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October 3, 2013

James A Lorensen
President
Gogebic Community College
E-4946 Jackson Rd.
Ironwood, MI 49938

Dear President Lorensen:

Enclosed is a copy of Gogebic Community College's *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*. We ask that you formally acknowledge receipt of this report within the next two weeks, and provide us with any comments you wish to make about it. Your response will become part of your institution's permanent HLC file. Please email your response to AQIP@hlcommission.org.

Sincerely,

Mary L. Green
AQIP Process Administrator

SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

GOGEBIC COMMUNITY COLLEGE

October 3, 2013



**Academic
Quality Improvement
Program**

The Higher Learning Commission **NCA**

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ELEMENTS OF GOGEBIC COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S FEEDBACK REPORT

Welcome to the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*. This report provides AQIP's official response to an institution's *Systems Portfolio* by a team of peer reviewers (the Systems Appraisal Team). After the team independently reviews the institution's portfolio, it reaches consensus on essential elements of the institutional profile, strengths and opportunities for improvement by AQIP Category, and any significant issues related to accreditation. These are then presented in three sections of the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*: "Strategic Challenges Analysis," "AQIP Category Feedback," and "Accreditation Issues Analysis." These components are interrelated in defining context, evaluating institutional performance, surfacing critical issues or accreditation concerns, and assessing institutional performance. Ahead of these three areas, the team provides a "Reflective Introduction" followed closely by an "Executive Summary." The appraisal concludes with commentary on the overall quality of the report and advice on using the report. Each of these areas is overviewed below.

It is important to remember that the Systems Appraisal Team has only the institution's *Systems Portfolio* to guide its analysis of the institution's strengths and opportunities for improvement. Consequently the team's report may omit important strengths, particularly if the institution were too modest to stress them or if discussion or documentation of these areas in the *Systems Portfolio* were presented minimally. Similarly the team may point out areas of potential improvement that are already receiving wide-spread institutional attention. Indeed it is possible that some areas recommended for potential improvement have since become strengths rather than opportunities through the institution's ongoing efforts. Recall that the overarching goal of the Systems Appraisal Team is to provide an institution with the best possible advice for ongoing improvement.

The various sections of the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* can be described as follows:

Reflective Introduction & Executive Summary: In this first section of the *System's Appraisal Feedback Report*, the team provides a summative statement that reflects its broad understanding of the institution and the constituents served (Reflective Introduction), and also the team's overall judgment regarding the institution's current performance in relation to the nine AQIP Categories (Executive Summary). In the Executive Summary, the team considers such factors as: robustness of process design; utilization or deployment of processes; the existence of results, trends, and comparative data; the use of results data as feedback; and systematic processes for improvement of

the activities that each AQIP Category covers. Since institutions are complex, maturity levels may vary from one Category to another.

Strategic Challenges Analysis: Strategic challenges are those most closely related to an institution's ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning, and quality improvement goals. Teams formulate judgments related to strategic challenges and accreditation issues (discussed below) through careful analysis of the Organizational Overview included in the institution's Systems Portfolio and through the team's own feedback provided for each AQIP Category. These collected findings offer a framework for future improvement of processes and systems.

AQIP Category Feedback: The *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* addresses each AQIP Category by identifying (and also coding) strengths and opportunities for improvement. An **S** or **SS** identifies strengths, with the double letter signifying important achievements or capabilities upon which to build. Opportunities are designated by **O**, with **OO** indicating areas where attention may result in more significant improvement. Through comments, which are keyed to the institution's Systems Portfolio, the team offers brief analysis of each strength and opportunity. Organized by AQIP Category, and presenting the team's findings in detail, this section is often considered the heart of the *Feedback Report*.

Accreditation Issues Analysis: Accreditation issues are areas where an institution may have not yet provided sufficient evidence that it meets the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*. It is also possible that the evidence provided suggests to the team that the institution may have difficulties, whether at present or in the future, in satisfying the *Criteria*. As with strategic challenges, teams formulate judgments related to accreditation issues through close analysis of the entire Systems Portfolio with particular attention given to the evidence that the institution provides for satisfying the various core components of the *Criteria*. For purposes of consistency, AQIP instructs appraisal teams to identify any accreditation issue as a strategic challenge as well.

Quality of Report & Its Use: As with any institutional report, the *Systems Portfolio* should work to enhance the integrity and credibility of the organization by celebrating successes while also stating honestly those opportunities for improvement. The *Systems Portfolio* should therefore be transformational, and it should provide external peer reviewers insight as to how such transformation may occur through processes of continuous improvement. The AQIP Categories and the Criteria for Accreditation serve as the overarching measures for the institution's current state as well as its proposed future state. As such, it is imperative that the *Portfolio* be fully developed, that it adhere to

the prescribed format, and that it be thoroughly vetted for clarity and correctness. Though decisions about specific actions rest with each institution following this review, AQIP expects every institution to use its feedback to stimulate cycles of continual improvement and to inform future AQIP processes.

REFLECTIVE INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR GOGEBIC COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The following consensus statement is from the System Appraisal Team's review of the institution's *Systems Portfolio Overview* and its introductions to the nine AQIP Categories. The purpose of this reflective introduction is to highlight the team's broad understanding of the institution, its mission, and the constituents that it serves.

Gogebic Community College (GCC) is a comprehensive community college. Located in Ironwood, Michigan, Gogebic Community College currently serves 1,147 Students. The College serves 722 full-time students, of which 358 are male and 364 are female, and 425 part-time students, of which 110 are male and 315 are female. While not ethnically diverse, the student population closely mirrors that of the college service region. GCC has established quality improvement processes across the institution, recognizing that change is a journey. GCC participates in the Continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN) and has added an institutional researcher position in order to help better utilize data. GCC has been recognized by the Department of Education and the Aspen Institute as being among the top 10% of all community colleges in the nation for the past two consecutive years.

- *GCC has identified three key elements, including critical thinking, intellectual curiosity, and a commitment to lifelong learning, for all students.*
- *GCC has worked to more consistently define learning outcomes, use common measures, collect data, and plan improvements. It is attempting to align its processes more intentionally.*
- *GCC has initiated the idea of "embedded assessment" through a series of Action Projects.*
- *GCC is a key stakeholder in economic and community development. As a rural college, GCC recognizes the importance of external stakeholders on the overall health of the college. "Education and Enrichment opportunities" are both identified as integral to the college's success and sustainability and include the Entrepreneurial Center for Innovation and Development. GCC may not fully recognize its other distinctive objectives.*

- *GCC prides itself on building connections with its students. Tenured faculty teaches 78% of total contact hours and the student to faculty ratio is 17 to 1.*
- *GCC has faculty and employee unions. Information sharing is encouraged, and the annual Employee Satisfaction Survey may reveal results related to the organizational culture and climate.*
- *GCC has mechanisms in place to ensure cross-sections of the college are either directly involved and/or made aware of any proposed change to the institution. GCC has established committees and identified roles and responsibilities for committee members.*
- *GCC's operations are overseen by deans of instruction, students, business services, and the Director of Development. The organizational operation, based on its small size, is lean and each dean reports directly to the president.*
- *GCC believes that measuring effectiveness and data sharing are critical and identifies a closed-loop system that feeds data back into decision-making for improvement. Dashboards are currently in development.*
- *GCC describes itself as agile, responsive, and risk-taking and has made substantial improvements since its last Systems Appraisal.*
- *GCC values collaborative relationships to help expand its capacity. GCC considers these relationships institutional strengths but the results may merit clarification.*

The following are summary comments on each of the AQIP Categories crafted by the Appraisal Team to highlight GCC's achievements and to identify challenges yet to be met.

1. GCC is a maturing institution that focuses on student learning. Processes for determining objectives and learning outcomes at the program level appear aligned, but there is little evidence that outcomes are being assessed. The student success processes are often not directly measured but evaluated through indirect measures such as student engagement results and student self-perceptions. It appears that retention rates, graduation rates, transfer-out rates, successful completion rates, satisfaction survey results, and other indicators in GCC's dashboard are used to measure student learning. However, these do not directly measure specific program learning outcomes so that potential improvement opportunities can be identified. It is unclear how data that is collected is tied to specific outcomes. There is also no analysis of those results in the portfolio. An opportunity exists to describe how the results are analyzed, what measures of progress are maintained to demonstrate the institutions progress toward meeting its goals, and an

analysis of long-term trends. GCC may find it beneficial to develop more direct measures that may be used to improve processes and ensure that students have met the objectives of their program of study, making clear what results are being evaluated and which have been determined a priority.

