

SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGE SOUTHEAST TECHNICAL

October 24, 2007



**Academic
Quality Improvement
Program**

The Higher Learning Commission **NCA**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGE – SOUTHEAST TECHNICAL

The following are summary comments on each of the AQIP Categories crafted by the Appraisal Team to highlight Minnesota State College Southeast Technical achievements and to identify challenges yet to be met.

Category 1 Helping Students Learn

The College describes considerable inertia surrounding assessment of student learning. However, the report indicates that it occurred in fits and starts usually related to HLC visits or concerns. While many institutions labor within this approach to assessment, the College could excel by more actively and consistently focusing on the issue.

The College has been compiling data that could be useful to the institution if applied in the context of strategic analysis for continuous quality improvement.

The Colleges' processes for setting, prioritizing and communicating targets for improvement of student learning remain unclear. Codifying and institutionalizing these parameters would empower the College and allow it to better understand how it could guide student success.

Category 2 Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives

The College has demonstrated careful, thoughtful work in identifying three distinctive objectives. The College would benefit from surveying its communities/service region stakeholders to determine the impact of the Foundation and the College's community involvement activities.

While the College did not indicate it assesses and reviews other distinctive objectives, there are a number of positive benefits from doing so, especially with respect to efficiency and effectiveness of operations.

While the results of accomplishing other distinctive objectives have been ongoing since 2003, it is unclear how these results compare with peer as well as other higher education institutions.

Category 3 Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs

The College's commitment to understanding who it serves is well documented in the data gathered and the analysis processes currently in place. The College recognized

the issues with the LRC and made changes to improve its operation. The continuance of such activity will only serve to benefit the College. Expansion of this commitment to include new student and stakeholder groups should be addressed in the College's educational offerings and services as a natural next step.

Category 4 Valuing People

Utilizing the collaborative process implemented to address the Nursing admissions issue on a more global scale could improve employee satisfaction in the performance review process and foster a greater perception of inclusion as part of the decision-making process.

The College has done a good job with its Action Project on staff development. The success modeled by the action project could serve as a template to address issues surrounding staff evaluations.

Evidence of employee training to address a culture of continuous quality improvement appears to be lacking. The College could improve the adoption of a continuous improvement philosophy by ensuring all staff members understand and embrace the mindset.

The College could employ measures to indicate the productivity and effectiveness of faculty, staff, and administrators in helping achieve College goals.

The College should develop measures comparing internal results to other higher education institutions in addition to MnSCU, as well as to other organizations outside of the education community. Comparison to other organizations could place the College's own performance in better perspective, and perhaps provide direction for continuous improvement initiatives.

Category 5 Leading and Communicating

College efforts toward a comprehensive approach to leading and communicating appear inconsistent. The College has tried several strategies to improve communication but to date it is unclear the degree to which these initiatives have had a positive impact. While selective actions have been taken as a result of survey information, it would be beneficial to the College to utilize a wider spectrum of tools to generate information gathered at more than one level in order to foster data driven decision making.

Development of a succession plan can provide a sound transition should any catastrophic event occur.

The College could benefit from the development of a decision-making model based on data that is used throughout the institution at all levels.

Category 6 Supporting Institutional Operations

The area of support services is vitally important to the ongoing health of any institution of higher learning. It appears that the College is challenged to be as nimble as needed to address the changing needs of its stakeholders. It is unclear how or if responsible entities set targets for improvement.

The College could profit from comparing internal results to other higher education institutions or organizations outside of the education community. Comparison to other organizations could place The College's own performance in perspective, and perhaps provide direction for continuous improvement initiatives.

Category 7 Measuring Effectiveness

The College's recent emphasis on measuring effectiveness is commendable. However, it is unclear that the model for Assessment, Analysis, Development and Implementation is in use throughout the institution. Further development and deployment should provide information needed to make useful data-driven decisions.

Across the categories, the College reports that many processes are too new to have either generated results, or the results are too new to have been analyzed and acted upon.

Category 8 Planning Continuous Improvement

The College has made efforts to develop the strategic planning processes. Such preparation will result in actionable continuous quality improvements.

Providing projections of performance of strategies and action plans will result in positive results in the area of continuous quality improvement. Furthermore, comparing projections to those of similar institutions will allow the College to gain perspective on its success in the area of continuous quality improvement.

Category 9 Building Collaborative Relationships

The College's collaborative relationships clearly serve the school and the community in a number of ways – educationally and economically. The planning processes in the Strategic Plan 2007-2011 have been completed; the ongoing development of processes to embrace a “Do-Study-Act” should provide information for data-driven decision making.

Accreditation issues and Strategic challenges for Minnesota State College Southeast Technical are listed in detail within the Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis section of the Appraisal Feedback Report.

ELEMENTS OF Minnesota State College Southeast Technical FEEDBACK REPORT

The *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* provides AQIP's official response to your *Systems Portfolio* by a team of readers trained in evaluation. After appraisers independently reviewed your document, the team reached consensus on essential elements of your institutional profile, strengths and opportunities for improvement by Category, and significant issues for your institution. These are presented in three sections of the Feedback Report: Accreditation Issues Analysis, Critical Characteristics Analysis, and Category Feedback. These components are interrelated in defining context, evaluating performance, surfacing critical issues, and assessing institutional performance.

It is important to remember that the Systems Appraisal Team had only your *Systems Portfolio* to guide their analysis of your institution's strengths and opportunities for improvement.

Consequently, their report may omit important strengths — if you were too modest to stress them in your *Systems Portfolio*, or if your discussion and documentation of them was unconvincing. Similarly, the team may have pointed out areas of potential improvement that are already receiving the institution's attention. Again, the team used its best judgment in identifying improvement opportunities. If some of these areas of potential improvement are now strengths rather than opportunities because of your own focused efforts, that is all to your credit. If the team was unsure about an area, we urged it to err on the side of giving your institution the best possible advice about where investing your efforts might pay off. If some of their advice comes after the fact, after you've already tackled an area, no harm is done.

