

**Reaffirmation of Accreditation Recommendation  
for  
Gogebic Community College  
Ironwood, Michigan  
of the 2014 - 2015  
Academic Quality Improvement Program  
Review Panel on Reaffirmation**

**The Higher Learning Commission**

**September 15, 2014**

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**Criterion Two: *Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct.*** The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

**Criterion Three: *Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support.*** The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

**Criterion Four: *Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement.*** The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

**Criterion Five: *Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness.*** The institution’s resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

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## **I. Context and Nature of Review**

### **A. Review Purpose, Process, and Materials**

AQIP Reaffirmation of Accreditation reviews are scheduled seven years in advance, when an institution first joins the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) or when an institution already participating in AQIP is reaffirmed via the AQIP Reaffirmation of Accreditation process.

In conducting these reviews, the AQIP Reaffirmation of review panel examines the following materials for each institution:

- Current Commission History file of institutional actions
- Current Commission Statement of Affiliation Status
- Current official Commission Organizational Profile
- AQIP Review Panel Report(s) on Institutional Status Change Requests
- Focused visit report(s) and action letter(s)
- Institutional websites
- Key correspondence between the institution and the Commission
- Last Comprehensive PEAQ Evaluation team report, institutional response, and Commission action letter
- Summary of Action Projects attempted
- Summary Update of institutional activity and dynamics since the last Quality Checkup, provided by the institution on September 1 of the review year
- Systems Appraisal Feedback Report
- Systems Portfolio, including update provided by the institution on September 1 of the review year
- Quality Checkup report
- Any evidence supporting compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation
- Any other major reports or documents that are part of the institution's permanent Commission files

Two lead panelists from the AQIP Reaffirmation of Accreditation draft a recommendation that is reviewed and approved by the entire panel before it is forwarded to the Institutional Actions Council.

### **B. Organizational Context**

The institution was first accredited by the Commission on January 1, 1949, and admitted to AQIP on September 19, 2000.

According to the Action Project Directory, since admission to AQIP, the institution has officially declared and attempted 11 individual Action Projects, and has provided AQIP with Annual Updates of ongoing projects and received Annual Update Feedback Reports on these.

The institution provided its most recent Systems Portfolio for review in 2013, and received a Systems Appraisal Feedback Report on October 3, 2013.

The institution proposed a change in its relationship with the Commission that was reviewed by the IAC and approved on April 23, 2013. This change permitted the institution to close an additional location in Hancock, Michigan and open an additional location in Houghton, Michigan.

AQIP conducted a Quality Checkup visit to the institution March 19-21, 2014, and provided a report of the findings of the visiting team.

### **C. Organizational Scope and Structure (including extended physical or distance education operations)**

Gogebic Community College offers 47 associate degree programs and 13 certificate programs. The institution has been approved by the Higher Learning Commission for distance education courses and programs. On November 14, 2013, the institution reported 659 full-time undergraduate students and 390 part-time undergraduate students. Of these, 32 were dual enrollment (high school) students.

The main campus is located at E4946 Jackson Road, Ironwood, Michigan. The institution has one additional location, in Houghton, Michigan.

The institution is publicly-controlled.

### **D. Notification of Quality Checkup Visit and Solicitation of Third-Party Comment**

A Quality Checkup site visit to the institution was conducted March 19-21, 2014. In compliance with Commission requirements, the institution notified its constituencies and the public of this visit and solicited third-party comment to be sent directly to the Commission. The Commission shared all comments received with the institution and the team, and the team discussed both the comments with the institution and reviewed evidence of the institution's compliance with the Commission's notification and third-party comment requirements.

### **E. Compliance with Federal Requirements**

In compliance with the Commission's federal compliance program, the institution provided evidence of compliance in conjunction with the Quality Checkup visit on March 19-21, 2014, and reported that Gogebic Community College met all the federal requirements.

## F. Evidence of the Organization's Responsiveness to Previous Commission Concerns Regarding Fulfillment of the Criteria for Accreditation

There were no accreditation issues identified during the review of the 2013 Systems Portfolio.

## II. Fulfillment of the Criteria for Accreditation

**CRITERION ONE: MISSION.** The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

**Core Component 1A:** The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

**Subcomponent 1.** The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.

**Subcomponent 3.** The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission.

**Team Determination:**      X   Core Component is met  
                                       \_\_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                       \_\_\_ Core Component is not met

### Evidence:

- Gogebic 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.
- Gogebic 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.
- Gogebic has in place a Strategic and Fiscal Planning Committee that reviews all proposals having significant budgetary implications.

**Core Component 1B:** The mission is articulated publicly.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.

**Subcomponent 2.** The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.

**Subcomponent 3.** The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

**Team Determination:**      X   Core Component is met  
                                           Core Component is met with concerns  
                                           Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- Gogebic's five-year master plan is posted on the website under the heading of Transparency Reporting. This document clearly articulates Gogebic's values, mission, and purposes, as well as the nature, scope, and constituents of the programs and services provided.
- The most recent update to the Mission, Vision, and Values was conducted in November 2012 and approved by the Board of Trustees. These are displayed on its website for the public to view. There is a survey embedded in the website allowing for public comment regarding the college and the services it provides.