2. GCC uses its strategic planning process to guide non-instructional activities. GCC is clearly well connected to its community and presents some impressive numbers to illustrate the community's involvement with the college and GCC's impact upon the community. An opportunity exists to build upon its non-instructional involvement and use data as part of a comprehensive improvement plan that includes clear goals, benchmarks, data analysis and specific improvements tied to the data analysis.
3. GCC provides a variety of quantitative and qualitative results to support student and stakeholder satisfaction. Comparative retention and completion data are welcome performance results, but the results reported are not tied directly to institutional improvement goals. The graduate survey results, by contrast, directly address this question, but lack of variance and reported participation rate make it difficult to ascertain whether these results can be meaningfully analyzed for improvement. If budget constraints prevent emergence of targeted programs, GCC may want to consider how to incorporate ways to encourage innovation in its process. GCC can create more systematic improvement efforts if it moves beyond retention and completion data and makes better use of the graduate and other surveys as instruments for Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs.
4. GCC demonstrates that it Values People through systematic processes that are clear and repeatable, designed to be proactive in promoting fair and equitable compensation and treatment, ethical conduct, opportunities for development and solicitation of feedback. Use of a deeper analysis of data from a broader set of sources and better coordination of activities across employee groups can aid GCC as it continues its quality journey to alignment and integration.
5. GCC has some processes in place to communicate with stakeholders but would benefit from inviting more participation from all stakeholders, both internal and external, in planning and decision making processes. The organizational structure appears hierarchical with little participation in decision making from a cross-section of the organization. The college lacks data that would assist in assessing the effectiveness of leading and communicating.

6. GCC has several systems in place to assess student, staff, and faculty needs. GCC is measuring student success and performance and is recognized by the Aspen Institute as a high performer. However, the results do not address issues, processes, and needs related to institutional operations. GCC has an opportunity to tie these processes and assessments into a comprehensive improvement plan with clear goals, analysis of results, and improvements more closely tied to data analysis. GCC might extend institutional effort and success related to measurement of student performance to include all institutional operations.
7. GCC has results related to information systems, student success and completion, and contract training services. GCC's Computer Services personnel ensure the integrity and timeliness of data collection systems. GCC also has created a capacity for comparison of data (7P5) that can aid data collection, analysis, and distribution, which can help the college drive performance improvement. However, few results relevant to Measuring Effectiveness are provided, and it is unclear that GCC analyzes or compares results for the purposes of identifying gaps and driving improvements.
8. GCC has inclusive planning processes and has identified key areas for planning and improvement. It relies on Action Projects to advance the institution. The Fiscal Priorities and Strategic Planning Committee is tasked with helping to identify priorities and ensure that the resources are in place to meet objectives. This committee has broad representation and openly communicates its decisions. GCC has also recently added an institutional researcher, which indicates their intent to continuously improve. An area of opportunity for the college is to ensure that data identification, data results, and data analysis are more clearly delineated throughout the planning process and are more visibly connected to specific needs and improvements. GCC has also identified the need to find more comparative data to benchmark itself; membership in the National Community College Benchmarking Project should help in this area.
9. GCC has embraced its role as economic, business and cultural leader in its small, rural community. However, as described elsewhere in this appraisal, these activities are often anecdotal and disconnected from a larger planning process. As GCC continues its quality journey, increased focus on planned outreach, measurement of the quality and results of collaborative activity, and establishment of more focused comparisons on collaborative relationships may prove useful.

Note: Strategic challenges and accreditation issues are discussed in detail in subsequent sections of the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*.

STRATEGIC CHALLENGES FOR GOGEBIC COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In conducting the Systems Appraisal, the Systems Appraisal Team attempted to identify the broader issues that would seem to present the greatest challenges and opportunities for the institution in the coming years. These areas are ones that the institution should address as it seeks to become the institution it wants to be. From these the institution may discover its immediate priorities as well as shaping strategies for long-term performance improvement. These items may also serve as the basis for future activities and projects that satisfy other AQIP requirements. The team also considered whether any of these challenges put the institution at risk of not meeting the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*. That portion of the team's work is presented later in this report.

Knowing that **Gogebic Community College** will discuss these strategic challenges, give priority to those it concludes are most critical, and take action promptly, the Systems Appraisal Team identified the following:

Throughout the portfolio, GCC presents results related to key areas, such as student retention and completion. However, it is not often clear how data are relevant to the appropriate category or how GCC analyzes results. GCC has an opportunity to clarify what methods are deployed systematically and regularly, what measures are collected and analyzed, and what linkages exist to mission and goals. GCC rightly notes the advantages of its small size with respect to responsiveness. While small size may be an asset, it does not substitute for processes and strategy.

Throughout many categories, GCC acknowledges that it has not compared itself to higher education institutions and other organizations. However, GCC has positioned itself to be able to utilize comparative data through IPEDS, the State of Michigan Activities Classification System, Perkins, and recent addition of the National Community College Benchmarking Project. In addition, the portfolio describes many processes in which GCC can use comparative data to measure its success. GCC has the opportunity to use these data to facilitate improvement.

GCC appears to lack formal comprehensive improvement processes. Specific examples and measures are often anecdotal and not tied to specific outcomes (i.e. volunteer hours, individual program results). While progress has been made in objective, quantifiable data collection, the link to analysis, utilization, and improvement remains lacking. This strategic issue has been an

ongoing challenge for GCC throughout its quality journey as noted in the 2005 Appraisal, the 2007 Reaffirmation Report, and the 2009 Appraisal.

GCC has pockets of assessment of student learning, but no apparent overall assessment plan for student learning. While GCC has clear student learning outcomes, GCC has the opportunity to focus increase use of direct student learning measures, integrated across the institution and systematically analyzed, which would provide support for continuous improvement.

AQIP CATEGORY FEEDBACK

In the following section, the Systems Appraisal Team delineates institutional strengths along with opportunities for improvement within the nine AQIP Categories. As explained above, the symbols used in this section are **SS** for outstanding strength, **S** for strength, **O** for opportunity for improvement, and **OO** for outstanding opportunity for improvement. The choice of symbol for each item represents the consensus evaluation of the team members and deserves the institution's thoughtful consideration.

Comments marked **SS** or **OO** may need immediate attention, either to ensure the institution preserves and maximizes the value of its greatest strengths, or to devote immediate attention to its greatest opportunities for improvement.

AQIP Category 1: Helping Students Learn: This category identifies the shared purpose of all higher education organizations and is accordingly the pivot of any institutional analysis. It focuses on the teaching-learning process within a formal instructional context, yet it also addresses how the entire institution contributes to helping students learn and overall student development. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to learning objectives, mission-driven student learning and development, intellectual climate, academic programs and courses, student preparation, key issues such as technology and diversity, program and course delivery, faculty and staff roles, teaching and learning effectiveness, course sequencing and scheduling, learning and co-curricular support, student assessment, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Gogebic Community College** for Category 1.

GCC is a maturing institution that focuses on student learning. Processes for determining objectives and learning outcomes at the program level appear aligned, but there is little evidence that outcomes are being assessed. The student success processes are often not directly measured but evaluated through indirect measures such as student engagement results and student self-perceptions. It appears that

retention rates, graduation rates, transfer-out rates, successful completion rates, satisfaction survey results, and other indicators in GCC's dashboard are used to measure student learning. However, these do not directly measure specific program learning outcomes so that potential improvement opportunities can be identified. It is unclear how data that is collected is tied to specific outcomes. There is also no analysis of those results in the portfolio. An opportunity exists to describe how the results are analyzed, what measures of progress are maintained to demonstrate the institutions progress toward meeting its goals, and an analysis of long-term trends. GCC may find it beneficial to develop more direct measures that may be used to improve processes and ensure that students have met the objectives of their program of study, making clear what results are being evaluated and which have been determined a priority.

1P1, S. GCC describes the use of a well-defined program review process to establish common student learning objectives. The process to determine common learning objectives is driven by both internal and external stakeholders. What remains unclear is how these are integrated into the learning objectives at the program level.