Executive Summary. Summative statements agreed upon by the Systems Appraisal Team based upon the institution's achievements and challenges in regards to each of the nine AQIP Categories. Strategic challenges for the institution are listed in detail within the Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis section of the Appraisal Feedback Report.

Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis: Strategic issues are those most closely related to your institution's ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning, and quality improvement goals. Accreditation issues are areas where you have not yet provided evidence that you meet the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*, or where the evidence you have presented suggests you may have difficulties, now or in the future, in meeting these expectations. If accreditation is essential for your institution then any accreditation issues identified are, by definition, also strategic. The Systems Appraisal Team identified both of these kinds of issues through analysis of your Organizational Overview and the feedback it provided for each Category, as well as by reviewing the Index to the *Criteria for Accreditation* that you provided along with your *Systems Portfolio*. This list of strategic issues offers a framework for addressing ongoing improvement of processes and systems, serving as an executive summary of the Report's key findings and recommendations.

Critical Characteristics: Your Systems Portfolio's Organizational Overview provides context for the team's knowledge of your institution's identity, mission objectives, strategic goals, and key factors related to improvement. Critical Characteristics are those features most important for understanding the institution's mission, environment, stakeholders, competitive position, goals, and processes. Characteristics having the greatest relevance to each Category are identified in the Report.

Category Feedback: The Report's feedback on each of AQIP's nine Categories specifically identifies 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. Comments, which are keyed to your *Systems Portfolio*, offer brief analysis of each strength and opportunity. Organized by Category, and presenting the team's findings in detail, this section is the heart of the Report. At the end of the list of strengths and opportunities for each Category is the team's consensus assessment of the institution's stage of development on that particular Category. This section consists of a series of statements reflecting the reviewers' assessment of the institution's current status in relation to critical quality

characteristics: 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 the Category covers. Since institutions are complex, maturity levels may vary from one Category to another.

STRATEGIC AND ACCREDITATION ISSUES

In conducting the Systems Appraisal, the team attempted to identify the broader issues that present the greatest challenges and opportunities for your institution in the coming years. These are all strategic issues, ones you need to grapple with as you identify your institution's strategies for confronting the future and becoming the institution you want to be. The team also examined whether any of these strategic issues put your institution into jeopardy of not meeting the Higher Learning Commission's accreditation expectations.

Issues Affecting Compliance with the *Criteria for Accreditation*. An important goal for the Systems Appraisal was to review your institution's compliance with the Higher Learning Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*. The peer quality experts who served on the team were all trained in evaluating Colleges and universities using the Commission's *Criteria*, and the Systems Appraisal process they followed included careful steps to ensure the team used the *Criteria* as a major factor in their review. As the team reviewed your presentation of your institutions under each AQIP Category, it searched for accreditation-related issues and concerns. In addition, the team used the *Index to the Criteria for Accreditation* that you provided with your Portfolio to perform a comprehensive review of the *Criteria* and each Core Component to ascertain whether you presented compelling evidence that your institution complies with each of these Commission expectations.

The Systems Appraisal team concluded that Minnesota State College Southeast Technical has presented evidence that it complies with each of the Five *Criteria for Accreditation* and each of their Core Components. Although the Systems Appraisal does not in itself constitute a review for continued accreditation, the team's conclusion upon reviewing your Portfolio against the *Criteria* will serve as a telling piece of evidence during the Commission's next scheduled AQIP review of your institution for Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

Issues Affecting Future Institutional Strategies. The Systems Appraisal Team identified the following strategic issues to assist Minnesota State College Southeast Technical in prioritizing and taking action on the important broad challenges and opportunities it faces. From these you may discover your vital immediate priorities, shaping strategies that can lead to a quantum leap in the performance of your institution. Implementing these strategies may call for specific actions, so AQIP's expectation that your institution be engaged in three or four vital Action Projects at all times will help encourage your administrators, faculty, and staff to turn these strategic goals into real accomplishments. Knowing that Minnesota State College Southeast Technical will discuss these strategic issues, give priority to those it concludes are most critical, and take action promptly, the Systems Appraisal Team identified:

While priorities and opportunities are clearly identified for the College, measurable targets and anticipated timelines are unclear. Measurable targets and defined timeframes are essential elements in a quality improvement program.

The College will find it useful to obtain and utilize comparative data from similar but non-MnSCU and/or independent schools. This type of comparative information contributes to process improvement and clarifies perceptions.

The College notes that the key to improving processes and systems for understanding needs includes enhancing/expanding data sources, improving data analyses and their use in institutional decision making, and moving from pilot programs to institutional-wide implementation. Addressing these issues will advance the College in its program of continuous quality improvement.

Information presented indicates that communication processes between different levels of the institution require improvement, particularly in terms of goals and information.

Addressing the process of how leadership relates identified issues to the use of data in decision making would be valuable to the College. A codified process would contribute to improved data/information, more consistent and complete communications, and more comprehensive planning.

USING THE FEEDBACK REPORT

The AQIP *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* is intended to initiate action for improvement. It is therefore important that the Report produced by the Systems Appraisal Team stimulate review of organizational processes and systems. Though decisions about specific actions are each institution's, AQIP expects every institution to use its feedback to stimulate cycles of continual improvement. At the next Strategy Forum an AQIP institution attends, its peers will examine in detail how it is using the feedback from its Systems Appraisal.

An organization needs to examine its Report strategically to identify those areas that will yield greatest benefit if addressed. Some key questions that may arise in careful examination of the Report may be: 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. Based solely upon an organization's *Systems Portfolio*, the Report reflects a disciplined, external review of what an organization says about itself. The report should help an organization identify ways to improve its *Systems Portfolio* so it functions better to communicate accurately to internal and external audiences. But the Report's chief purpose is to help you to identify areas for improvement, and to act so that these areas actually improve. These improvements can then be incorporated into an updated *Systems Portfolio*, guaranteeing that future Systems Appraisals will reflect the progress an institution has made.