**Core Component 1C:** The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

**Team Determination:**      X   Core Component is met  
                                           Core Component is met with concerns  
                                           Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

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

**Core Component 1D:** The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

**Subcomponent 1.** Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.

**Subcomponent 3.** The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

**Team Determination:**     Core Component is met  
                                    Core Component is met with concerns  
                                    Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- Gogebic's mission is developed with input from the community and grows out of its public mission as a state institution.
- Gogebic is well connected to its community and integral to the financial health and well-being of the community (the college took over operation of the local ski facility, for example, when its threatened closure represented a significant financial hardship to the community). Data are provided to support the college's involvement and impact with the communities it serves.
- 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.

**Team Determination on Criterion One:**

Criterion is met  
 Criterion is met with concerns  
 Criterion is not met

**Summary Statement on Criterion One:**

The Vision, Values, and Mission of the institution was updated and approved by the Board of Trustees in 2012. The Mission Statement was developed by a cross-functional group of individuals representing every employee group as well as members of the Board of Trustees.

Criterion One is met and no Commission follow-up is recommended.

**CRITERION TWO: Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct.** The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

**Core Component 2A:** 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.

**Team Determination:**      X   Core Component is met  
                                       \_\_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                       \_\_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- Gogebic Community College provides numerous examples in its Systems Portfolio that it operates with integrity. The board of trustees has adopted an ethics policy and the administration reviews this policy annually with all college employees. A system is in place for any employee to safely share concerns about ethical breeches with the administration and/or board of trustees. Information about this Anonymous Incident Reporting system is available on the college website. Annual audits help to ensure the financial integrity of the institution.

**Core Component 2B:** 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.

**Team Determination:**      X   Core Component is met  
                                       \_\_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                       \_\_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- The institution presents itself clearly and accurately to the public. Information about admissions requirements, tuition and fees, tuition refund policy, program length, satisfactory academic progress, and graduation requirements is available in the catalog and on the college website. The website also has information on the college's faculty and staff as well as its accreditation relationship with the Higher Learning Commission.

**Core Component 2C:** The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

**Subcomponent 1.** The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.

**Subcomponent 2.** The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution’s internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.

**Subcomponent 3.** The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests, or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.

**Subcomponent 4.** The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

**Team Determination:**     Core Component is met  
                                    Core Component is met with concerns  
                                    Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- The governing board of Gogebic Community College consists of seven publically-elected trustees that meet on a monthly basis. Board meetings are held in accordance with the State of Michigan's Open Meetings Act and allow for public comment. Although the board has the ultimate decision making authority for the college, its activities are generally limited to setting policy, approving budgets, and acting on hiring recommendations.
- The governing board's actions reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution. As an example of this, each board meeting includes time for looking at ways of “Growing the College Business Smartly” to avoid the dangers of unsustainable attempts to enhance enrollments.
- The Gogebic board of trustees strives to have excellent working relationships with its local, state, and federal governmental representatives. It also tries to be responsive to the needs of its external as well as internal constituents. In the strategic planning process, for example, the board holds stakeholder meetings before establishing the college's long- and short-term planning objectives.
- Although the board of trustees has the ultimate decision-making authority for the college, it delegates the day-to-day management of the organization to the administration. It also delegates the oversight of academic matters to the faculty. All of the college's degree offerings and course delivery systems, for example, are reviewed by faculty, particularly those serving on the Curriculum Committee.

**Core Component 2D:** The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

**Team Determination:**     Core Component is met  
                                    Core Component is met with concerns  
                                    Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- Both the Systems Appraisal team and the Quality Checkup Visit team noted that while the institution's commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning is adequately demonstrated in the Systems Portfolio, it could be improved. Although there is only one reference to academic freedom in the Systems Portfolio, a statement on academic freedom as it pertains to the faculty can be found in Article XVI of the 2013-2014 Master Agreement between Gogebic Community College and the Michigan Association of Higher Education Gogebic Community College District .

**Core Component 2E:** The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.

**Subcomponent 2.** Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.

**Subcomponent 3.** The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

**Team Determination:**      X   Core Component is met  
                                       \_\_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                       \_\_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- Both the Systems Appraisal team and the Quality Checkup Visit team noted that the evidence provided in the Systems Portfolio that Gogebic Community College meets Core Component 2.E. was adequate, but could be improved. Although it appears that Gogebic Community College offers ethics training to faculty and staff on a regular basis, it is not clear that the college has an institutional research board (or similar committee) to help ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by faculty, staff and students.
- In addition to the ethics training provided to staff, the college counsels students on ethical behavior as it relates to academic integrity, plagiarism, cheating, and copyright laws. Gogebic has an academic honesty policy in place that is incorporated into course syllabi and discussed with students at the beginning of each semester
- The importance of academic honesty and integrity are also reinforced through the college's student handbook. According to the college's statement on dishonesty and cheating, academic dishonesty of any kind may be dealt with in any manner deemed suitable by the instructor, including the assignment of a failing grade for the course. Cheating on examinations may also result in the student appearing before the Student

Personnel Committee and possible suspension from the college, if circumstances warrant. The student handbook also contains an acceptable computer use policy.

**Team Determination on Criterion Two:**

- Criterion is met  
 Criterion is met with concerns  
 Criterion is not met

**Summary Statement on Criterion Two:**

Criterion Two is met and no Commission follow-up is recommended.

