

Category Five: Leading and Communicating

Processes

5P1

The current version of the [mission statement](#) was adopted by the Board of Trustees in November 1997. At the same time, the Board adopted the College's current (and first recorded) [values statement](#), which was developed by a committee comprised of faculty and staff during the process of building the "Strategic Plan 1998-2003."

The College has recognized that it has an opportunity to review and update the institution's mission, values, and visions statements in a more systematic manner. At its January 2010 planning session, the Board of Trustees determined that they would review the mission, values, and vision statements at each annual planning session.

5P2

In November 2009, the Board of Trustees adopted a *Laramie County Community College Strategic Plan 2010-2015*. This plan identified strategic directions and goals that are aligned with the College's missions, vision, and values, and was the foundation for the most recent budget setting cycle. During this cycle, budget requests at all levels of the institution were tied directly to the strategic directions. Units developed operational plans with goals and objectives that were to be linked to specific goals in the Strategic Plan. However, this is a brand new process and as such documentation of the process is still under development.

5P3

The development of the College's Strategic Plan included the use of focus groups to gather community input on stakeholder needs. This input was incorporated into the strategic goals and directions, including goals to develop more systematic processes to assess the needs and expectations of these groups and to incorporate these into future direction and goal setting. One of the first steps in achieving these goals was the budgeting process described in 5P2. As these efforts proceed, existing unit-level activities will be integrated into an institution-wide system.

Existing unit-level activities include the academic program review process, through which faculty and deans examine student success. In addition, many programs, including every Career and Technical Program, have advisory committees to review curriculum and objectives and provide input on stakeholder needs. Also, the Center for Lifelong Learning assesses business and community needs through surveys and uses these results in planning.

5P4

Laramie County Community College (LCCC) does not have a systematic process in place to survey future opportunities, but relies on a wide range of efforts to gather information. Prior to the adoption of the new Strategic Plan, these efforts were carried out at the department/program level without consistent

linkage to institutional goals. With the recently adopted Strategic Plan, an opportunity exists for the institution to develop more systematic efforts in this area.

5P5

Current practices include teams, task forces, groups and committees, both standing and ad hoc, are formed to make recommendations (such as screening committees, the textbook selection committee, and the diversity committee) or to carry out specific assignments (operating groups such as the Academic Standards Committee, Student Learning Assessment Committee, and the Learning Leadership Team). Sometimes groups that began as recommending bodies (such as the Enrollment Management Advisory Council) are transformed into operating bodies charged with implementing their recommendations. All such recommendations are subject to administrative approval at the appropriate level (Board of Trustees, President's Cabinet, Learning Leadership Team [LLT], Deans, etc.). In addition, feedback and input are gathered through in-service meetings, round tables, and consultative feedback processes, as well as the newly initiated Budget Advisory Committee and Campus Conversations.

While there are many structures in place, assessment efforts completed as a part of the AQIP process have clearly identified gaps and dissatisfaction with the decision-making processes at LCCC. As referenced in 3P3-3P4 above, the results on the annual climate survey identified concerns in the campus community in the arena of leading and communicating. The Quality Council has since initiated two action projects to address these concerns: College-wide College Council and Define Organizational Structures and Processes.

5P6

Currently data, information, and performance results are used in decision-making processes. The College recognizes the opportunity to strengthen the use of data to inform these processes and make them more robust. The third goal of the [Strategic Plan](#) is to ensure institutional effectiveness, including the development and implementation of assessment plans for all areas of the College. As mentioned above (see 5P2), initial efforts in this area were made in the most recent budgeting cycle.

Current practices include data used in decisions regarding

- admissions office recruiting efforts,
- academic program reviews,
- requests for new positions,
- course scheduling,
- building expansion and renovation,
- course and program curriculum and delivery, and
- new program proposals.

5P7

Information sharing between and among LCCC's levels occurs through electronic and print media and in small and large group meetings. In May 2009, the College adopted an e-mail procedure stating that e-mail is the official means of communicating official, immediate, institutional information. In addition, minutes of meetings are posted on the College's intranet. The President's Cabinet meets weekly, after which bullet points from the meetings are sent out to the campus community. In-service meetings are

scheduled each semester to discuss campus activities and issues. The President meets with faculty and staff groups each semester. The majority of teams and departments meet at least monthly.

It is important to note that information sharing is not the same as communication. As previously identified, LCCC has recognized that there do not exist adequate consensus building and ownership building interactive communication channels between and among the levels of the College and has made this an ongoing focus of the AQIP process. Current related action projects are the College-wide College Council and Define Organizational Structures and Processes. Furthermore, the President's Cabinet has initiated Campus Conversations to provide a forum for informal interaction.