Within a year following the Systems Appraisal, an institution participates in another AQIP Strategy Forum, where the focus will be on what the institution has learned from its Appraisal (and from its other methods of identifying and prioritizing improvement opportunities, and what it has concluded are its major strategic priorities for the next few years. 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 through Action Projects that will make a difference in institutional performance.

CRITICAL CHARACTERISTICS ANALYSIS

The purpose of this section is to identify what team members understood to be the critical and distinguishing characteristics of your institution. They are the shared understanding of the most important aspects of Minnesota State College Southeast Technical, its current dynamics and the forces surrounding it, and its internal momentum and aspirations, at least as team members understood them. This section also demonstrates that the Systems Appraisal Team recognized and knew what makes Minnesota State College Southeast Technical distinctive. Should you find some characteristics that you think are critical and missing from this list, you may want to clarify and highlight these items when you revise your *Systems Portfolio* and other literature explaining your institution to the public.

Item Critical Characteristic

- O1a Minnesota State College-Southeast Technical is a public two-year open admissions technical college with two major campuses: Winona (72 acres) and Red Wing (55 acres), 65 miles apart. The College's primary service area includes the southeast corner of Minnesota, southwestern Wisconsin, and a portion of northeast Iowa.
- O1b The College is the product of a merger of Winona and Red Wing Technical Colleges. It is part of a single governing board and state system designed to enhance individual institutional viability through administrative efficiencies, institutional collaboration and cooperation.
- O1c The College's mission and vision statements reflect a commitment to educating students for employment, skill enhancement and retraining, and to providing them with learning opportunities for professional and personal enrichment. The College has also incorporated a set of defined values (Integrity, Diversity, Excellence, Access, Learning, and Stewardship).
- O1d The College offers 83 certificates, diplomas, Associate of Science degrees, and Associate of Applied Science degrees in six career program areas.
- O1e The College participates in MN Online, a collaboration within the Minnesota State College and University system (MnSCU) to offer degrees and courses through the MnSCU central web portal.

- O1f The College has experienced significant growth in the demand for general education, transfer, and online offerings since 2001.
- O1g Each campus competes with multiple 2- and 4-year local and national institutions.
- O1h In light of the decline in the traditional pre-collegiate pool of applicants, the College has expanded recruitment to attract adult learners and students who seek specific courses rather than entire programs.
- O1i For the College, the “Vo-tech” image is evolving into a community driven institution of higher learning for professional and personal betterment.
- O2a The College’s Center for Custom Training and Education (CTE) provides hour and credit-based contract training for area businesses, continuing education for non-degree seeking students, operates the Small Business Development Centers of Winona and Red Wing, and facilitates Minnesota Job Skills Partnership grants with its corporate partners. It is designed to be self-sufficient as well as a revenue-generating entrepreneurial division.
- O2b The College has identified three primary institutional objectives: integrate the College into business planning, development, sustenance and growth; develop the College Foundation; integrate the College with local and regional communities.
- O2c Through institutional planning, distinctive objectives are shaped by state statutes, including those created by the MnSCU system, and the evolution of the Colleges’ mission, vision, and values statements.
- O3a Selected College statistics: 60% of students attend classes on the Winona campuses, 40% at the Red Wing campus; 44% enrolled in classes directly after high school; over 94% of FY05 graduates found related employment within 6 months; in 2006, 66% of students received financial aid; and there is a 16:1 student/faculty ratio. Student population statistics reflect growth in female, diversity, financial aid recipients, and full time enrollment populations.
- O3b Students attend the College due to: availability of a particular program; location of the College; cost of attending the College; variety of courses offered; and availability of financial aid or scholarships.

- O3c As an open enrollment institution, the College provides programs and services to a diverse student population with acknowledged individual and group needs influenced, for example by educational background, preparedness for college, English proficiency, and/or family responsibilities/support.
- O4a The College reports a total of 204 employees, of which 118 are full-time and 86 are part-time including 87 faculty members. All faculty members are credentialed for their areas of instruction. Demographic characteristics of the College's employees include 57% female and 2% minorities. Five different bargaining units represent employees. Through collective bargaining, MnSCU colleges must maintain a minimum of 60% unlimited full-time faculty.
- O4b Of the College's support and administrative positions, the majority are reviewed and classified by the Minnesota Department of Employee Relations (DOER).
- O4c The policies of the Minnesota DOER are administered by the MnSCU central human resources office and are impacted by collective bargaining agreements, specific systems credentialing, HR procedures, and defined reporting structures.
- O5a The College is subject to the MnSCU Board of Trustees, which is appointed by the Governor and selects the College Chancellor, is responsible for system-wide planning, system rules and regulations, and setting policy for academics, fiscal management, personnel, admissions and tuition and fees. The College participates in the federal Pell and work-study programs, Minnesota State Grant Program, and the Perkins (federal) program.
- O5b At the College, the Executive Council is responsible for all school operations.
- O5c The College annually publishes its values (IDEALS), Student Responsibilities and Rights statements, as well as College Responsibility statements.
- O6a Programs housed at each campus reflect the needs of the region each serves; dual-campus programs are offered where demand exists (e.g., Carpentry, Accounting). The College also offers courses in accounting at Rushford, MN, approximately 20 miles Southeast of Winona.

