aligned with mission

As explained in 2P1, the college has a 3-year collaborative process to develop its goals and objectives. A list of the recently revised goals and objectives can be found at http://clcpages.clcollinois.edu/depts/res/transfer/goals/bdapproved_Goals_0608.pdf, and they are outlined in Table 8.1:

Table 8.1 Goals and Objectives for Fiscal Years 2006-2008	
Strategic Goal 1: Learning	
The College of Lake County will enhance student learning.	
This goal includes the following themes: fostering student learning in general education, using technology to enhance learning, focusing on student-centered services, recognizing and valuing a diverse community, and building a competitive workforce.	
Objectives in Support of Goal 1: Learning	
Objectives in support of Strategic Goal One, Learning, are listed in 1C2.	
Strategic Goal 2: Outreach	
The College of Lake County will strengthen its outreach to the community.	
This goal includes the following themes: increasing outreach to identify and serve community needs, and increasing partnerships with diverse constituent groups within the community.	
Objectives in Support of Goal 2: Outreach	
Objective 1:	The College will increase public awareness of its educational programs and opportunities for financial aid in order to increase higher education participation of those with the ability to benefit.
Objective 2:	The College will identify and respond to the educational needs of diverse populations within Lake County, partnering with educators, businesses, social agencies, the military, governmental agencies, civic organizations and community groups to address educational issues affecting the quality of life in Lake County.
Strategic Goal 3: Access and Student Success	
The College of Lake County will work to reduce barriers and increase opportunities to meet the diverse needs of the people of Lake County.	
This goal includes the following themes: focusing on student-centered services, enhancing the technology infrastructure.	
Objectives in Support of Goal 3: Access and Student Success	
Objective 1:	The College will continuously improve student services, including the use of technology, to ensure that students have easy access to the information, people, and services they need to be successful and will adopt and promote academic and student policies that encourage retention, growth in personal responsibility and academic work ethic.
Objective 2:	The College will facilitate educational transitions from one level to the next by forming partnerships and cooperative agreements with four-year colleges and universities and working closely with the University Center of Lake County.
Objective 3:	The College will form partnerships with Lake County primary and secondary schools to promote student preparation and transition to college.

Objective 4:	The College will strengthen and enhance the academic advising system to improve student decision-making in university transfer and career programs and will encourage students to develop a career plan that connects their career objectives to an educational plan.
Objective 5:	The College will improve the success of students in achieving their individual academic goals.
Objective 6:	The College will promote increased participation in financial aid and scholarships.
Strategic Goal 4: Accountability and Responsible Stewardship	
The College of Lake County will evaluate and improve all academic and nonacademic departments to ensure high quality and utilize resources efficiently and effectively and expand facilities.	
This goal includes the following themes: focusing on effectiveness and efficiency, assessing and continuously improving all academic and nonacademic departments and programs, and ensuring adequate financial resources.	
Objectives in Support of Goal 4: Accountability and Responsible Stewardship	
Objective 1:	The College will ensure its long-term financial viability including evaluating options for achieving greater cost efficiency in operations, maximizing the use of existing revenue sources, and developing new revenue sources.
Objective 2:	The College will incorporate the principles of continuous improvement into its functions conducting reviews of all academic and nonacademic departments and using the results in college decision-making systems to ensure the highest quality of education; efficient and effective operations; and superior services to students, staff and the community, measuring student and stakeholder satisfaction.
Objective 3:	The College will foster a working environment which values and respects employee contributions, encourages and strengthens participation in decision-making, demonstrates internal relationships that emphasize collaboration across departments, open communication and team building.
Objective 4:	The College will promote learning by fostering, modifying and expanding a safe, clean and environmentally responsible campus that enhances students' physical, social and intellectual well-being and meets the needs of the community.
Objective 5:	The College recognizes the critical contribution of its faculty and staff to achieving higher education excellence in the teaching and learning environment and accordingly will provide resources for professional development.

In addition to these goals and objectives, each year, all administrative units are required to develop activities to support college goals and objectives. These activities must be tied directly to both a goal and an objective. Once compiled, a report is published detailing all of the goals, objectives, and supporting activities. This report is followed by both a mid-year update and a final report describing accomplishments. All three documents are approved by the Board of Trustees and then distributed widely throughout the campus.

Processes (P)

8P1 *Planning the process*

The college planning process is explained in 2P1 and 8C2.

8P2 *Selecting short- and long-term strategies*

Short- and long-term strategies are developed by individual college departments and divisions (explained in 2C1, 2P1, and 8C2) and are approved by the college Executive Staff prior to approval by the Board of Trustees.

8P3 *Developing key action plans*

As explained in 8C2, individual administrators, in collaboration with their faculty and staff, develop yearly activities to support college goals and objectives. They are required to also submit an action plan for how they plan to accomplish the activity. Specifically, they are to identify milestones, individuals responsible, financial resources required, support needed from internal and external partners, and anticipated outcomes.