**CRITERION THREE: Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support.** The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

**Core Component 3A:** The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

**Subcomponent 1.** Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.

**Subcomponent 3.** The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

**Team Determination:**     Core Component is met  
     Core Component is met with concerns  
     Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- Gogebic Community College ensures that its curriculum is current and that it requires appropriate levels of student performance by seeking input from partners external to the college. These partners include business and industry members, Department of Labor personnel, and faculty from the local secondary schools. All occupational (Career and Technical) programs at Gogebic have advisory boards or committees.
- As noted in the Systems Appraisal Report, the institution has articulated what it calls "Program Learning Objectives" for all six of its primary academic divisions (Language and Fine Arts, Social Science, Mathematics and Science, Applied Technology, Allied Health, and Business). These objectives are not program-specific, however, and they are inconsistently articulated. Some are articulated from a student perspective: One of the objectives of the Social Science Division, for

example, is to "Analyze social issues by synthesizing concepts and research methods from the different social science disciplines." Others, however, are articulated from a faculty perspective: One of the objectives of the Allied Health Division, for example, is "To maintain full accreditation by appropriate agencies for all programs offered by the college." While it can be valuable for a department or division to articulate goals from a faculty perspective, all programs should also have goals that are stated from a student perspective.

- The quality of Gogebic's programs is consistent across all modes of delivery. One way the institution achieves this consistency is by offering its online sections "concurrently" with its face-to-face counterparts. Many business courses, for example, are taught in a concurrent format. This means that a single instructor concurrently teaches an "on-ground" section of a class at the same time that he/she is teaching an online section of that same course.

**Core Component 3B:** 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.

**Subcomponent 1.** The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.

**Subcomponent 3.** Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

**Subcomponent 4.** The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.

**Subcomponent 5.** The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission.

**Team Determination:**    \_\_\_ Core Component is met  
                                    X  Core Component is met with concerns  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- The general education program at Gogebic Community College appears to be problematic. The college offers five different types of associate's degrees, with varying levels of general education course requirements. While it is clear that the Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), and Associate of Applied Science

- (AAS) degrees meet Higher Learning Commission expectations for these types of degrees, this is not the case when it comes to the general education requirements for the Associate of Applied Business (AAB) and Associate of Applied Technology degrees. The AAB degree, for example, requires 10 credits in "Communications," but four of these "communication" credits must be in "computer related courses." And, even though the college does not have a general education goal related to business or computer literacy, students in the Associate of Applied Technology in Automotive Technology program are required to take "BUS 101 - Introduction to Business," any "Business Elective," and "CPL 100 - Computer Literacy" as part of their "General Education Core."
- The college also has two certificate programs of substantial length without any required general education courses: The Automotive Technology Certificate requires 49 credit hours and the Cosmetology Certificate requires 55 credit hours. Neither program requires any general education coursework beyond a one credit hour "ORI 100 - College Experience" course, which is required in the Cosmetology program, but not in the Automotive Technology program. Certificate programs of this length are expected to have an appropriate component of general education.
  - According to a statement on p. 40 of the college catalog, "General Education courses at Gogebic Community College are grouped into four basic categories. The courses you choose within each category will depend upon the type of degree you pursue and your personal interests." These four categories are: 1) Communications, 2) Science and Mathematics, 3) Social Science & Humanities, and 4) Multicultural. The college also has "general learning outcomes" in the areas of "Awareness - Ethics/Citizenship" and "Multicultural - Accepting the Challenges of Diversity." Despite the suggestion that students in all of the college's associate degree programs are expected to take general education courses in all four of these categories (as well as fulfill the college's intended general learning outcomes), this is not the case when it comes to the college's Associate of Applied Technology programs. Students in the Associate of Applied Technology in Automotive Technology program, for example, are not required to take any "Multicultural" courses (as described on p. 40 of the catalog).
  - Students in the Associate of Applied Technology in Ski Area Management program are also not required to take a Multicultural course (as defined on p. 40 of the college catalog). Furthermore, despite the statement in the Systems Portfolio that the college's "curriculum reflects the importance of human and cultural diversity through humanities and social science requirements," students in the Ski Area Management program can also avoid taking a course in the Social Science & Humanities category by taking a second course in communications (Speech or Technical Writing).
  - The Quality Checkup Team advised "Gogebic . . . to review the purposes and content of its general education objectives." The Reaffirmation Panel agrees with this advice, as there is no clear connection between the college's "six general learning outcomes" and its required general education courses. Furthermore, many of Gogebic's general education goals and several of the courses allowed to fulfill the general education course requirements in its applied associate degree programs are vocational in nature. As a consequence, they do not reflect the Higher Learning Commission's Guiding Value 3, which includes the statement, "The Commission

distinguishes higher education in part on the basis of its reach beyond narrow vocational training to a broader intellectual and social context."

- Every program offered by Gogebic Community College engages students in analyzing and communicating information. As part of their general education program, students in the AA and AS transfer programs, for example, are required to take two communications courses (ENG 101 and 102). Students enrolled in one of the college's associate of applied science programs must also take at least two communications classes (which may include "Business Communications," "Technical English," and "Technical Writing").
- The institution has provided evidence that its faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission. For example, students in the college's AA and AS programs are required to take courses in the fine arts as well as the humanities. One of the objectives of the Applied Technology Division is to provide a student learning environment that stimulates creativity in its students. And, one of the objectives of the Allied Health Division is to "recruit and maintain faculty capable of making significant contributions to the basic and applied research efforts of the supporting institutions."