- O6b Sixty-six percent of the College's building space is between 33 and 39 years of age. Enrollment growth and changing student needs have propelled a large-scale remodeling project at both the Winona main and Red Wing campuses.
- O6c Equipment inventory exceeds \$48 million and the value of computer-related instructional technology exceeds \$1.5 million. Seventy-five percent of the College technology budget is dedicated to instructional support with a student access ratio of 4 students/computer. Wireless access is available at the Red Wing campus and at critical student access areas at the Winona campus.
- O6d Financially, the College operates under the authorization of the Minnesota State College and Universities system. College funds are managed as a stand-alone unit and are subject to independent audit. Allocations to the system are a direct legislative appropriation. The annual College operating budget averages \$14.5 million with \$500,000 for technology upgrades.
- O6e The College is obliged to seek additional and alternative funding sources. Ensuring access means remaining affordable, even with an allocation model for state funded institutions that is moving away from majority state support.
- O7a The College has identified three sets of outcomes to measure student learning: college-wide common learning outcomes; Minnesota Transfer Curriculum outcomes; and program-specific learning outcomes.
- O7b The College utilizes several information systems including: Integrated Statewide Records System; Statewide Employment Management System; State Colleges and Universities Personnel and Payroll System; and the Minnesota Accounting and Procurement System.
- O7c The College maintains a database for academic program plans, course outlines, program descriptions, general program information, and related academic reports.
- O8a Institutional decision making occurs through the Colleges' annual strategic work plan and budgeting processes.
- O8b The College has established four strategic directions: increased access and opportunity; promote and measure high quality programs and services; providing programs and

services integral to state and regional economic needs; and innovate to meet current and future educational needs efficiency.

- O8c Beginning in 2005, the College deployed a new planning process (IDEALS 2011).
- O9a The College's engagement with MnSCU has made the school a stronger force for civic and economic development. The College is focused on preparing individuals for employment and advancement and is responsive to community needs.
- O9b The College is working to overcome the perception that trade programs are for those who cannot meet the academic rigors of typical higher education.
- O9c The College has characterized each of its key collaborative relationships with an articulation of its partnership purpose, risks and mutual benefits, and relevance to vision and mission.

CATEGORY FEEDBACK

In the following sections, each of which deals with strengths and opportunities for improvement for one of the nine AQIP Categories, selected *Critical Characteristics* are again highlighted; those the Systems Appraisal Team believed were critical keys to reviewing that particular AQIP Category. The symbols used in these "strengths and opportunities" sections for each Category stand for *outstanding strength* (SS), *strength* (S), *opportunity for improvement* (O) and *pressing or outstanding opportunity for improvement* (OO). The choice of symbol for each item represents the consensus evaluation of the Systems Appraisal Team members, and deserves your 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

Helping Students Learn identifies the shared purpose of all higher education organizations, and is accordingly the pivot of any institutional analysis. This Category focuses on the teaching-learning process within a formal instructional context, yet also addresses how your entire institution contributes to helping students learn and overall student development. It examines

your 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.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Minnesota State College Southeast Technical that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 1, Helping Students Learn:

Item Critical Characteristic

- O1a Minnesota State College-Southeast Technical is a public two-year open admissions technical college with two major campuses: Winona (72 acres), and Red Wing (55 acres), 65 miles apart. The College's primary service area includes the southeast corner of Minnesota, southwestern Wisconsin, and a portion of northeast Iowa.
- O1c The College's mission and vision statements reflect a commitment to educating students for employment, skill enhancement and retraining, and to providing them with learning opportunities for professional and personal enrichment. The College has also incorporated a set of defined values (Integrity, Diversity, Excellence, Access, Learning, and Stewardship).
- O1d The College offers 83 certificates, diplomas, Associate of Science degrees, and Associate of Applied Science degrees in six career program areas.
- O1e The College participates in MN Online; a collaboration within the Minnesota State College and University system (MnSCU) to offer degrees and courses through the MnSCU central web portal.
- O1h In light of the decline in the traditional pre-collegiate pool of applicants, the College has expanded recruitment to attract adult learners and students who seek specific courses rather than entire programs.
- O2a The College's Center for Custom Training and Education (CTE) provides hour and credit-based contract training for area businesses, continuing education for non-degree seeking students, operates the Small Business Development Centers of Winona and

Red Wing, and facilitates Minnesota Job Skills Partnership grants with its corporate partners. It is designed to be self-sufficient as well as a revenue-generating entrepreneurial division.

- O3c As an open enrollment institution, the College provides programs and services to a diverse student population with acknowledged individual and group needs influenced for example by educational background, preparedness for college, English proficiency, and/or family responsibilities/support.
- O6a Programs housed at each campus reflect the needs of the region each serves; dual-campus programs are offered where demand exists (e.g., Carpentry, Accounting).
- O7a The College has identified three sets of outcomes to measure student learning: college-wide common learning outcomes; Minnesota Transfer Curriculum outcomes; and program-specific learning outcomes.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Minnesota State College Southeast Technical’s most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 1, Helping Students Learn.

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1P1	S	In 2002, the College collaboratively developed and validated a philosophy of general education which was subsequently distributed throughout the organization. The College has established committees for and uses various methods to determine common student and program learning objectives, design new programs, and determine the preparation required of students.
1P2	S	The College has an identifiable process for developing new programs which includes evaluating the availability of resources and validating the relevancy of the proposed curriculum with external stakeholders. The State of Minnesota has a universal transfer agreement to facilitate easy movement between institutions within the state. In order to ensure consistency and compliance in relation to the transfer curriculum, the Minnesota State College and University System (MnSCU) is conducting a

- comprehensive review of courses offered in its transfer curriculum (2007).
The College also adheres to the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum Guidelines established in 1994 by the Minnesota Transfer Agreement.
- 1P3 O While a thoughtful process is in place to determine need for and mission congruence of new programs, the College is developing information which indicates what preparation is required of students. Such information should facilitate improved opportunities for student success.
- 1P4 S The College uses its catalog, web sites and program brochures for communicating expectations.
- 1P5 S College counselors use information from career assessment inventories to assist students in identifying appropriate programs. In addition, the College uses the Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS) to help students progress in a timely fashion.
- 1P6 O Although the College has responded to HLC concerns about assessment by developing action plans, some of the efforts have not taken root. A consolidation and completion of these efforts, to include full-time faculty, should provide the institution with information vital to data-driven decision making surrounding issues of student success.
- 1P7 O Developed in fall 2006, the faculty introduced a peer review process for the design of all online courses. This process ensures that the delivery system is effective and efficient. The College could benefit by initiating such a process for traditional classes as well.
- 1P8 SS The College has a well developed review process to monitor the currency and effectiveness of the curriculum which includes accountability standards and program viability.
- 1P9 O The Action Project to improve critical support services appears to have moved directly to improving specific services. The College might be better served by prioritizing needs prior to implementing projects.
- 1P10 O It is unclear that all co-curricular activities promote the values of the College (IDEAL). Further strengthening of this relationship could reinforce

that co-curricular development goals are aligned with curricular learning objectives.