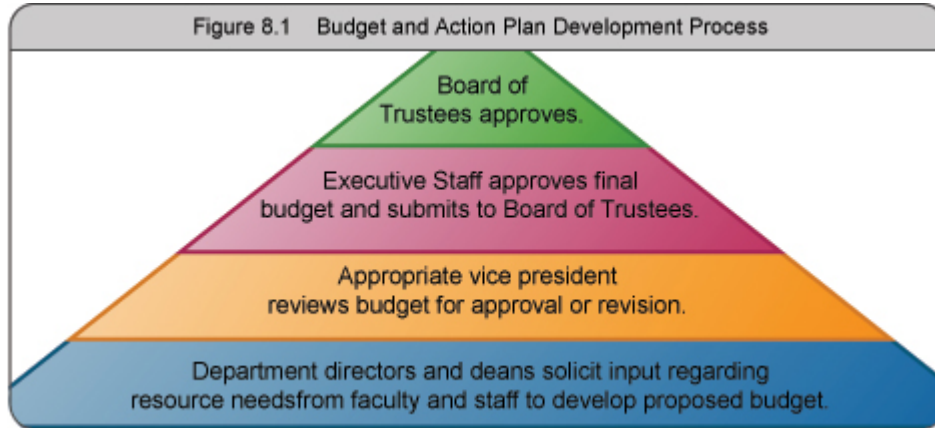
8P4 *Coordinating and aligning planning processes*

As demonstrated in 2P1 and 8C2, the college's planning process is a college-wide process and includes collaboration and cooperation among all levels of the institution. A point of emphasis

during the development of activities is inclusion. Administrators at all levels are strongly encouraged to collaborate with faculty and staff in developing departmental strategic activities.

8P5 *Selecting measures and setting performance projections*

Measures and performance projections are developed by individual department directors and deans, approved by their direct supervisors, and then submitted for discussion and approval to the Executive Staff. Figure 8.1 illustrates the process:



8P6 *Accounting for resource needs*

As described in 8P3 and 8P5, resource needs are identified as part of the action plan and activity development process. This process takes place prior to budget development and discussion. Each administrator identifies the specific activities to support the goals and objectives, and estimates the financial and other resources needed to accomplish the activity. Activities requiring financial resources are discussed first at the department or division level, then the vice president level, followed by ultimate approval by the Executive Staff. The college's final budget is approved by the Board of Trustees and subject to public review and comment.

8P7 *Ensuring faculty, staff, and administrative development*

As the college changes to meet the various needs of stakeholder groups, the skills and abilities needed to successfully address these changes often require developing new skills sets. When this happens, the college offers training through the Teaching and Learning Center, or identifies external training providers to offer necessary training and professional development. For example, the college offers specialized training to faculty and staff when it implements a new version of the PeopleSoft enterprise system. In addition, the college has a very generous professional development and education program (described in 4P4, 4P5, and 1C5) that provides incentives for completing training and education programs.

8P8 *Measuring and analyzing planning effectiveness*

Beyond the "Action Projects" results described in 8R1, the annual feedback from peer reviewers of action project updates, and the year-end progress report (described in 8R1, and 8R2), the college receives anecdotal evidence collected during various administrative and faculty meetings, regarding the effectiveness of its planning systems. The college does not currently collect specific data to determine the effectiveness of the continuous improvement planning systems.

Results (R)**8R1 Results of planning strategies and action plans**

As discussed in 8C2, once institutional strategies and action plans are developed, the administrators responsible for performance are required to submit both a mid-term and a final report. These reports are reviewed throughout the institution and, finally, by the Board of Trustees. Primary results for the college's three AQIP action projects are included in Table 8.2:

Table 8.2 Primary Results for AQIP Action Projects	
Action Projects	Results
Increasing the number of English Language Learners (ELL) who are entering college courses at the College of Lake County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 3 questions added to college application which are designed to identify ELL students in an effort to provide additional support services, and to enhance data collection and analysis. ■ Revision of entire Adult Education ESL curriculum and course sequences creating two tracks: an academic track for students seeking to transition into college programs and degrees, and a life skills track for students seeking general language development. ■ Increased presence of counselors visiting academic ESL classes to assist ESL student transition. ■ Improved process for ESL students seeking financial aid and scholarships. ■ Bi-lingual motivational and recruitment videos and PowerPoint presentations to explain registration and financial aid process.
Increasing the success of students who place into developmental reading and writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ New "Early Alert" programs piloted with developmental math and English faculty. ■ "Linked" courses between English 109 and Sociology. ■ Funding for a new English faculty member whose training has a specialization in reading. ■ Summer bridge program to assist developmental students the summer after graduation. ■ Two new brochures explaining the admissions process and methods for demonstrating math and language proficiency.
Implementing assessment of student learning in general education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ General education web resource for both faculty and students to assist in teaching and learning of the college's General Education Learning Outcomes. ■ Results of "Writing Artifacts" and shared results/recommendations from faculty (regarding student writing strengths and areas for improvement) for analysis. ■ Results of CAAP "scientific reasoning" tests for analysis. ■ Results of CAAP test for "reading" for analysis. ■ Recommendation to expand the college's General Education Learning Outcomes by adding "reading" and "information technology."