**Core Component 3C:** The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.

**Subcomponent 2.** All instructors are appropriately credentialed, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.

**Subcomponent 3.** Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.

**Subcomponent 4.** The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.

**Subcomponent 5.** Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.

**Subcomponent 6.** Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

**Team Determination:**    \_\_\_ Core Component is met  
                                    X  Core Component is met with concerns  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- According to data provided in the 2013 Systems Portfolio, Gogebic Community College employs 37 faculty members and that 78% of the college's contact hours are taught by tenured faculty. Twenty-six of these instructors are employed on a full-time basis and 11 are employed on a part-time basis. Given the size of the student population (1,049 full- and part-time students were reported on 11/14/13), this appears to be a sufficient number of instructors to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty at this institution
- The institution has provided no information in its Systems Portfolio on faculty credentials. Nor has it provided a statement on what credentials it expects its faculty to possess by policy. As a consequence, the Reaffirmation of Accreditation Panel cannot confirm that all instructors at GCC are appropriately credentialed. On this topic, the Quality Checkup Report notes that the college has recently hired an HR director, and that with this hire, GCC has the opportunity to better document faculty qualifications and other important information.
- GCC instructors are evaluated on a regular basis in accordance with the institution's collective bargaining agreement with the faculty. As explained in the Systems Portfolio, the faculty evaluation system includes "student evaluations, administrative review, peer review, and instructional outcomes." It is not clear, however, what is meant by the term "instructional outcomes."
- Professional development opportunities are available to both faculty and staff at GCC. The college's Center for Faculty & Staff Development is the primary source of training by the college itself. The institution's processes for determining the training needs of faculty include student feedback, portfolios, and regular reviews with their dean. Although the Systems Portfolio states that, "We invest a significant proportion of our budget in staff development by providing for travel to conferences that we feel would have a positive impact," no information is provided on the level of financial resources allocated for professional development. As noted in the Systems Appraisal Report, the college may benefit from a more formal staff development process.
- GCC instructors are accessible for student inquiry. According to Section VI.F.4. of the 2013-2014 Master Agreement between Gogebic Community College and the Michigan Association of Higher Education Gogebic Community College District, faculty members are required to maintain and post a minimum of five (5) office hours per week. Faculty schedules, as well as office hours, must be shared with the Dean of Instruction within the first week of classes.
- Although the Systems Portfolio provides no information on the qualifications of the staff providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, it is clear that the college supports their ongoing training and development in various ways. For example, student support staff can take advantage of the in-service training provided by the college's Center for Faculty & Staff Development.

**Core Component 3D:** The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.

**Subcomponent 3.** The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.

**Subcomponent 4.** The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

**Subcomponent 5.** The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

**Team Determination:**      Core Component is met  
                                    Core Component is met with concerns  
                                    Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations. These include, for example, orientation, academic advising, financial aid counseling, tutoring, TRIO services, and career counseling. When appropriate, the college also provides resources support (such as the provision of laptop computers) and referrals to community services.
- Preparedness for a given curriculum is determined by reviewing ACT or COMPASS assessment results. Students who are underprepared for academic programs or courses are placed into appropriate developmental-level courses to prepare them for their chosen college-level curriculum. GCC offers various levels of developmental education in English and Math. The college also offers a developmental chemistry class for those students who have no background in chemistry, but who are interested in the sciences as a field of study.
- A group of faculty and staff focused on building and maintaining a strong developmental and remedial culture at GCC have formed the College Developmental Education Committee. One of the initiatives developed by this committee was a Supplemental Instruction program, which is being piloted with courses that show high levels of attrition. In spring 2013, for example, a section of Pharmacology utilized supplemental instruction to identify and address gaps in student learning outcomes.
- Gogebic Community College provides academic advising appropriate to its programs and the needs of its students. During the initial enrollment period, for example, all students meet with their academic advisor to discuss student goals and intentions. The college also offers advising through its TRIO learning support processes.

- GCC provides its students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning. This includes, for example, the Library Resource Center, science labs, and computer labs. The college also operates a skiing facility, which serves as an outdoor learning lab for its Ski Area Management program. As would be expected, the institution relies on partnerships with local healthcare facilities to provide clinical experiences for its Allied Health students. The institution also relies on a collaborative agreement with Michigan Technological University (MTU) to provide library services for students taking classes at its Copper Country Center in Houghton, Michigan. GCC students are allowed to use the MTU library free of charge
- The institution provides guidance to its students in the effective use of research and information resources. One of its six "general learning outcomes" is an intended learning outcome related to information literacy. This intended learning outcome is reinforced through co-curricular as well as curricular activities. The College also counsels students on ethical behavior as it relates to academic integrity, plagiarism, cheating, and copyright laws.

**Core Component 3E:** The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

**Subcomponent 1.** Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

**Team Determination:**     Core Component is met  
                                    Core Component is met with concerns  
                                    Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- Gogebic Community College offers its students a number of co-curricular activities that help contribute to the educational experience of its students. These include, for example, the Phi Theta Kappa honor society, a student newspaper, student government, student clubs, and athletics.
- GCC has linked its co-curricular activities to its "general learning outcomes," creating an alignment between its students' academic and non-academic pursuits. At least one of GCC's co-curricular activities links to every general learning outcome, and all of its co-curricular activities map to the outcomes related to communication and ethics/citizenship.