1P1, O. While GCC has defined six areas of general learning outcomes, it is unclear if it has targets for expected student achievement or has a plan to assess them on a regular basis.

1P2, SS. GCC has well-developed, comprehensive, program specific outcomes that are well monitored and reviewed. The college has identified several outcomes and skill subsets related to these outcomes.

1P3-4, O. Development of programs and courses involves faculty, transfer articulation, federal financial aid regulations, advisory boards, and accrediting bodies. While the college does appear to respond to the need for responsive programs, the descriptions do not describe a systematic, college-wide process but rather anecdotal examples of changes and/or responses.

1P5, O. After careful review of the information presented, it is unclear what process is utilized to determine the level of academic readiness necessary for program or course success. It is unclear if prerequisites and any placement tests are periodically reviewed to determine if they are still appropriately defined. Further, the enrollment exemption process is unclear.

1P6, O. To convey program requirements and expectations to students, GCC employs in-person and web resources, but it's unclear if learning objectives are communicated through these forums – or is it just general information about the program. Also, it is unclear if students are blocked from registering for classes for which they do not meet the required preparation, and if an appeals

process exists for those wishing to challenge prerequisites.

1P7, S. The Entering Student Survey sounds like a great way of connecting with students personally and getting much needed information that helps in advising and directing students to specific programs of study. The college exhibits a willingness to reach students early and often.

1P8, SS. GCC devotes a multitude of resources, including an Accelerated Learning Program (ALP), to its underprepared students. This demonstrates that they are up-to-date on different initiatives to help underprepared students. Offering other developmental classes that are discipline specific is also a useful strategy (CHEM 099). The Developmental Ed Committee keeps the college focused on this at-risk population.

1P9, OO. From the brief description in the portfolio, it is unclear how faculty detects differences in student learning styles and whether such action is expected. There is no systematic approach to helping train faculty in student learning styles and no real assessment of student learning styles.

1P10, S. GCC meets the needs of its student subgroups through tailored advising practices and sharing resources via college syllabi.

1P11, O. While the portfolio describes a variety of ways that student outcomes are promoted and measured, there is no discussion of a comprehensive plan to define, document, and communicate effective teaching and learning practices.

1P12, S. It's clear from the narrative that curriculum is designed by faculty. GCC has different ways in which developmental coursework is delivered: traditional format, directed study, and accelerated learning.

1P13, SS. GCC includes both internal and external stakeholders in the process to ensure programs and courses remain up to date and effective. A formal program review process includes a three-year cycle for existing programs and a shortened review cycle for new programs or certificates. This review process devotes attention to curriculum, cost effectiveness, challenges and outcomes. An area of opportunity may be to include data analysis to determine and monitor trends.

1P14, O. While the program review is in place, the process by which it is utilized to change or discontinue programs and courses is not described. An opportunity exists to more closely align program change and/or discontinuation with the program review process.

1P15, O. GCC uses several tools to determine support service needs, including surveys,

evaluations, assessment, and early student updates. However, a comprehensive process for determining learning support needs is not described. In addition, GCC's response doesn't address tutoring services, an important element to any college's learning enrichment programs. What constitutes "student success data" is also unclear.

1P16, S. GCC has created a clear crosswalk between co-curricular activities and general student learning outcomes.

1P17, S. Students in technical programs must demonstrate competency; writing is assessed using a thoughtful process in English classes; and students in programs like nursing and cosmetology take industry-standard exams.

1P18, O. There is a lack of evidence in the portfolio of a comprehensive process for assessing student learning. While faculty perform various assessment activities, GCC lacks a formal plan for the assessment of student learning. In other words, departmental efforts are not connected to a more comprehensive plan, which is a crucial component for any college's efforts to measure, document, and improve student learning.

1R1, O. GCC's more formal assessment procedures still appear in their infancy. The efforts of the English department represent one of the only consistent practices.

1R2-3, OO. It appears that retention rates, graduation rates, transfer-out rates, successful completion rates, satisfaction survey results, and other indicators in GCC's dashboard are used to measure student learning. However, these do not directly measure specific program learning outcomes so that potential improvement opportunities can be identified. There is also no analysis of those results in the portfolio. An opportunity exists to describe how the results are analyzed, what measures of progress are maintained to demonstrate the institutions progress toward meeting its goals, and an analysis of long-term trends.

1R4, S. Data provided include graduate performance at transfer institutions and performance on Michigan Technical Skills Attainment. Employer feedback regarding graduate knowledge and skills presents an opportunity.

1R5, OO. GCC presents only two sources of data for student support services. These two sources, the library and TRIO program, illustrate data collection procedures, but GCC offers no explanation for the results or how the results are used to inform decision-making. Opportunities exist to broaden measures to include all students, as well as describing how the results are

evaluated, and what measures of progress are maintained.

1R6, O. Appropriate measures of student learning are not compared with a defined cohort of peer institutions.

1I1, O. Embedded assessment, student course evaluations, and the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) are improvements that address student learning and career needs. The Action Project and ALP program illustrate the early stages of more formalized assessment practices and innovative ways to help developmental education students. However, it is unclear how these actions are part of a comprehensive improvement plan that includes clear objectives, the collection of relevant data and the adjustment, as appropriate, of actions based upon these results.

1I2, OO. While the college identifies the size of the institution, the faculty-to-student ratio, and the percentage of full-time faculty as key factors impacting the level of commitment to the organization, the portfolio's response doesn't fully address the question. For example, the college's response doesn't illustrate how the culture contributes to improvement. By simply citing its size, the college doesn't reveal how the culture reinforces contributions to the improvement of student learning.

AQIP Category 2: Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives: This category addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of the institution's major objectives that complement student learning and fulfill other portions of its mission. Depending on the institution's character, it examines the institution's processes and systems related to identification of other distinctive objectives, alignment of other distinctive objectives, faculty and staff roles, assessment and review of objectives, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Gogebic Community College** for Category 2.

GCC uses its strategic planning process to guide non-instructional activities. GCC is clearly well connected to its community and presents some impressive numbers to illustrate the community's involvement with the college and GCC's impact upon the community. An opportunity exists to build upon its non-instructional involvement and use data as part of a comprehensive improvement plan that includes clear goals, benchmarks, data analysis and specific improvements tied to the data analysis.

2P1, O. GCC's strategic planning process (8P1) guides nearly all collegiate operations, including non-instructional activities. However, the process of design and operation is not explained, and

the degree to which activities are systematic and widely integrated is not clear. Although the Entrepreneurial Center for Innovation and Development was established to provide customized training for area businesses, it is not clear if other non-operational processes are established to provide services to other stakeholders.

2P2, O. GCC utilizes a combination of formal and informal processes in determining non-instructional goals and objectives. The college does not address how it uses its informal mechanisms as part of a structured planning process. Another area of opportunity is to clarify key stakeholders.

2P3, S.

2P4, O. GCC describes an informal process to both assess and review the appropriateness and value of key objectives. The processes in the portfolio are informal and vague. Also, there is no indication how these processes are used to drive improvement.

2P5, S. Faculty and staff needs are determined as part of the strategic planning process.

2P6, O. While the use of the strategic planning process provides a framework for determining faculty and staff needs, it is not clear how needs are incorporated in the planning processes to adjust objectives and processes that support them.

2R1, OO. A variety of measures are listed in 2R1 but not all bullets seem relevant as they list events and activities, not ways of measuring activity. No mention was hinted at many of these items in 2P1-2P6, especially the ski areas and other functions that might be considered aspects of student support services (e.g., campus preview); thus, it is unclear if GCC has a unified, clear definition of its other distinctive objectives. GCC measures participation for a variety of activities as measures of performance. While participation is an indicator of perceived value, a broader set of measures focused on results and outcomes might aid GCC in its quality journey.

2R2, O. GCC has included a diverse list of performance results, but the results are not tied to distinct objectives. Also, the units of measure are not given for Figure 2-1, leaving the reader without context to understand the numbers.

2R3, O. GCC is aware that it needs to find comparative data for benchmarking itself against other institutions. While there appear to be some possible data sources, such as the Michigan Dashboard, under development, an opportunity exists for GCC to be more proactive in finding

other sources for benchmarking itself. In order to compare performance results, GCC might search for community colleges with programs similar to its ECID. Other comparable community colleges with foundations may have data on fundraising, scholarships, etc.