8R2 Performance Projections

As explained in 2P1, the college revises its goals and objectives every three years. The strategies and activities in support of these goals and objectives are developed on a yearly basis. A complete listing of the goals and objectives is found in 1C2 and 8C2. Activities in support of the goals and objectives are published in a document entitled *2006 Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Program Activities End-of-Year Progress Report*. In addition, the college is currently reviewing the process for selecting the next round of action projects as described in 8I1.

8R3 Comparisons of performance projections

In addition to participating in AQIP and the National Community College Benchmark Project, the college routinely benchmarks processes and strategies with other "like" institutions. The college does not benchmark with organizations outside of the education community.

8R4 Results of planning system effectiveness

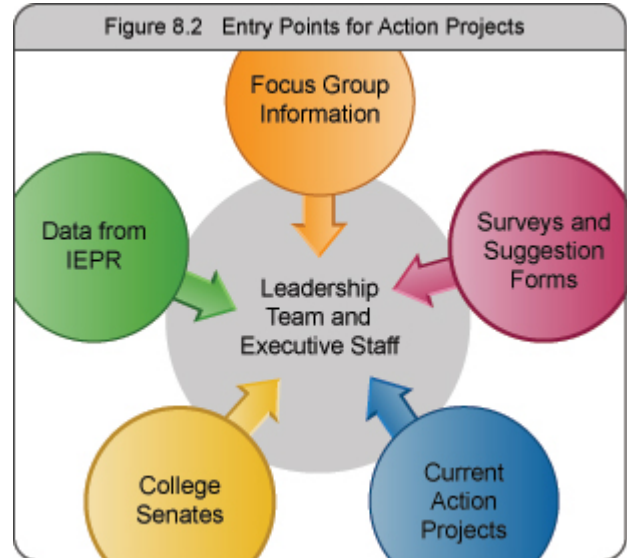
The evidence demonstrating the effectiveness for planning continuous improvement can be found in the high percentage of activities supporting college goals and objectives that are accomplished each year. During most years, over 95% of the proposed activities are accomplished. The high completion rate can be attributed directly to the planning process which requires a mid-year update. Administrators responsible for carrying out activities are held accountable and must report on progress. During those rare occasions when little has been accomplished, the

supervising vice president or dean intervenes to support and encourage activity completion. Additionally, as demonstrated in 8R1, the college participation in AQIP has generated multiple outcomes resulting in improved service to both students and staff.

Improvement (I)

8I1 *How CLC improves current processes and systems*

As an AQIP institution, the college is currently developing a new process by which action projects can be suggested, discussed, and implemented. The initial process used to select the college's current action projects resulted in some dissention about the criteria used in selecting the projects, and the methods used in gathering suggestions. As a result, a new process is currently being developed that combines multiple entry points for action projects and criteria by which projects will be selected. Figure 8.2 illustrates the multiple entry points from which the AQIP Leadership Team and Executive Staff receive input and suggestions:



The criteria by which new action projects will be selected are as follows:

- Is the project achievable, measurable, and beneficial to students and staff?
- Does the project address AQIP categories and areas of emphasis?
- Is the project highly rated by the college community?
- Can the project be completed with existing resources? If not, are other external funding sources possible?
- Are the projects equally dispersed across institutional divisions?

8I2 *How CLC targets and communicates improvement priorities*

Consistent with the college's decentralized and collaborative process for developing activities in support of its goals and objectives, targets for improvement are set by various stakeholders, including individual divisions/departments, the AQIP Leadership Team, the Executive Staff, and the Board of Trustees. A current listing of the major Action Projects is included in 8R1.

Results and improvement priorities are communicated in the following four ways:

1. Electronic Communication: E-mails and AQIP updates are provided to the college community on a regular basis.
2. Print Communication: Printed brochures describing the AQIP Action Projects and current results are distributed to all full-time employees during both the fall and spring mandatory orientation events. In addition, three times a year the goals, objectives, and activities progress and updates are distributed throughout the college and to the Board of Trustees.
3. Presentations: AQIP updates are provided to the Board of Trustees, the Executive Staff, the Governance Commission, the Educational Affairs Council, Faculty Senate, and the Monthly Administrator Meeting.
4. AQIP Leadership Team: Monthly meetings provide progress updates and identify challenges currently facing Action Project teams. Team members are responsible for communicating this information to their various stakeholders.