**Team Determination on Criterion Three:**

Criterion is met

- Criterion is met with concerns  
 Criterion is not met

### Summary Statement on Criterion Three:

Criterion Three is met with concerns. Commission follow-up in the form of a focused visit is recommended on Core Component 3B (general education) and 3C (faculty credentials).

**CRITERION FOUR: Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement.** The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

**Core Component 4A:** The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning.

**Subcomponent 3.** The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.

**Subcomponent 4.** The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.

**Subcomponent 5.** The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.

**Subcomponent 6.** The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

**Team Determination:**  Core Component is met  
 Core Component is met with concerns  
 Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- To help ensure the currency and relevancy of its academic programs, Gogebic Community College maintains a practice of regular program reviews. All new programs at GCC are reviewed during each of the first two years of their existence. After that, the college formally reviews each of its programs at least every three years. GCC includes both internal and external stakeholders in the process to ensure programs and courses remain up to date and effective. The review process devotes attention to curriculum, cost effectiveness, challenges, and outcomes.
- Gogebic Community College has published information in its catalog about how it evaluates the credits that it transcripts. Grades lower than a “C” will not be accepted as transfer credit to Gogebic Community College. It has also published information on what it awards for prior learning. For example, information on how the College transcripts Advanced Placement (AP) and College Level Examination Program (CLEP) scores can be found in the student handbook as well as the college catalog.
- At Gogebic Community College, the Dean of Students acts as the Registrar. It is the Registrar's duty to preserve the academic integrity of the institution and to establish and maintain accurate permanent academic records. The Registrar is also responsible for evaluating transcripts of transfer students and for the certification of graduation requirements.
- The Quality Checkup Report confirms that Gogebic Community College has demonstrated that it is appropriately disclosing its transfer policies to students and to the public. The report also confirms that the institution's policies contain information about the criteria the institution uses to make transfer decisions.
- The institution maintains and exercises authority over course prerequisites, course rigor, and expectations for student learning. The faculty, particularly those serving on the Curriculum Committee, have primary responsibility for exercising this responsibility. Course prerequisites are published in the course descriptions found in the college catalog.
- Gogebic Community College maintains specialized accreditation for some of its occupational programs. The college's automotive technology program, for example, is accredited by the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF). In addition, some of its programs are licensed by the State of Michigan. This would include its nursing, cosmetology, and building trades programs.
- Gogebic Community College participates in the MACRAO (Michigan Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers) Transfer Student Agreement. In general, according to this agreement, any student who receives an Associate of Arts or an Associate of Science degree from Gogebic Community College is not required to pursue further General Education requirements at most four-year colleges and universities in Michigan. To facilitate transfer to other institutions, the Registrar's Office identifies transcripts of students completing MACRAO requirements with the statement, "MACRAO Transfer Agreement Satisfied."
- The Systems Appraisal Report notes that the institution has long-standing, strong relationships with transfer institutions. The college's transfer coordinator, faculty, and administration maintain regular contact with these institutions. Data provided in the Systems Portfolio indicate that a relatively high percentage of Gogebic Community College students successfully transfer to four-year colleges and universities compared to other community colleges in Michigan. Data showing that

GCC students transferring to other institutions have an average GPA of 3.10 after transfer is another indication that the institution is doing a commendable job of preparing students for transfer.

**Core Component 4B:** The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.

**Subcomponent 3.** The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.

**Subcomponent 4.** The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

**Team Determination:**    \_\_\_ Core Component is met  
                                    X  Core Component is met with concerns  
                                   \_\_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- The previous (2007) Reaffirmation of Accreditation report expressed concern about the state of assessment at Gogebic Community College. The report noted, for example, that although the college had a system for assessing student learning outcomes, it did not have actual assessment results or comparative data for any of its academic programs, with the exception of nursing. As a consequence, the report recommended Commission monitoring and GCC was required to develop an AQIP Action Project on assessment. The purpose of this project would be to ensure that the college's assessment plan is implemented in general education as well as each academic program. Results were to be reported, along with appropriate comparative data, and shared widely within the college. Plans for improving teaching and learning were also to be developed, implemented and documented based on the results from assessment.
- In response to the previous (2007) Reaffirmation of Accreditation report, Gogebic developed multiple Action Projects on assessment. Despite these efforts, the 2013 System Appraisal Report continued to express serious concerns about the college's assessment efforts. The Systems Appraisal Report states, for example, that although "GCC has pockets of assessment of student learning" it has "no apparent overall assessment plan for student learning." While the college has articulated intended student learning outcomes, it has the opportunity to increase its use of direct student measures across the institution and to systematically analyze the results of these direct assessments in an effort to support the continuous improvement of student learning. The Report also states that GCC's "formal assessment procedures still appear [to be] in their infancy."