2R4, O. GCC has clear links to its community. These ties enhance the college's ability to reach students and other stakeholders. However, among these endeavors, there does not appear to be a strong connection to the strategic plan and institutional priorities. GCC might measure economic impact of these activities as possible indicators of their contribution to its region.

2I1, O. GCC has established the Entrepreneurial Center for Innovation and Development in recognition of the importance of community outreach and service. GCC is also engaged in a variety of other activities. However, it is unclear if these grew out of a process that included clear goals, data analysis, and benchmarking.

2I2, S. GCC cites formal and informal means to select processes for improvement of non-instructional objectives.

AQIP Category 3: Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs: This category examines how your institution works actively to understand student and other stakeholder needs. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student and stakeholder identification, student and stakeholder requirements, analysis of student and stakeholder needs, relationship building with students and stakeholders, complaint collection, analysis, and resolution, determining satisfaction of students and stakeholders, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Gogebic Community College** for Category 3.

GCC provides a variety of quantitative and qualitative results to support student and stakeholder satisfaction. Comparative retention and completion data are welcome performance results, but the results reported are not tied directly to institutional improvement goals. The graduate survey results, by contrast, directly address this question, but lack of variance and reported participation rate make it difficult to ascertain whether these results can be meaningfully analyzed for improvement. If budget constraints prevent emergence of targeted programs, GCC may want to consider how to incorporate ways to encourage innovation in its process. GCC can create more systematic improvement efforts if it moves beyond retention and completion data and makes better use of the graduate and other surveys as

instruments for Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs.

3P1, O. GCC utilizes both formal and informal data collection techniques to identify the changing needs of its student population. It is unclear if these techniques are part of a comprehensive planning process. The college may benefit from the use of a more formalized data collection process.

3P2, S. GCC utilizes a variety of methods, including personal advising practices, low student-to-teacher classroom ratios, and web services, to build and maintain relationships with both perspective and current students.

3P3, S. GCC lists several formal and informal practices to analyze the changing needs of its students. Some methods involve data collection and analysis and others reflect the college's emphasis on one-on-one communication. The college has also identified a formal means to develop new courses and programs based on stakeholders' needs.

3P4, S. This is a typical process for institutions of higher education.

3P5, S. GCC relies on a careful analysis of enrollment trends, industry feedback, advisory board input, and labor market data. A process that includes careful analysis of budget and college stakeholder input may support sustainable programs.

3P6, S. GCC has a formal process to handle student complaints and keeps written records of its actions. The college is also proactive in reaching out to students for input on anticipated policy changes.

3R1, S. GCC utilizes a variety of means to collect data on customer satisfaction, including student satisfaction surveys, course evaluations, graduation surveys, employer satisfaction surveys, and community outreach sessions.

3R2, S. GCC collects several key indicators of student success and satisfaction. These data are compared to the results of other Michigan community colleges. The data provided suggest that students are satisfied with their experience and achieve their goals. Retention rates also speak to an acceptable level of satisfaction.

3R3, OO. The testimony that GCC has provided is overwhelmingly positive, but it is also limited in its scope and seems anecdotal. The survey of non-returning students presents no historical or comparative data to provide context.

3R4, S. GCC utilizes both employer satisfaction surveys and clinical site evaluations as the primary mechanisms to determine stakeholder satisfaction. External stakeholders, particularly community businesses and partners, have praised the quality of GCC students. An analysis of stakeholder satisfaction in areas not tied directly to academics (contracted training, apprenticeship, and professional development) may be beneficial.

3R5, OO. While GCC reports a significant amount of hours volunteered by staff members across a number of community organizations, it is unclear if there is any intentional outreach to be sure those of central importance are included, rather than just individual staff members' interest. The advisory boards would be a much better indication of the college's performance in building relationships with key stakeholders.

3R6, O. GCC recognizes that comparative results of building relationships with key stakeholders is an area of opportunity. Specific attention to benchmarking against similar institutions may provide GCC valuable information. To aid in improvement efforts, GCC may want to employ an instrument that can provide comparative data and statistical gap analysis.

3I1, S. GCC's appointment of an Institutional Researcher is an important step forward, as the college can utilize the office's data to make decisions that could benefit students and other stakeholders. Other improvements include new equipment, enhanced resources for incoming students, and new efforts within the college's advising system.

3I2, O. GCC's culture is one of commitment and engagement; however, it is unclear how GCC reflects principles of AQIP in generating continuous improvement processes based on data collection and analysis.

AQIP Category 4: Valuing People: This category explores the institution's commitment to the development of its employees since the efforts of all faculty, staff, and administrators are required for institutional success. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to work and job environment; workforce needs; training initiatives; job competencies and characteristics; recruitment, hiring, and retention practices; work processes and activities; training and development; personnel evaluation; recognition, reward, compensation, and benefits; motivation factors; satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The

Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Gogebic Community College** for Category 4.

GCC demonstrates that it Values People through systematic processes that are clear and repeatable, designed to be proactive in promoting fair and equitable compensation and treatment, ethical conduct, opportunities for development and solicitation of feedback. Use of a deeper analysis of data from a broader set of sources and better coordination of activities across employee groups can aid GCC as it continues its quality journey to alignment and integration.

4P1, S. Identification of the specific credentials, skills, and values required for GCC positions includes benchmarking information from similar positions at other community colleges as well as regulatory and professional expectations.

4P2, S. GCC posts all positions both internally and externally, while adhering to contractual agreements related to posting as well as screening processes to ensure that only qualified candidates receive interviews. GCC's hiring teams include a cross-section of college representatives, including some who will work directly with the applicant. The team makes a hiring recommendation to the appropriate dean.

4P3, S. GCC has a structured approach to its hiring processes. As a result of an AQIP Action Project, the college's Human Resources office has implemented a hiring and selection process that all search teams must follow. Competitive compensation, professional growth opportunities, communication, and staff cohesiveness are each credited for the minimal staff turnover enjoyed by GCC, but a formal retention process is not in place. Next steps for GCC might include clarification of the hiring and retention process for adjunct employees.

4P4, S. A formal Faculty Mentoring Program and Faculty Handbook are among GCC's strengths. Further, mandatory faculty orientation that includes adjunct faculty strengthens GCC's commitment to Valuing People. GCC has an opportunity to expand orientation and mentoring programs to all employees.

4P5, S. GCC requires early retirement notification to provide time to find an adequate replacement. GCC begins the search process early so new hires can be trained by outgoing employees when possible. Many staff undergo cross-training to perform job duties in other areas. The addition of a Human Resources officer allows GCC to more closely monitor search processes, position changes, and retirements. GCC might also want to include how it plans to

address unanticipated changes due to addition/deletion of programs or a loss of funding sources.

4P6, O. GCC describes a process-oriented system of job classification but no examples are provided and it is unclear how this fits into the overall organizational productivity. GCC describes a process whereby the supervisor takes a primary role in the assignment of new tasks to staff members. Areas of opportunity for GCC would include clarification as to how the new task is initially identified and assigned, and the process utilized to minimize impact on employee workload.

4P7, S. GCC recognizes that ethical practices need to permeate all operations including integrity in academics, finances, personnel, etc. GCC's Board of Trustees has approved an ethics policy. The college uses an anonymous reporting system so employees can safely report breaches related to the college's ethical behavior policy. GCC may wish to clarify how annual updates are communicated with staff and what processes are followed if issues of ethical misconduct occur.

4P8, S. Training needs at GCC are identified through both a formal and informal process. Professional development opportunities are available to staff at all levels of the college. A primary source of internal training is the Center for Faculty & Staff Development. GCC has a process for determining the training needs of faculty, including student feedback, portfolios and regular reviews with their dean. Professional development opportunities for faculty and staff members are commonly identified during annual reviews. To address an area of opportunity, GCC could clarify the topic selection process within the Center for Faculty and Staff Development.