- 1P11 OO The College has a plan to improve the process of student assessment; however, it is unclear if the plan has been implemented. Realization of the plan should contribute to more success in helping students learn.
- 1P12 OO Although the College has a variety of means for measuring student preparedness, it is unclear when follow-up studies are conducted and their degree of comprehensiveness. The use of data-informed decision making should better serve the College in this area.
- 1R1 O The College provides data from the 2005 and 2007 learning outcomes ratings, however with the exception of issues surrounding mathematics, no analysis of the results of the data or of action taken is presented. Such data provides an excellent baseline upon which to build as the institution develops strategies for student success.
- 1R2 O It is unclear if the College directly measures knowledge and skills with the exception of nursing. In order to maintain standards of continuous improvement, it is necessary to employ measures across the College.
- 111 S The College reports a shift from imposing assessment processes to collaboratively establishing them, with interest from the faculty.

AQIP CATEGORY 2: ACCOMPLISHING OTHER DISTINCTIVE OBJECTIVES

Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of your institution's major objectives that complement student learning and fulfill other portions of your mission. Depending on your institution's character, it examines your 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.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Minnesota State College Southeast Technical that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation

of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 2, Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives:

Item Critical Characteristic

- O2a The College's Center for Custom Training and Education (CTE) provides hour and credit-based contract training for area businesses, continuing education for non-degree seeking students, operates the Small Business Development Centers of Winona and Red Wing, and facilitates Minnesota Job Skills Partnership grants with its corporate partners. It is designed to be self-sufficient as well as a revenue-generating entrepreneurial division.
- O2b The College has identified three primary institutional objectives: integrate the College into business planning, development, sustenance and growth; develop the College Foundation; and integrate the College with local and regional communities.
- O2c Through institutional planning, distinctive objectives are shaped by state statutes, including those created by the MnSCU system, and the evolution of the Colleges' mission, vision, and values statements.
- O6a Programs housed at each campus reflect the needs of the region each serves; dual-campus programs are offered where demand exists (e.g., Carpentry, Accounting).
- O8b The College has established four strategic directions: increased access and opportunity; promote and measure high quality programs and services; providing programs and services integral to state and regional economic needs; and innovate to meet current and future educational needs efficiency.
- O9a The College's engagement with MnSCU has made the school a stronger force for civic and economic development. The College is focused on preparing individuals for employment and advancement and is responsive to community needs.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Minnesota State College Southeast Technical's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 2, Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives.

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
2P1	S	The College's objectives are shaped by state statutes, and by the evolution of the College mission, vision, and values through cyclical planning. Ultimate authority for setting objectives lies with the College President and Executive Council.
2P2	S	Expectations regarding objectives are communicated through newsletters, email, and monthly staff meeting announcements; during in-service meetings; while attending state and national meetings and conferences, and during orientation programs for new employees.
2P3	O	It is unclear how decision makers at the College determine faculty and staff needs in relation to the institution's other distinctive objectives. Having a process to identify staff needs could make meeting other objectives more efficient.
2P5a	S	The Executive Council, College departments, and work groups collect and analyze data related to CTE
2P5b	O	The College monitors Foundation gifts and grant reports but does not report a formalized process to determine the satisfaction of Foundation Board members with the College's use of donations. The College could benefit from surveying Foundation Board members as representative of all donors on the impact of the Foundation on the College.
2R1a	S	CTE programming has resulted in positive trends for contract training participation, grant training participation, and online. Contract credit participation resulted in a planned decline and open enrollment participation has remained even.
2R1b	SS	Foundation-related capital campaign and scholarship activity has increased since 2002.
2R1c	O	Although the College has demonstrated that it is taking measures to promote community involvement, data indicating success in this area is not included. The College could benefit from knowing if the time and money put into community relations was having a positive impact.

- 2R3 O Based on the information, it is unclear that other objectives strengthen the College and enhance relationships. The College could benefit from having information about its impact on its service region.

- 2I1 O While the recent employment of a full-time institutional research analyst will help the College better define avenues for data analysis on a college-wide basis, the school could benefit from a more formalized and comprehensive process of analyzing information in pursuit of developing new improvement strategies.

- 2I2 O Although the three objectives are in different stages of development, the CTE annual planning processes could function as a model for establishing improvement priorities for the other distinctive objectives.

AQIP CATEGORY 3: UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS' AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS' NEEDS

Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs 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.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Minnesota State College Southeast Technical that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 3, Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs:

Item Critical Characteristic

- O1c The College participates in MN Online, a collaboration within the Minnesota State College and University system (MnSCU) to offer degrees and courses through the MnSCU central web portal.

- O2a The College’s Center for Custom Training and Education (CTE) provides hour and credit-based contract training for area businesses, continuing education for non-degree seeking students, operates the Small Business Development Centers of Winona and Red Wing, and facilitates Minnesota Job Skills Partnership grants with its corporate partners. It is designed to be self-sufficient as well as a revenue-generating entrepreneurial division.

- O3b Students attend the College due to: availability of a particular program; location of the College; cost of attending the College; variety of courses offered; and availability of financial aid or scholarships.

- O3c As an open enrollment institution, the College provides programs and services to a diverse student population with acknowledged individual and group needs influenced, for example, by educational background, preparedness for college, English proficiency, and/or family responsibilities/support.

- O6a Programs housed at each campus reflect the needs of the region each serves; dual-campus programs are offered where demand exists (e.g., Carpentry, Accounting).

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Minnesota State College Southeast Technical’s most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 3, Understanding Students’ and Other Stakeholders’ Needs.