- The 2013 Systems Appraisal Report expresses concerns about all levels of assessment at Gogebic Community College. Regarding course-level assessment, for example, the Report notes that "[w]ith the exception of some data from a recent Action Project, the college hasn't conducted formal course-level assessment of student learning." Regarding program-level assessment, the Report states that "there is little evidence that outcomes are being assessed." Regarding the assessment of intended general education outcomes, the Report maintains that, "[w]hile GCC has defined six areas of general learning outcomes, it is unclear if it has . . . a plan to assess them on a regular basis."
- In its summary comments on AQIP Category One (Helping Students Learn), the 2013 Systems Appraisal Report observes that it appears that the college is relying almost exclusively on retention rates, graduation rates, transfer-out rates, successful completion rates, and satisfaction survey results as measures of student learning. Although certainly valuable, these measures do not directly assess student learning in a way that could be used to identify potential opportunities for improvement. As a consequence, the college has not provided evidence that it is systematically using assessment results to improve student learning. The 2013 Systems Appraisal Report also notes that, "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."
- In some ways, Gogebic's processes and methodologies for the assessment of student learning reflect good practice. For example, the college has identified goals for student learning. This is the essential first step in any assessment process. In addition, the college's assessment efforts include substantial participation by faculty and other instructional staff members. The Systems Appraisal Report also observes that writing is assessed at GCC using a thoughtful process in English classes, and that students in the nursing and cosmetology programs are required to take industry-standard exams.

**Core Component 4C:** The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.

**Subcomponent 3.** The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.

**Subcomponent 4.** The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are

suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

**Team Determination:**     Core Component is met  
                                    Core Component is met with concerns  
                                    Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- Gogebic Community College measures student retention, persistence, and completion on a regular basis. The college also annually compares its results in these areas to other colleges participating in National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP). The institution has been so successful in these areas, that it has been recognized by the Aspen Institute as being among the top 10% of Community Colleges in the nation when it comes to indicators of success such as certificate and degree completion. Its goals for retention, persistence, and completion are not defined in terms of precise percentages. Instead, GCC's goal is to "remain ahead of our peers whom we benchmark against."
- GCC's Systems Portfolio emphasizes that according to the National Community College Benchmark report, Gogebic Community College transfer students have a higher average GPA and retention rate at transfer institutions than the reported median value of the 267 colleges participating in this report. The retention rate of GCC students was approximately 20% higher than the median. The Systems Portfolio also presents data indicating that GCC has an excellent record when it comes to fall-to-next-term retention rates and successful completion or transfer when compared to other community colleges in the state of Michigan.
- Gogebic Community College attributes its excellent fall-to-next-term retention rate (nearly 80%) as well as its remarkable completion and transfer rates (65%) to its hard work in developing a culture of student success. The institution also attributes these outcomes to an outstanding faculty who care about student success as well as an administration that recognizes and supports diversity in educational methodologies.
- The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice. Data is collected according to both IPEDS and NCCBP guidelines. The college's retention committee analyses this data, along with student survey and demographic data, with the intention of continually increasing the retention numbers at GCC.

**Team Determination on Criterion Four:**

Criterion is met  
 Criterion is met with concerns  
 Criterion is not met

**Summary Statement on Criterion Four:**

Criterion Four is met with concerns. Commission follow-up in the form of a focused visit is recommended on Core Component 4B (The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning).

**CRITERION FIVE: Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness.** The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

**Core Component 5A:** The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.

**Subcomponent 3.** The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.

**Subcomponent 4.** The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.

**Subcomponent 5.** The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

**Team Determination:**      X   Core Component is met  
                                       \_\_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                       \_\_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- Gogebic'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's 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.
- The allocation of institutional resources is reviewed at multiple levels. A Strategic and Fiscal Planning Committee reviews all proposals that have significant budgetary implications. The annual budget is developed at board retreats and adopted by the full board each fiscal year.

**Core Component 5B:** The institution’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution’s governance.

**Subcomponent 2.** The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight for the institution’s financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

**Subcomponent 3.** The institution enables the involvement of its administration, faculty, staff, and students in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

**Team Determination:**      X   Core Component is met  
                                       \_\_\_ Core Component is met with concerns  
                                       \_\_\_ Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- The seven-member Board of Trustees is the constitutional body of Gogebic Community College and has the final authority and responsibility in all matters concerning the operation of the college.
- Gogebic has a governance process that relies on participation by all employee groups in decision-making processes. This includes review by the cabinet and the use of cross-functional teams.

**Core Component 5C:** The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.

**Subcomponent 3.** The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.

**Subcomponent 4.** The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution’s sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.

**Subcomponent 5.** Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

**Team Determination:**      X   Core Component is met

- Core Component is met with concerns  
 Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- Gogebic's mission, vision, and values statements drive their planning. Choices in regards to program offerings are driven by their responsiveness to students and other stakeholders.
- Gogebic's Strategic and Action Planning processes show the incorporation of an evaluation component designed to measure the effectiveness of a program, process, or service.
- AQIP Action Projects are used to evaluate performance and identify opportunities for improvement.
- Planning processes show evidence of being holistic, and include internal and external involvement. The Quality Checkup Team noted in its report, "The College has a true collaborative planning and governance structure that includes broad representation from faculty, staff, administration, and the board. As a result there is strong consensus around the college's goals and operations."

**Core Component 5D:** The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

**Subcomponent 1.** The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.

**Subcomponent 2.** The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

- Team Determination:**  Core Component is met  
 Core Component is met with concerns  
 Core Component is not met

**Evidence:**

- Gogebic reports results related to information systems, student success and completion, and contract training services. Computer Services personnel ensure the integrity and timeliness of data collection systems. The college has also created a capacity for comparison of data that can aid data collection, analysis, and distribution, which can help the college drive performance improvement.
- The college is in the early stages of establishing measures of effectiveness. A series of pilot projects is focused on embedded assessments.