4P9, O. Training opportunities are supported by the College Board. The Center for Faculty & Staff Development provides training and staff attend professional conferences. The opportunity exists to further clarify the response provided in 4P9. As written, it appears GCC relies upon staff and faculty volunteers to provide the training at the Center for Faculty and Staff Development. From the information presented, the process to identify training topics and establish a priority training schedule is unclear. Further, the informal process of training notification may unintentionally limit the number of participants. The college may benefit from a more formal staff development process.

4P10, O. GCC's faculty and staff collective bargaining agreements guide its personnel evaluation process. However, the evaluation and development processes could be more closely aligned to the

college's mission and goals. The completion of the personnel evaluation process for non-instructional employees is an additional area of opportunity.

4P11, S. GCC's contract negotiations, facilitated by its three unions, help determine benefit and compensation packages. The college has employed outside consultants to review its job descriptions and compensation packages. GCC holds an annual employee recognition ceremony to honor employees for years of service and outstanding performance.

4P12, O. Annual employee satisfaction survey, rounding, and other processes provide awareness to faculty, staff and administrators. It is unclear how these processes are used to systematically determine key issues related to the motivation of faculty, staff, and administrators. An opportunity exists to develop a more structured process that includes some confidential venues to measure key issues.

4P13, S. An employee satisfaction survey and rounding process gather feedback on employee satisfaction. GCC has developed a comprehensive set of crisis management procedures, which are documented in the Gogebic Community College Emergency Response Guide. The college's anti-bullying and intimidations policy illustrates its commitment to a civil workplace where employees treat each other with respect.

4R1-2, O. An area of opportunity for GCC is to expand the number of sources utilized in collecting measure of valuing people. With the exception of an annual Employee Satisfaction Survey (ESS), no other measures are reviewed and it is unclear how the data are analyzed or tracked consistently. In an attempt to better understand the decline in satisfaction in figure 4.3, GCC can further refine the ESS questions.

4R3, OO. While GCC utilizes course evaluations, such feedback is not a complete measure of productivity and effectiveness for faculty, staff, and administrators. Further, the data presented (figures 4.7 - 4.12) does not identify the percentage of student feedback forms returned, limiting the value of the data presented. A final area of opportunity is to expand the scope of the data collected to include other key stakeholders (employers, transfer colleges, professional seminars, contract training, etc.).

4R4, O. GCC acknowledges that it is not comparing performance results against other higher education institutions. Peers might include other Michigan community colleges, NCCBP participants, and IPEDS comparison group.

4I1, SS. GCC has made improvements in this category. A Human Resource Director was hired, data from the Employee Satisfaction Survey is used to identify areas of concern and satisfaction, and a college security plan was developed. The college's employee satisfaction survey, rounding process, and campus safety plan, provide evidence that the college has made improvements related to Category Four.

4I2, O. GCC has made some significant improvements in this area that provide the potential for the development of comprehensive processes and data collection to monitor progress in this area, such as the rounding process. An area of opportunity exists to further clarify the mechanisms utilized by GCC to improve performance in Valuing People. The culture seems to value feedback, but the infrastructure doesn't have a mechanism for formalizing it.

AQIP Category 5: Leading and Communicating: This category addresses how the institution's leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide planning, decision-making, seeking future opportunities, and building and sustaining a learning environment. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to leading activities, communicating activities, alignment of leadership system practices, institutional values and expectations, direction-setting, use of data, analysis of results, leadership development and sharing, succession planning, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Gogebic Community College** for Category 5.

GCC has some processes in place to communicate with stakeholders but would benefit from inviting more participation from all stakeholders, both internal and external, in planning and decision making processes. The organizational structure appears hierarchical with little participation in decision making from a cross-section of the organization. The college lacks data that would assist in assessing the effectiveness of leading and communicating.

5P1, S. GCC has an inclusive process for determining mission, vision, and values. The college uses regular systematic review with broad stakeholder inclusion to define and review mission and values. The use of a five-year cycle ensures the mission and values are regularly reviewed and updated.

5P2, S. GCC has well-established and proactive processes to help ensure alignment of college direction and goals with the mission, vision and values of the institution. Processes include

meetings of the Board of Trustees, the Strategic and Fiscal Planning Committee, and Curriculum Committee. “Growing the College Business Smartly” is noted as a positive initiative in the area of Leading and Communicating.

5P3, O. While GCC’s Master Plan was developed with input from a cross-sectional team and appears to take into account internal and external issues, there is no clear explanation how the Master Plan incorporates the needs and expectations of students and key stakeholder groups. The opportunity exists for GCC to clarify both the process described in Figure 5.1 and the unique role of key stakeholders in the overall governance process.

5P4, O. The portfolio describes who has responsibility for decision-making but does not discuss the process or criteria for making decisions or gathering input. While several informal means of identifying opportunities for programs and services were identified in the narrative, GCC has an opportunity to create a more comprehensive process that expands the influence of faculty and staff expertise and clearly identifies a decision-making process that seeks future opportunities while enhancing a strong focus on students and learning.

5P5-6, O. While GCC has a well-defined governance and strategic planning process, it is unclear how often the college evaluates its achievements and performance against its institutional goals and expectations to identify gaps and/or opportunities for improvement. GCC has an opportunity to broaden the participation of all stakeholders and to use data to drive improvement.

5P7-8, S. Results from the Employee Satisfaction Survey indicate that a variety of communication methods serve the needs of the college staff. Information is communicated in person, at staff meetings, and through email. The Employee Satisfaction Survey suggests that communication is successful and that college staff has the necessary resources to accomplish its work.

5P9, SS. GCC provides opportunity for faculty and staff to develop their professional and leadership skills. Financial support is offered for conference attendance, as well as professional development offerings through the Entrepreneurial Center for Innovation and Development, and through the Center for Faculty Development. The college’s institutional documents, commitment to professional development, minutes from committee meetings, and feedback through the Employee Satisfaction Survey all contribute to high expectations and performance.

5P10, O. GCC has an opportunity to incorporate a leadership development process to promote

development of internal candidates for senior leadership positions.

5R1-3, O. GCC may wish to incorporate performance measures of Leading and Communicating that address leadership processes, development, and communication. The employee satisfaction survey provides limited feedback regarding Leading and Communicating. Lack of a performance measure that can be used for comparison prevents GCC from effectively benchmarking. GCC has identified this area as a potential Action Project.

5I1, S. GCC shows that several significant improvements have been made in this area. The Rounding Process and Employee Satisfaction Survey provide employees with opportunities for direct and indirect communication.

5I2, O. It is unclear how culture and infrastructure are integrated into a comprehensive improvement plan with targets and indicators. GCC has the opportunity to ensure that the processes they have put into place are both sustainable and measurable.

AQIP Category 6: Supporting Institutional Operations: This category addresses the variety of institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to student support, administrative support, identification of needs, contribution to student learning and accomplishing other distinctive objectives, day-to-day operations, use of data, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Gogebic Community College** for Category 6.

GCC has several systems in place to assess student, staff, and faculty needs. GCC is measuring student success and performance and is recognized by the Aspen Institute as a high performer. However, the results do not address issues, processes, and needs related to institutional operations. GCC has an opportunity to tie these processes and assessments into a comprehensive improvement plan with clear goals, analysis of results, and improvements more closely tied to data analysis. GCC might extend institutional effort and success related to measurement of student performance to include all institutional operations.

6P1, S. GCC describes a comprehensive process to both identify and support the needs of students and prospective students by administering the Entering Student Survey during orientation and Early Student Update survey during the third and fourth weeks of every semester.

Other processes include assessment of writing and math skills as well as admission details. GCC encourages faculty to identify at-risk students for early intervention. GCC monitors student enrollment forecasts, achievement needs, and state and national trends to ensure that student support needs are met. GCC might broaden its needs assessment to other groups to further explore the support services for non-student stakeholders.

6P2, O. The rounding and budgeting processes help identify administrative support needs. An opportunity exists to develop a more comprehensive process that includes long-term goals, short-term realities, and emerging needs.

6P3, SS. GCC uses the Facilities, Safety, and Security Committee to assess safety needs and implement changes. The college has an emergency response guide, which is distributed to all personnel and local law enforcement. Emergency response pendants are available. AED units are located across campus.

6P4, O. GCC relies upon the executive team, AQIP action committees, and internal governance groups to ensure the college is fulfilling the task of Supporting Institutional Operations. However, the process for managing these operations is unclear. The portfolio doesn't indicate the coordination among the groups, and if an overall plan with benchmarks and data collection exists.