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
3P1	SS	The College uses committees and support services to identify the changing needs of student groups by analyzing data collected from College forms, basic skills tests, service and technology usage and satisfaction surveys.
3P2	SS	The College employees a number of methods for building and maintaining relationships with current and prospective students.
3P3-3P4	O	While the College is purposeful in building relationships with stakeholders, it isn’t clear how they identify changing needs. Creating a

- process to identify changing needs could make the College more agile in meeting its stakeholders' needs.
- 3P6 O Although the College has several mechanisms for gathering student complaints, it is unclear how it analyzes this feedback in a summative and formative manner, selects courses of action, and communicates the action. Complaints often reflect needs; response to student and other stakeholder complaints would further the College's willingness to listen, analyze and act.
- 3P7 OO The College collects data from multiple sources on student and other stakeholder satisfaction. However it is unclear how the information is used or what criteria are applied for determining success. Further, some of the measures that are collected appear to be indirect measures of student satisfaction. An understandable actionable picture of satisfaction can be best sustained through the use of clearly defined and updated statistics.
- 3R1 S The College has analyzed results from multiple years of satisfaction measures and has taken appropriate action. For example, student satisfaction with the LRC was an issue and the College addressed it with an action project. The results indicate that the satisfaction level with the LRC has improved significantly.
- 3R2 S Enrollment rates have experienced an upward trend. Success rates are above MnSCU rates for all 2-year Colleges. Only 2002 cohort rates lagged behind for the same period. Retention and degree completion rates are above the national average.
- 3R3-3R4 O While data concerning students has been collected and analyzed, data addressing other stakeholders has only recently been captured. As more data becomes available, trends can be determined and action can be taken to better address the needs of all stakeholders.
- 3I1-3I2 OO Furthering data analysis will be greatly enhanced by the hiring of a full-time Institutional Research technician. While many targets are yet to be

defined, the College needs to clearly articulate processes to address understanding the needs of key stakeholders.

AQIP CATEGORY 4: VALUING PEOPLE

Valuing People explores your institution's commitment to the development of your employees since the efforts of all your faculty, staff, and administrators are required for institutional success. It examines your 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.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Minnesota State College Southeast Technical that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 4, Valuing People:

Item Critical Characteristic

- O1c The College's mission and vision statements reflect a commitment to educating students for employment, skill enhancement and retraining, and to providing them with learning opportunities for professional and personal enrichment. The College has also incorporated a set of defined values (Integrity, Diversity, Excellence, Access, Learning, and Stewardship).

- O4a The College reports a total of 204 employees, of which 118 are full-time and 86 are part-time including 87 faculty members. All faculty members are credentialed for their areas of instruction. Demographic characteristics of the College's employees include 57% female and 2% minorities. Five different bargaining units represent employees. Through collective bargaining, MnSCU colleges must maintain a minimum of 60% unlimited full-time faculty.

- O4b Of the College's support and administrative positions, the majority are reviewed and classified by the Minnesota Department of Employee Relations (DOER).

O4c The policies of the Minnesota DOER are administered by the MnSCU central Human Resources office and are impacted by collective bargaining agreements, specific systems credentialing, HR procedures, and defined reporting structures.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Minnesota State College Southeast Technical's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 4, Valuing People.

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
4P1	S	The College has processes in place for determining skills and values required for employees, based on the long and short-term needs of the College and/or department. A standardized faculty credentialing process is in place, and the College uses systematic hiring procedures.
4P2a	S	The College has processes in place to recruit, hire and retain employees, based on standardized procedures in place for the MnSCU system.
4P2b	O	It is not clear if the College has employee retention or orientation processes. Much of the HR activity in this area is based on an "as needed" basis without clear policy or process reported.
4P3	SS	In response to an issue raised concerning admissions to the Nursing program, a staff development initiative was created to address admission process issues. The success of this collaborative and collegial approach as a solution of a major issue is commendable and under consideration for other departments.
4P4	SS	The College assesses need for faculty professional development based on program advisory committee recommendations, program review processes, and assessment of student learning. The College provides professional development opportunities and incentives, such as tuition for all MnSCU institutions.
4P6a	OO	The utilization of a formal faculty evaluation system is unclear. Evaluation of faculty performance is a critical component in advancing the teaching and learning process.

- 4P6b S The College has an employee performance evaluation system that is tied to job descriptions. Staff members are evaluated according to state policy on a 6-month review and update basis. Administrators perform a self evaluation on an annual basis.
- 4P7 S The College has procedures for recognizing, rewarding and compensating employees for service to students.
- 4P8 O Processes for identifying key issues related to motivation of faculty, staff and administrators include department initiated surveys, college-wide climate surveys, and the Faculty Shared Governance and AFSCME labor/management groups. Although groups charged with identifying issues exist, the College remains concerned about the effectiveness of processes currently used to identify key issues.
- 4P9a O It is unclear what policies or procedures the College has in place to determine employee satisfaction or well-being.
- 4P9b S The College has systems in place that ensure that staff satisfaction, health, safety, and well-being needs are met. These measures include CPR training, a college-wide safety committee, and emergency response plans.
- 4P10 O The College collects and analyzes a number of direct and indirect measures pertaining to valuing people. However it is unclear how the measures are utilized.
- 4R1a OO Although College policy mandates that supervisors conduct performance reviews of staff, the percentage of staff members with completed reviews reported was modest. Completed performance reviews for all employees would provide a basis for accountability and staff improvement plans.
- 4R1b O Expenditures for professional development for 2006 were 84% of those spent in 2004.
- 4R2 OO Although data have been gathered between FY2004 and FY2006, comparative analysis and action on these data are not indicated. Doing so should improve employee satisfaction and performance.

- 411 O The evaluation of employee performance is necessary for a supervisory position. Efforts to ensure that supervisors are at ease with this responsibility could facilitate and improve the process. The College acknowledges that it needs improved data to measure performance evaluation process effectiveness and the relationship between this process and others that impact professional development.
- 412 O Although improvement priorities are clearly identified, a process/culture for developing target completion dates has yet to be developed. As reported, currently improvement targets are limited to getting more data/information.