**Team Determination on Criterion Five:**

- Criterion is met  
 Criterion is met with concerns  
 Criterion is not met

**Summary Statement on Criterion Five:**

Gogebic's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities

Criterion Five is met and no Commission follow-up is recommended.

**TEAM RECOMMENDATION****A. Affiliation Status**

**Recommendation:** The Systems Appraisal Feedback Report, Quality Checkup Report, and Quality Highlights indicate that the institution provided evidence that it complies with each of the Five Criteria for Accreditation and their Core Components. The Reaffirmation Panel agrees that the Criteria for Accreditation are all met. Criteria Three and Four, however, are met with concerns.

**Rationale:** The Panel's rationale for this conclusion is articulated above for each of the five Criteria for Accreditation.

**Criterion-related Monitoring Required (focused visit):**

**Monitoring:** The Reaffirmation of Accreditation Panel recommends that the Higher Learning Commission conduct a focused visit to Gogebic Community College by the fall of 2016 on general education, the assessment of student learning, and faculty credentials.

**Rationale:** The purpose of this visit would be to ensure that the college is in compliance with Core Components 3B, 3C, and 4B, Assumed Practice B.1.h., and the Commission's Guiding Value 3 (Education for a diverse, technological, globally connected world).

Regarding Core Component 3B (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):

As explained in greater detail in the body of the report, the Reaffirmation of Accreditation Panel has concerns about the college's general education program. The institution's "core learning outcomes" do not seem to be well aligned with its general education course requirements in the Associate of Applied Business and Associate of Applied Technology programs. Nor is it clear that the Associate of Applied Business program, the Associate of Applied Technology program, and its certificates of substantial length all contain an appropriate component of general education.

Regarding Core Component 3C (The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services):

As noted above, the institution has not provided information in its Systems Portfolio that would allow the Reaffirmation of Accreditation Panel to confirm that its faculty, staff, and administration are appropriately credentialed. Nor has the institution provided any statement on the credentials it expects its faculty, staff, and administration to hold as a matter of policy.

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

The previous (2007) Reaffirmation of Accreditation Report includes the following statement under the heading, "Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up via declaration of a specific Action Project(s) and the submission of Annual Updates":

Although a system for assessing student learning outcomes has been developed, GCC does not have actual assessment results or comparative data for any of its academic programs, with the exception of nursing.

Seven years have now passed since the last Reaffirmation of Accreditation Recommendation, and in the interim, the Higher Learning Commission has required follow-up in the form of Action Projects and annual updates on assessment. Nevertheless, as documented above, the most recent (2013) Systems Appraisal Report is still making comments such as:

- Although "GCC has pockets of assessment of student learning," it has "no apparent overall assessment plan for student learning." While the college has articulated intended student learning outcomes, it has the opportunity to increase its use of direct student measures across the institution and to systematically analyze the results of these direct assessments in an effort to support the continuous improvement of student learning.
- GCC's "formal assessment procedures still appear [to be] in their infancy."
- Regarding course-level assessment: "[w]ith the exception of some data from a recent Action Project, the college hasn't conducted formal course-level assessment of student learning."
- Regarding program-level assessment: "there is little evidence that outcomes are being assessed."
- Regarding the assessment of intended general education outcomes: "[w]hile GCC has defined six areas of general learning outcomes, it is unclear if it has . . . a plan to assess them on a regular basis."
- "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."

- "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."

It is apparent that monitoring in the form of Action Projects and annual updates has not been effective in ensuring that Gogebic Community College is meeting Higher Learning Commission expectations for the assessment of student learning. As a consequence, a focused visit on assessment is recommended at this point.

The purpose of this aspect of the focused visit would be to ensure that Gogebic is assessing its intended course, program, and general education learning outcomes on a regular basis using direct measures of student learning, and using its assessment results to improve student learning and inform its planning and budgeting processes

Regarding Assumed Practice B.1.h. and Guiding Value 3:

While it may be that the general education components of Gogebic Community College's Associate of Applied Business and Associate of Applied Technology degree programs meet the "letter" of Assumed Practice B.1.h. in that these programs require at least 15 credit hours of what the college is calling "general education" coursework, it is not clear that all of these "general education" courses meet the "spirit" of general education as expressed in the Higher Learning Commission's Guiding Value 3, which states, in part: "Even for the most technical qualification, students need the civic learning and broader intellectual capabilities that underlie success in the workforce. The Commission distinguishes higher education in part on the basis of its reach beyond narrow vocational training to a broader intellectual and social context."

## **B. Commission Sanction or Adverse Action**

### **III. Participation in the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP)**

#### **A. Comments and counsel on specific improvement projects**

Since joining AQIP in 2000, the College's website indicates that Gogebic has completed 12 Action projects. Two other Action Projects are currently active. Completed projects include: *Assessment of Student Learning; Collection and Use of Data; Data Needs and Access; Development of an Institutional Vision; Embedded Assessment for GCC Engineering Program; Emerging Planning for Campus Security and Safety; Human Resources; Improved Student Learning Through Continuous Improvement; and New program-Course Development.*

Current Action Projects are directed at addressing opportunities identified in the Systems Portfolio review process. *Program Specific Learning Outcome Assessment* attempts to better define how learning outcomes are assessed and the results used improve instructional processes. *Outstanding Opportunities for Improvement* addresses the questions in their Systems Portfolio that received an OO rating in the Feedback Report.