6P5, O. GCC collects a variety of data, but it is unclear how these are used as part of a comprehensive improvement plan for supporting institutional operations. GCC may wish to consider how various stakeholder groups can communicate systematically with one another about best practices, troubleshooting, and efforts to encourage innovation and empowerment that support continual effectiveness of all institutional operations.

6R1-2, O. While GCC does collect performance results for its institutional operations, how the results are used to drive improvement isn't clear. Figure 6-1 provides valuable data but it does not seem related to institutional operations.

6R3, O. The portfolio provides information on fiscal soundness, enrollment, etc., but it is unclear how these items measure administrative support services or drive improvement. Measures of efficiency and effectiveness related to fiscal condition, physical plant operation, information systems performance, and other indicators may be helpful.

6R4, O. It is not clear how GCC uses data to implement strategies. Despite the portfolio's repeated mention of the employee satisfaction survey, the college doesn't indicate how these

results have been used for institutional improvement. GCC has the opportunity to better utilize data to inform strategic planning, academic planning, etc.

6R5, O. GCC is to be commended for being recognized by the Aspen Institute as one of the nation's leading community colleges. It is unclear what measures were recognized by the Aspen Institute as representing good performance of GCC's processes for supporting institutional operations. GCC has an opportunity to provide both results and benchmarking comparisons from like-institutions to support the statements contained in this response.

6I1, O. The portfolio lists several significant improvements but it is unclear if those initiatives were the result of a comprehensive process. Connecting the improvements listed to identifiable goals and data analysis would provide the reader with an understanding of how these achievements grew out of a continual quality process.

6I2, O. Even though GCC's small size is an asset, GCC has the opportunity to better formalize processes and set targets for improvement performance based on data.

AQIP Category 7: Measuring Effectiveness: This category examines how the institution collects, analyzes, and uses information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to collection, storage, management, and use of information and data both at the institutional and departmental/unit levels. It considers institutional measures of effectiveness; information and data alignment with institutional needs and directions; comparative information and data; analysis of information and data; effectiveness of information system and processes; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Gogebic Community College** for Category 7.

GCC has results related to information systems, student success and completion, and contract training services. GCC's Computer Services personnel ensure the integrity and timeliness of data collection systems. GCC also has created a capacity for comparison of data (7P5) that can aid data collection, analysis, and distribution, which can help the college drive performance improvement. However, few results relevant to Measuring Effectiveness are provided, and it is unclear that GCC analyzes or compares results for the purposes of identifying gaps and driving improvements.

7P1-2, O. GCC describes the types of data collected and who might use the data, but there is no

discussion of a comprehensive system to ensure that data collected is aligned to a broader strategy or institutional plan. Unclear is whether the end user is trained in the scope of data available, the data collection programs, and the process whereby they may request data.

7P3, S. Data collection is determined on the needs of departments and as identified in the program review process. Protocols for data storage are assumed (7P7).

7P4, O. GCC employs a variety of methods to analyze data at the institutional level, including analysis of enrollment trends and cost effectiveness. GCC does not explain a process for institutional data analysis. From the brief description in the portfolio, it is unclear how data are tied to specific goals and outcomes.

7P5, S. GCC has positioned itself to be able to utilize comparative data through IPEDS, the State of Michigan Activities Classification System, Perkins, and the recent addition of the Community College Benchmarking Project. Several college programs use data from accreditors to compare program graduates' performance to other accredited programs.

7P6, O. GCC describes an informal alignment process that may be a consequence of its small size. GCC indicates that feedback to determine if students are meeting stated course and program objectives is important. However, it is unclear how such data are analyzed, discussed among instructors, and used to identify and make improvements. How data are aligned for non-instructional programs or services is not addressed.

7P7, S. To support the institution, GCC has created appropriate systems to address information system needs, accuracy, security, reliability, and replacement. Backup systems are in place to ensure data integrity. Access to data is limited by job duties, the administrative and academic networks are separate, and validation is required to access private information.

7R1, O. Event logs are maintained and monitored daily. Employees are trained regularly as part of the planning and evaluation process. However, it is unclear how these examples are relevant to Measuring Effectiveness.

7R2, OO. The portfolio lists general accomplishments but no real data tied to GCC's Measurement systems. The college has an opportunity to present longitudinal information showing performance along with targets related to its institutional mission and goals. The measures described in the portfolio appear somewhat anecdotal instead of systematic. Thus, it is unclear how areas needing improvement can be identified if expected levels of achievement are

not determined and monitored.

7R3, O. GCC does not collect comparative data in this area. The college recognizes that comparative data for this category provides an opportunity for improvement. Perhaps involvement with the National Community College Benchmarking Project will help develop comparative data collection methodologies.

7I1, O. While the improvements listed are important, it's not clear how they are the results of the processes described earlier in this section. The Action Project is significant and it looks hopeful that it will generate a compelling data-driven argument about the usefulness of this process and the subsequent results and improvements.

7I2, O. GCC recognizes that its small size and flat organizational structure can provide effective cross-institutional communication when deployed intentionally and systematically. Size alone, however, is not an improvement related to Measuring Effectiveness. It is unclear how the Cabinet selects its institutional performance measures. GCC has an opportunity to demonstrate that its systems and processes create an infrastructure in which this occurs.

AQIP Category 8: Planning Continuous Improvement: This category examines the institution's planning processes and how strategies and action plans are helping to achieve the institution's mission and vision. It examines coordination and alignment of strategies and action plans; measures and performance projections; resource needs; faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities; analysis of performance projections and results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Gogebic Community College** for Category 8.

GCC has inclusive planning processes and has identified key areas for planning and improvement. It relies on Action Projects to advance the institution. The Fiscal Priorities and Strategic Planning Committee is tasked with helping to identify priorities and ensure that the resources are in place to meet objectives. This committee has broad representation and openly communicates its decisions. GCC has also recently added an institutional researcher, which indicates their intent to continuously improve. An area of opportunity for the college is to ensure that data identification, data results, and data analysis are more clearly delineated throughout the planning process and are more visibly connected to specific needs and improvements. GCC has also identified the need to find more comparative data to benchmark itself;

membership in the National Community College Benchmarking Project should help in this area.

8P1-2, S. GCC's key planning processes include strategic and financial planning, a five-year formal review process, and the establishment of annual goals and strategies. Action Projects are selected and developed to support specific areas of the College and thereby supplement the strategic planning process. The process involves input from both internal and external stakeholders and also provides opportunities for the Strategic and Fiscal Planning Committee to be proactive and anticipate future needs. Annual goals are determined using input from staff and other stakeholders and are then assigned to responsible parties for implementation.

8P3, O. The process illustrated in the flowchart presents an effective planning process. The brief portfolio description and chart do not make it clear, however, who oversees the selection of specific projects and action plans. GCC has the opportunity to add a closing-the-loop step to ensure that the work of the pilot projects is not lost. GCC may also want to consider how it utilizes the AQIP process as part of its mechanism for establishing continuous improvement strategies.

8P4-5, O. GCC has a mature process to ensure coordination and alignment of planning across the institution. While establishment of structures and principles can promote a goal of alignment and coordination, it is not clear how structures and principles are used to define objectives, select measures, and set performance targets. GCC has an opportunity to enhance alignment and coordination through increased stakeholder involvement, encouraging active collaboration among and within different internal departments and operational areas and removing hierarchical constraints – all AQIP principles for high performing institutions.

8P6, O. GCC has formed a representative Fiscal and Strategic Planning Committee responsible for investigating the viability of institutional changes prior to the expenditure of funds. While this group can effectively link resource and revenue forecasts to Action Projects, once selected, it is not clear how GCC links strategy selection and actions plans (8P-4-5).

8P7, S. GCC's planning process seeks to minimize risk while preserving creativity and responsiveness to stakeholders. GCC utilizes the Fiscal Priorities and Strategic Planning Committee, outside partnerships, and feasibility studies to carefully consider risk.

8P8, O. GCC discusses how it supports professional development of staff, faculty and administrators; however, there is limited definition of the process used to define how professional

development needs are identified, prioritized or the criteria used to determine whose request is funded.