AQIP CATEGORY 5: LEADING AND COMMUNICATING

Leading And Communicating addresses how your institution's leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide your institution in setting directions, making decisions, seeking future opportunities, and building and sustaining a learning environment. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to leading activities, communicating activities, alignment of leadership system practices, institutional values and expectations, direction setting, future opportunity seeking, decision making, use of data, leadership development and sharing, succession planning, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Minnesota State College Southeast Technical that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 5, Leading and Communicating:

Item Critical Characteristic

- O1c The College's mission and vision statements reflect a commitment to educating students for employment, skill enhancement and retraining, and to providing them with learning opportunities for professional and personal enrichment. The College has also incorporated a set of defined values (Integrity, Diversity, Excellence, Access, Learning, and Stewardship).

- O2a The College has identified three primary institutional objectives: integrate the College into business planning, development, sustenance and growth; develop the College Foundation; and integrate the College with local and regional communities.
- O5a The College is subject to the MnSCU Board of Trustees, which is appointed by the Governor and selects the MSC-ST Chancellor, is responsible for system-wide planning, system rules and regulations, and setting policy for academics, fiscal management, personnel, admissions and tuition and fees. The College participates in the federal Pell and work-study programs, Minnesota State Grant Program, and the Perkins (federal) program.
- O5b At the College, the Executive Council is responsible for all school operations.
- O5c The College annually publishes its values (IDEALS), Student Responsibilities and Rights statements, as well as College Responsibility statements.
- O8a Institutional decision making occurs through the Colleges' annual strategic work plan and budgeting processes.
- O8b The College has established four strategic directions: increased access and opportunity; promote and measure high quality programs and services; provide programs and services integral to state and regional economic needs; and innovate to meet current and future educational needs efficiency.
- O8c Beginning in 2005, the College deployed a new planning process (IDEALS 2011).

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Minnesota State College Southeast Technical's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 5, Leading and Communicating.

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
5P1-5P2	OO	Although the College has clearly defined mission, vision and values statements, and an intentional strategy congruent with state requirements, it is unclear how these initiatives take into account the needs and expectations of students and key stakeholders. The processes

- for setting directions, seeking opportunities and sustaining a learning environment are unclear.
- 5P3 S It appears that in embracing a continuous improvement environment, the College leadership is expanding the input channels in the institutional decision-making processes through workgroups, formal committees, and ad hoc committees – many of which evolve to be incorporated as permanent committees.
- 5P5 O Although successful communication modes include personal contact, email, telephone and department meetings, and there are templates for committee minutes, the College indicates it uses email as its primary communication source. It is unclear how the College ensures that communication occurs upward and downward.
- 5P7 S The College encourages and strengthens leadership by developing administrators from within, including: faculty coordinators on the College's Academic Council; having faculty take the lead with special projects, workgroups, grant programs; Faculty Excellence Awards; Center of Excellence projects; and the faculty union. Leadership initiatives are communicated through college-wide email, staff meetings, newsletters and public relations announcements as well as annual reports.
- 5P8 OO It is unclear if the College maintains a leadership succession plan. Development of such a plan is necessary and assures continuity of leadership.
- 5P9 OO Measures of leading and communicating are limited to satisfaction surveys and communication/decision-making focused questionnaires. Further, there is little discussion of analyzing surveys, as well as modest descriptions of surveys. Although subjective measures of satisfaction are easily obtained, the use of objective measures could greatly enhance the validity of the data gathered.
- 5R1a S The institution has begun to collect information on the effectiveness of its communication processes, and has initially used the data to drive the implementation of an Action Project.

- 5R1b O While the College has taken action in response to the 2004 Constellation Survey, it is unclear how results of these process changes compare to other institutions. The College is addressing the survey results by making recommendations for change to the President and Executive Council and has made a number of critical adjustments to committees and communication structures.
- 5I1-5I2 OO Although the College used an FY07 climate survey to compare to the FY04 Constellation Survey, the institution acknowledges that other measures need to be established. The College estimates that these measures will grow out of the FY07 climate survey. Areas where action can be taken to improve leading and communicating are clearly identified; however, measurable targets are unclear.

AQIP CATEGORY 6: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS

Supporting Institutional Operations addresses the variety of your institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive. It examines your 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.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Minnesota State College Southeast Technical that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 6, Supporting Institutional Operations:

Item Critical Characteristic

- O6b Sixty-six percent of the College's building space is between 33 and 39 years of age. Enrollment growth and changing student needs has propelled a large-scale remodeling project at both the Winona main and Red Wing campuses.
- O6c Equipment inventory exceeds \$48 million and the value of computer-related instructional technology exceeds \$1.5 million. Seventy-five percent of the College technology budget

is dedicated to instructional support with a student access ratio of 4 students/computer. Wireless access is available at the Red Wing campus and at critical student access areas at the Winona campus.

- O6d Financially, the College operates under the authorization of the Minnesota State College and Universities system. College funds are managed as a stand-alone unit and are subject to independent audit. Allocations to the system are a direct legislative appropriation. The annual College operating budget averages \$14.5 million with \$500,000 for technology upgrades.
- O6e The College is obliged to seek additional and alternative funding sources. Ensuring access means remaining affordable, even with an allocation model for state funded institutions that is moving away from majority state support.
- O7a The College utilizes several information systems including: Integrated Statewide Records System; Statewide Employment Management System; State Colleges and Universities Personnel and Payroll System; and the Minnesota Accounting and Procurement System.
- O7c The College maintains a database for academic program plans, course outlines, program descriptions, general program information, and related academic reports.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Minnesota State College Southeast Technical's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 6, Supporting Institutional Operations.

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
6P1	S	Academic and Student Affairs use program advisory committees and program reviews to identify support service needs of students. Program advisory committees inform instructors of needed entry-level skills, attitudes, behaviors and life skills that shape curricula and delivery. Program review informs instructors of needed learning and support process improvements to ensure program viability.
6P2	O	The Executive Council is responsible for administrative support services, however, it is unclear how needs are identified.