Given that Gogebic has been an AQIP institution for 14 years, the number of Action Projects does not meet the minimum requirement of three projects per year. Completed and current Action Projects link to five of the nine AQIP categories. Several Action Projects have been focused on student assessment of learning and taken more than one year to complete. The progress Gogebic has made in this area is acknowledged, but the institution is encouraged to continue to focus efforts in this critical area, but select projects that are not as broad in scope and can be completed in one year. The assessment process measurement of specific learning outcomes is worthy of a project that would increase the use of direct learning measures and impact the College's continuous improvement efforts in this area.

**B. Comments and counsel on key institutional processes and systems**

Gogebic's commitment to AQIP is evident by the resources invested in the position of institutional researcher to assist selecting, managing, and distributing data. The development and implementation of a dashboard, which helps communicate relevant information, better informs decision making, and help focus attention on the most important things to measure will move the institution forward in a number of ways.

Although the appointment of an institutional researcher improves data collection and analysis capabilities, it is not apparent that faculty and staff have been trained in data collection and analysis methods. Therefore, little data analysis is likely occurring relative to institutional and process level performance outside of Institutional Research, thereby training will improve Gogebic's ability to identify improvement actions and learn how to link its actions to positive outcomes.

**C. Comments and counsel on the institution's culture of quality and its quality program or infrastructure**

Gogebic clearly demonstrates a solid commitment to continuous quality improvement and practices that embrace the AQIP philosophy and model.

The Reaffirmation Panel notes that Gogebic Community College is an early adopter of the AQIP process and after 14 years has made progress on its quality journey. The college continues to develop a culture and infrastructure where defining processes, establishing measures and targets, identifying opportunities for improvement, and taking action are the norm.

**Summary of panel comments and counsel about the organization's commitment to continuous quality improvement and its participation in AQIP:**

The Reaffirmation Panel acknowledges and commends Gogebic Community College for voluntary participation in the Academic Quality Improvement Program of the Higher Learning Commission in its pursuit of continuous quality improvement.



**STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS WORKSHEET**

**INSTITUTION and STATE:** Gogebic Community College MI

**TYPE OF REVIEW:** AQIP Reaffirmation of Accreditation Recommendation

**DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW:**

**DATES OF REVIEW:** 9/15/14

No Change in Statement of Affiliation Status

**Nature of Organization**

**CONTROL:** Public

**RECOMMENDATION:** No change

**DEGREES AWARDED:** Certificate, Associates

**RECOMMENDATION:** No change

**Conditions of Affiliation**

**STIPULATIONS ON AFFILIATION STATUS:**

Prior Commission approval is required for substantive change as stated in Commission policy.

**RECOMMENDATION:** No change

**APPROVAL OF NEW ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS:**

Prior Commission approval required.

**RECOMMENDATION:** No change

**APPROVAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION DEGREES:**

Approved for distance education courses and programs. The institution has not been approved for correspondence education.

*Recommendations for the  
STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS*

**RECOMMENDATION:** No change

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**ACCREDITATION ACTIVITIES:**

AQIP, Quality Checkup: 03/19/2014

AQIP, Systems Appraisal: 06/01/2018

AQIP, Strategy Forum: 2014 - 2015

AQIP, Systems Appraisal: 06/01/2022

**RECOMMENDATION:** Focus Visit to be conducted in Fall semester 2016.

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Monitoring: The Reaffirmation of Accreditation Panel recommends that the Higher Learning Commission conduct a **focused visit** to Gogebic Community College by the fall of 2016 on general education, the assessment of student learning, and faculty credentials.

Rationale: The purpose of this visit would be to ensure that the college is in compliance with Core Components 3B, 3C, and 4B, Assumed Practice B.1.h., and the Commission's Guiding Value 3 (Education for a diverse, technological, globally connected world).

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**Summary of Commission Review**

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**YEAR OF LAST REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION:** 2007 - 2008

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**YEAR FOR NEXT REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION:** 2014 - 2015

**RECOMMENDATION:** 2022 - 2023

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**ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE WORKSHEET**

**INSTITUTION and STATE:** 1324 Gogebic Community College MI

**TYPE OF REVIEW:** AQIP Reaffirmation of Accreditation Recommendation

**DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW:**

XX No change to Organization Profile

**Educational Programs**

	<u>Program Distribution</u>
Programs leading to Undergraduate	
Associates	47
Bachelors	0
 Programs leading to Graduate	
Masters	0
Specialist	0
Doctors	0
 Certificate programs	
Certificate	13

**Recommended Change:**

**Off-Campus Activities:**

In State - Present Activity  
Campuses: None.

Additional Locations:  
Gogebic Community College – Copper Country Center - Houghton, MI

**Recommended Change:**

Out Of State - Present Activity  
Campuses: None.

Additional Locations: None.

**Recommended Change:**

**ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE WORKSHEET**

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Out of USA - Present Activity

Campuses: None.

Additional Locations: None.

**Recommended Change:**

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**Distance Education Programs:**

Present Offerings:

Certificate 51.0707 Health Information/Medical Records Technology/Technician Medical Coding and Billing Specialist Internet

**Recommended Change:**

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**Correspondence Education Programs:**

Present Offerings:

None.

**Recommended Change:**

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**Contractual Relationships:**

Present Offerings:

None.

**Recommended Change:**

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**Consortial Relationships:**

Present Offerings:

None.

**Recommended Change:**

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