8R1, O. GCC indicates that student learning, marketing and enrollment management, and fiscal sustainability are areas of great importance to the institution's effectiveness. However, what measures of enrollment management are collected and analyzed to ensure GCC remains on target are unclear (note: Figure 6-1 listed data collected regarding student learning). For example, are enrollment numbers continually monitored given that even small fluctuations can have a dramatic effect on budget?

8R2-3, O. GCC has identified strategies and targets, and developed actions plans to support student success efforts without clearly defining the terms of its success. Without a frame of reference, the results presented are statistical snapshots. The college has the opportunity to more clearly tie data to performance regarding targets and projections.

8R4, O. GCC has stated that data are not available to compare with like institutions.

8R5, O. The results listed for this area indicate success in specific areas, but there is little evidence that GCC's Planning for Continuous Improvement is effective.

8I1, S. GCC has hired an institutional researcher and recognizes the key role of data in decision-making.

8I2, O. The portfolio discusses a supportive environment at GCC but no real detail is included.

AQIP Category 9: Building Collaborative Relationships: This category examines your institution's relationships – current and potential – to analyze how they contribute to the institution's accomplishing its mission. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to identification of key internal and external collaborative relationships; alignment of key collaborative relationships; relationship creation, prioritization, building; needs identification; internal relationships; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Gogebic Community College** for Category 9.

GCC has embraced its role as economic, business and cultural leader in its small, rural community. However, as described elsewhere in this appraisal, these activities are often anecdotal and disconnected from a larger planning process. As GCC continues its quality journey, increased focus on planned

outreach, measurement of the quality and results of collaborative activity, and establishment of more focused comparisons on collaborative relationships may prove useful.

9P1-2, S. Representatives of GCC from all levels of the institution reach out to primary sources of prospective students on a regular basis. Area employers and employees participate on college advisory boards and program review committees. Articulation agreements are established with the high school and students have an opportunity to enroll in dual-credit courses. They also have long-standing, strong relationships with transfer institutions.

9P3, O. GCC partners with several agencies to provide services to students and utilizes community support in a way that appears to utilize resources responsibly. However, it is unclear if the relationships occur naturally out of mutual necessity or through a formal process. What's missing is a plan or process that keeps track of and coordinates all efforts.

9P4, S. This is a typical process for institutions of higher education.

9P5-6, O. The portfolio describes a college that is well connected to its community and values ongoing communication. However, a systematic process of cultivation, monitoring and assessment, and deployment is not evident. GCC has an opportunity to clarify the process followed to ensure that partnerships support the mission, vision and values of the organization.

9P7, S. GCC promotes a collegial environment predicated on relationship building, stakeholder participation, and open communication channels for faculty, staff and students.

9R1, O. GCC identifies several measures used to gather data. GCC has the opportunity to more clearly define each survey's measurements. The measures used do not seem to align with building relationships. Some of the measures focus on student support and satisfaction and are not relevant to collaboration. Additionally, the informal feedback provided from college staff participating in the community can be more systematically collected and analyzed to better support collaborative relationships.

9R2, S. GCC provides longitudinal results that indicate collaborative and supporting relationships among employees and their supervisors. GCC also demonstrates strong external relationships in its clinical relationships, creation of a state of the art welding program in partnerships with area high schools, and its ski area management program. GCC might benefit by measuring the effects of external partnerships.

9R3, O. GCC relies on its size and uniqueness as key reasons for its decision to not compare to like institutions or organizations outside of higher education. Although the college cannot compare or benchmark relationships unique to the college, there is an opportunity to compare like relationships such as articulation agreements, transfer opportunities, etc.

9I1, O. No real concrete improvements in this area are mentioned in the portfolio. GCC has the opportunity to create systematic and comprehensive processes that will lead to significant improvements.

9I2, O. Additional information related to culture and infrastructure is needed in this response.

ACCREDITATION ISSUES GOGEBIC COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The following section identifies any areas in the judgment of the Systems Appraisal Team where the institution either has not provided sufficient evidence that it currently meets the Commission’s *Criteria for Accreditation* (and the core components therein) or that it may face difficulty in meeting the *Criteria* and core components in the future. Identification of any such deficiencies as part of the Systems Appraisal process affords the institution the opportunity to remedy the problem prior to Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

No accreditation issues noted by team.

| Criterion 1: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio | Core Component | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----|----|----|----|
| | 1A | 1B | 1C | 1D | |
| Strong, clear, and well-presented. | | | x | x | |
| Adequate but could be improved. | x | x | | | |
| Unclear or incomplete. | | | | | |
| Criterion 2: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio | Core Component | | | | |
| | 2A | 2B | 2C | 2D | 2E |
| Strong, clear, and well-presented. | x | | x | | |
| Adequate but could be improved. | | x | | x | x |
| Unclear or incomplete. | | | | | |
| Criterion 3: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio | Core Component | | | | |
| | 3A | 3B | 3C | 3D | 3E |
| Strong, clear, and well-presented. | x | | | | x |

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----|----|----|--|
| Adequate but could be improved. | | x | x | x | |
| Unclear or incomplete. | | | | | |
| Criterion 4: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio | Core Component | | | | |
| | 4A | 4B | 4C | | |
| Strong, clear, and well-presented. | x | | x | | |
| Adequate but could be improved. | | x | | | |
| Unclear or incomplete. | | | | | |
| Criterion 5: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio | Core Component | | | | |
| | 5A | 5B | 5C | 5D | |
| Strong, clear, and well-presented. | | x | | | |
| Adequate but could be improved. | x | | x | x | |
| Unclear or incomplete. | | | | | |

1.A *The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations (5P1 & 5P2).*

Adequate but could be improved

- The mission statement for Gogebic Community College was developed by a cross-sectional group of individuals representing every employee group as well as members of the Board of Trustees.
- Board of Trustee meetings include looking at ways of "Growing the College Business Smartly" a part of a shared vision that guides the institution's operation.
- Operationally, GCC is highly integrated and no one area operates completely independently.

1.B. *The mission is articulated publicly (5P3 & 5P8).*

Adequate but could be improved.

- GCC's five year master plan (updated in 2012), is posted on GCC's webpage under the heading of Transparency Reporting. This document clearly articulates GCC's values, mission, and purposes, as well as the nature, scope, and constituents of the programs and services provided.
- GCC's Vision, Values, and Mission statements are displayed on their website for the public to view.

- GCC provides a survey embedded on their website allowing for public comment regarding the college and the services we provide.

1.C. *The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society (1P4 & 1P10).*

Strong, clear and well-presented

- GCC's mission, vision, and goals indicate a respect for the diversity of its student population and larger community.
- GCC provides special accommodation for identified students as well as a comprehensive support services for the general population including student advising, tutoring, and career planning among others.
- GCC's learning outcomes emphasize the importance of diversity and consideration of opposing views.

1.D. *The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good (3P3 & 3P5).*

Strong, clear, well-presented

- GCC's mission is developed with input from the community and grows out of its public mission as a state institution.
- GCC is well connected to its community and integral to the financial health and well-being of the community. (GCC took over operation of the local ski facility, for example, when its threatened closure represented a significant financial hardship to the community).
- The Fiscal and Strategic Planning Committee reviews labor market data, advisory committee reports, community needs, faculty expertise, potential partnerships, and available resources to make decisions.

2.A. *The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows fair and ethical policies and processes for its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff (4P7).*

Strong, clear, well-presented.

- GCC has established a set of value principles that include a statement of fiscal integrity (8P4). Gogebic Community College will maintain its financial integrity (as measured by audit and financial reporting, operate within a structurally balanced budget, maintain a fund balance approximately equal to 10% of budget, managed enrollment/results).
- GCC provides staff training and services on ethical behavior as it relates to academic integrity, plagiarism, cheating, and copyright laws. GCC has an academic honesty policy that is incorporated into syllabi and discussed with students at the beginning of each semester.
- GCC operates and promotes integrity through its finances, academic curriculum, personnel procedures, and the auxiliary outreach and the board policies administered by the Board of Trustees and the college administration.

2.B. *The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships (1P6).*

Adequate, but could be improved

- The college catalog and website state the required preparation and learning objectives for each offering.
- All students must meet face-to-face with their academic advisor prior to registration each semester.
- Section 1 P6 does not clearly state where GCC presents information on costs, control, or accreditation. It is assumed such information is included in GCC's web and catalog materials.