5P8

At the beginning of each semester, the College President presents the state of the College and his priorities for the year. LCCC has recognized that presentation of information does not necessarily develop a shared vision or a deeper understanding of these characteristics. As mentioned elsewhere in this portfolio, LCCC has clearly identified this as a part of the AQIP process. The College recognizes that it has an outstanding opportunity to further address this area.

5P9

LCCC established the Leadership Academy in January 2008. The Academy has the goal and function of developing and strengthening leadership skills among the administrators and other interested employees. To date, the President's Cabinet, Deans and several directors have completed the Academy. Courses include employment law, policies and procedures, hiring practices, communication, conflict resolution, coaching, managing performance, quality improvement and motivation. This Academy will continue to develop current and future leaders on campus.

In addition to the Academy, there are several other opportunities for leadership development. The Human Resources Department is developing a supervisory training program to help guide managers and supervisors. College-wide involvement in AQIP processes is encouraged through participation in Action Project teams and the Quality Council. Employees are also encouraged to participate and accept leadership positions in a multitude of activities such as ad hoc and standing committees and teams and professional development organizations. Furthermore, the College supports employee participation in external leadership development programs such as Leadership Cheyenne and Leadership Wyoming.

5P10

Emergency presidential succession is addressed in the *Policy Governance Manual* and states, "In order to protect the Board from sudden loss of president services, the President shall not fail to ensure that at least three (3) other members of the management team are sufficiently familiar with Board and President issues and processes to take over with reasonable proficiency as an interim successor." In the event that vice presidents or deans leave the College, the President assigns interim individuals to fill the role until the new employee is hired. The Performance Management System Action Team identified the need for LCCC to develop institution-wide succession planning processes.

Results

5R1

The College initiated an annual climate survey and follow-up focus survey process in the fall 2009, as discussed elsewhere in this portfolio. The climate survey addressed such issues as leadership and communicating throughout the entire college.

5R2

In fall 2009, the College administered a climate survey during an all-college meeting to determine where the next action projects should be focused. The survey consisted of a series of statements to which employees were asked to indicate their level of agreement. Approximately 70% of employees responded. Through an analysis of the results (see Table 5R2), the College identified the strongest opportunities for improvement in this category. As presented in the table below, the stronger the disagreement, the greater the opportunity for the College. As indicated elsewhere, these results have had a substantial impact on the institution. The institutional response is ongoing. See 5I1 below for more information.

Table 5R2: Fall 2009 Climate Survey Results for Leading and Communicating

Statement about LCCC	Agree or Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
At LCCC, there is a climate of trust among faculty, staff, and administrators.	20%	22%	58%
Morale and job satisfaction are high.	17%	27%	57%
Administrators clearly explain the process and rationale used in decision making.	23%	24%	53%
I feel comfortable speaking out on issues affecting the college.	27%	26%	47%
Input from employees is considered in the decision-making process.	26%	28%	46%
There is a climate in which different opinions are welcomed and respected.	30%	25%	44%
Communication between employees (faculty and staff) and the administration is two-way.	36%	22%	42%
I have the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.	40%	27%	33%
The college has broad-based involvement in its planning processes.	27%	42%	31%
I believe the college is headed in the right direction.	45%	29%	26%
I participate in the decision-making process.	42%	35%	23%
Communication within my own work area is two-way.	70%	13%	17%
I help provide solutions to issues affecting the college.	50%	34%	15%
Taking part in the decision-making process is important to me.	78%	17%	5%

5R3

Currently LCCC does not have comparison data for performance results in this category. The College will be implementing the Noel-Levitz College Employee Satisfaction Survey in fall 2010 to address this issue.

Improvements

5I1, 5I2

Issues related to Category 5, Leading and Communicating, have been a recurring concern to the institution since the last comprehensive self-study (1999). The ongoing processes associated with AQIP have fostered the development of a culture of continuous improvement and enabled the College to finally gain some traction in addressing these issues.

The fall 2009 Climate Survey highlighted the categories (4 and 5) in which the greatest opportunities lay. Subsequently, the College established the Leading and Communicating Action Team, which was charged to drill down into the Climate Survey results to better understand the issues and to recommend action projects. This led to the Focused Survey in January 2010; the results of this survey were used to recommend several action projects and quick fixes. Two of the action project projects, College-wide College Council and Define Organizational Structures and Processes, have been initiated in this category. Additional, less formal efforts (quick fixes) include employee lunches with the President, fireside chats with President's Cabinet, and the electronic distribution of President's Council bullets. Finally, the climate survey/focused survey process will be ongoing.

Another improvement was the initiation of the Leadership Academy (see Category 4) to strengthen the development of leadership across the College. The College has also initiated a benchmarking action project (see Category 7), which will strengthen effectiveness in all categories. Efforts in this area are further aided by the recent adoption of the Strategic Plan. The impetus for developing this plan is also a manifestation of the growing culture of continuous improvement.