2.C. *The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity (5P2).*

Strong, clear, well-presented

- The Board of Trustees (B.O.T.) is a publicly elected board.
- Monthly B.O.T. meetings are held in accordance with open meeting law and allow for public comment.

- While the B.O.T. has the ultimate decision making authority for the college, its activities are generally limited to setting policy, adopting budgets, and acting on ultimate hiring recommendations.

2.D. *The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning (1P1).*

Adequate, but could be improved.

- Faculty has the academic freedom to facilitate courses in a manner that best meets the needs of students. It is the responsibility of the faculty to meet the needs of its students and it is the responsibility of the Dean of Instruction to ensure the faculty have the training and support systems available to perform at the highest level (1P9).
- GCC expresses opinions that reflect tolerance of diverse philosophies and approaches to life.
- GCC's general learning outcomes include Information Literacy. One of the tenants of that goal is that a student will "Accept free expression of ideas, beliefs, and opinions (1P1)."

2.E. *The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly (4P7).*

Adequate but could be improved

- GCC's board has adopted an ethics policy that applies to all faculty, staff, administration and students.
- GCC's general and program-specific goals include outcomes related to applying knowledge responsibly and ethically.
- GCC counsels students on ethical behavior as it relates to academic integrity, plagiarism, cheating, and copyright laws.

2.E. *The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly (1P1).*

Adequate, but could be improved.

- GCC provides professional development resources and conducts faculty evaluations to ensure instructors remain current in their respective areas.

- The Center for Faculty and Staff Development provides programming to encourage effective teaching and learning habits.
- Program review occurs on a two to three year cycle for occupational and transfer programs. The portfolio more clearly addresses direct measures of student learning.

3.A. *The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education (1P4 & 1P12).*

Strong, clear, well-presented

- GCC performs program reviews, reviews transfer credits and conducts meetings with advisory boards to design and improve its academic programs.
- The Academic Review Process, Program Advisory Committees and faculty each play an integral role in maintaining a high level of academic integrity.
- All degree offerings and delivery systems are reviewed by faculty in instructional divisions, the Dean of Instruction, the Curriculum Committee, and the Transfer Coordinator to ensure they are at the appropriate educational level.

3.B. *The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs (1P1 & 1P2).*

Adequate but could be improved.

- The specific General Education requirements for each of these degree options is outlined in our current College Catalog and are an extension of GCC's Vision, Values, Mission, and Purposes.
- Specific program learning objectives are determined by division chairs and faculty within their respective instructional divisions with additional input from advisory committees where appropriate. Program learning objectives are approved by the Curriculum Committee when a program is initiated and reviewed periodically.
- The general and program specific learning outcomes respect diversity, differences of opinion and intellectual inquiry

3.C. *The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services (4P2 & 4P10).*

Adequate but could be improved.

- GCC has position descriptions and uses a team interview approach.
- GCC's hiring and evaluation processes are guided by state regulations and collective bargaining agreements.
- Figure 4-1 clearly shows that student evaluations, administrative review, peer review, and instructional outcomes drive the faculty development and review process.

3.D. *The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching (1P7 & 1P15).*

Adequate but could be improved.

- High school visits, career exploration courses, referrals, Freshman Seminar, and course advising are all ways GCC helps students select programs of study that match their needs, interests, and abilities. Students take interest inventories and meet with the Career Counselor to discuss the results.
- Entering student survey and the entry assessment process (COMPASS) are used to identify students' needs and goals.
- GCC could benefit by more clearly describing evidence for tutoring and other services.

3.E. *The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment (1P16).*

Strong, clear, well-presented

- GCC has linked its co-curricular activities to its general education learning outcomes, creating alignment in both academic and non-academic student pursuits.
- GCC has comprehensive program learning objectives for each division to help ensure an enriched educational environment.
- At least one of GCC's co-curricular activities links to every General Education Learning Outcome, with all mapping to communication and ethics/citizenship.

4.A. *The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs (1P4 & 1P13).*

Strong, clear, well-presented

- GCC's advisory committees meet regularly and provide input on the needs of business and industry.
- Relationships with external accrediting bodies help to ensure that students have appropriate technical skills.
- The program review cycle is conducted on a two to three year cycle. The review process is linked to industry and transfer institutions.

4.B. *The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning (1P2 & 1P18).*

Adequate but could be improved.

- Program learning objectives are approved by the Curriculum Committee when a program is initiated and reviewed periodically. As part of the newly adopted program review process, all programs are reviewed during each of the first two years of their existence.
- With the exception of some data from a recent Action Project, the college hasn't conducted formal course-level assessment of student learning.
- GCC administers faculty evaluations and student surveys in order to assess the quality of instructional practices and student satisfaction. While important, these are not initiatives related to the assessment of student learning outcomes.

4.C. *The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs (3P1).*

Strong, clear, well-presented

- Retention rates illustrate the effectiveness of the college's outreach efforts.
- GCC studies enrollment patterns and surveys incoming students in order to determine their learning needs.
- Retention, persistence, completion, and failure rates are used to judge success in meeting educational needs.

5.A. *The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future (8P6).*

Adequate but could be improved

- GCC's Fiscal and Strategic Planning Committee is responsible for investigating the viability of institutional changes before expending funds. Recommendations are made based on current resources and revenue forecasts.
- The budgeting process ensures the college educational mission and support services are not adversely affected by elective resource decisions.
- Strategy selection is linked to resources via the annual budget process as well as by instructional division and committee review.

5.B. *The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission (5P5 & 5P9).*

Strong, clear, well-presented.

- GCC has a governance process that includes review by the cabinet and the use of teams and committees composed of faculty, staff, administration, and, as appropriate, students.
- Leadership opportunities are provided through professional development funds.
- GCC joined the Continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN) and sends six to eight people to their annual workshop.

5.C. *The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning (5P2 & 5P6).*

Adequate but could be improved.

- GCC's mission, vision, and values statements drive their planning. GCC's choices in regards to program offerings are driven by their responsiveness to our students and other stakeholders.
- GCC's Strategic and Action Planning processes show the incorporation of an evaluation component designed to measure the effectiveness of a program, process, or service.
- The Action Projects are intended to generate information regarding the effectiveness of GCC's processes and ways to improve them.

5.D. *The institution works systematically to improve its performance (7P2 & 7P4).*

Adequate but could be improved.

- The College examines enrollment trends for each program, completion rates (GPA of 2.0 or higher), and general and divisional budgets. Annually a cost effectiveness analysis is conducted for each academic/occupational program.
- GCC involves many participants in its data selection, management, and distribution.
- GCC employs a variety of methods to analyze data at the institutional level, including analysis of enrollment trends and cost effectiveness.

QUALITY OF GOGEBIC COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S SYSTEMS PORTFOLIO

Because it stands as a reflection of the institution, the *Systems Portfolio* should be complete and coherent, and it should provide an open and honest self-analysis on the strengths and challenges facing the organization. In this section, the Systems Appraisal Team provides Gogebic Community College with constructive feedback on the overall quality of the portfolio, along with suggestions for improvement of future portfolio submissions.

The portfolio is well written overall. However, a common theme throughout the portfolio is a lack of specificity in providing example and narrative that answer the specific question in the Category Items.

USING THE FEEDBACK REPORT

AQIP reminds institutions that the Systems Appraisal process is intended to initiate action for institutional improvement. Though decisions about specific actions rest with each institution, AQIP expects every institution to use its feedback to stimulate cycles of continual improvement and to inform future AQIP processes.

Some key questions that may arise in careful examination of this report may include: How do the team's findings challenge our assumptions about ourselves? Given our mission and goals, which issues should we focus on? How will we employ results to innovate, grow, and encourage a positive culture of improvement? How will we incorporate lessons learned from this review in our planning and operational

processes? How will we revise the *Systems Portfolio* to reflect what we have learned? How an organization interprets, communicates, and uses its feedback for improvement ought to support AQIP's core values, encouraging involvement, learning, collaboration, and integrity.

AQIP's goal is to help an institution to clarify the strategic issues most vital to its success, and then to support the institution as it addresses these priorities in ways that will make a difference in institutional performance.