- 6P3 S The College utilizes department and work group meetings to problem-solve, address process improvements, and manage work plan goals. Activities are documented and process records are used to ensure continuity during succession, to identify improvement opportunities, and to foster cross-training. The delivery of services and dissemination of information occurs through the application of various technologies.
- 6P4 S The College collects information from process stakeholders and uses the information to drive changes to support services. Day-to-day concerns are addressed at the lowest possible level within the organization. Concerns that rise to a more inclusive level are considered and addressed at the most appropriate upper level.
- 6P5 S The College uses student satisfaction, employee satisfaction, repair and replacement expenditures, classroom and laboratory utilization, and other sources of information to measure student and administrative support processes.
- 6R1 S In the FY04 AQIP Vital Focus Constellation Survey seven out of the top ten items rated by College employees were specific to Student Services. One item was rated as high priority, but not done well. Student satisfaction with Student Services ranked higher than national averages.
- 6R2 S The College presents multiple year results for both satisfaction and fiscal health with accompanying analyses that will assist in continued strategic planning. The College maintains buildings and technology according to employee satisfaction surveys. The College is reported as financially sound, in that its cash reserve fund is three times the state system's requirement.
- 6I1 O The 2007 follow-up climate survey relating to issues from the FY04 AQIP Vital Focus Constellation Survey will help to determine short- and long-term impacts related to remodeling projects, re-coding classroom utilization, and measuring both satisfaction and use of the remodeled LRC and commons area. The College identifies the lag time between proposal and funding for buildings as problematic – primarily because of

inflexible commitments. Because of the technical aspects of the College's programs, space utilization reporting is challenging. While efforts are underway to address these issues, supporting institutional operations is a primary consideration in assessing the viability of the College.

- 612 O While support service opportunities are clearly identified, the College does not report measurable targets or timelines for completion. It isn't clear how the College determines targets.

AQIP CATEGORY 7: MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

Measuring Effectiveness examines how your institution collects, analyzes, and uses information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to collection, storage, management, and use of information and data – at the institutional and departmental/unit levels; 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.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Minnesota State College Southeast Technical that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 7, Measuring Effectiveness:

Item Critical Characteristic

- O7a The College has identified three sets of outcomes to measure student learning: college-wide common learning outcomes; Minnesota Transfer Curriculum outcomes; and program-specific learning outcomes.
- O7b The College utilizes several information systems including: Integrated Statewide Records System; Statewide Employment Management System; State Colleges and Universities Personnel and Payroll System; and the Minnesota Accounting and Procurement System.
- O7c The College maintains a database for academic program plans, course outlines, program descriptions, general program information, and related academic reports.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Minnesota State College Southeast Technical's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 7, Measuring Effectiveness.

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
7P1	S	The institution has clear, measurable goals aligned with the MnSCU system's strategic directions and has a clearly defined process for determining the viability of programs. The College uses two data-driven planning processes that impact program viability: program advisory committee interaction and program reviews. The results from these processes impact programmatic and institutional decisions involving student support services, advising, instructional support, as well as budgeting and added investments.
7P2	O	In 2004, the College completed a systematic evaluation of data practices to eliminate duplication, in 2005 upgraded the institutional research analyst position to full-time, and provided primary data source access. It is unclear whether these changes will ensure that individual departmental needs are being met.
7P3	S	The College uses comparative information and data provided by the Office of the Chancellor which is part of the System Accountability Framework. Institutions of similar size, offering similar programs and services state-wide and within the immediate service region are criteria for selecting comparative information and data from the MnSCU system.
7P4	O	The College leadership is charged with the analysis and communication of information and data. However, it is unclear how this analysis relates to overall performance measures related to AQIP criteria. The institution acknowledges that the CFO and CAO are defining/refining communications protocols between/among units to facilitate timely analysis of information for effective decision making.
7P5	OO	Although the College has recently developed an annual planning process, it is too soon to determine if this process will ensure alignment with institutional goals and objectives. The College recognizes that

- communication of the results of these analyses is both essential and challenging. Although the institution maintains that “the sharing of information occurs as needed within and among operational units,” a systematic means of sharing information would add value to the process.
- 7P6 SS The IT department has developed a comprehensive process for ensuring effectiveness of information systems and processes. The College employs the Parkerian Hexad as the method to ensure effectiveness of their information systems.
- 7P7 O The College reports that many of their information systems are not mature enough to have been collecting and analyzing effectiveness measures regularly, but will be implementing these provisions in the future.
- 7R1 OO The College acknowledges that it currently does not have a systematic approach to assessing the effectiveness of measurement systems. Although certain dashboard measures have been included in the portfolio, others could not be included because they have yet to be determined (only baseline data has been collected). While an academic database has recently been established and is still in its development stage, a formal feedback process on accessibility, convenience, and clarity of report formats would add to its effectiveness.
- 7I1 OO The institution acknowledges that integrity and security concerns result from the storage of paper documents that have yet to be converted to digitized, editable format documents and record templates (as mandated by MnSCU). The College also acknowledges that an overhaul of its document management system will allow it to get its data “house” in order.

AQIP CATEGORY 8: PLANNING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Planning Continuous Improvement examines your institution’s planning processes and how your strategies and action plans are helping you achieve your mission and vision. It examines your

institution's processes and systems related to institutional vision; planning; strategies and action plans; coordination and alignment of strategies and action plans; measures and performance projections; resource needs; faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities; measures; analysis of performance projections and results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Minnesota State College Southeast Technical that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 8, Planning Continuous Improvement:

Item Critical Characteristic

- O2b The College has identified three primary institutional objectives: integrate the College into business planning, development, sustenance and growth; develop the College Foundation; and integrate the College with local and regional communities.

- O6a Sixty-six percent of the College's building space is between 33 and 39 years of age. Enrollment growth and changing student needs have propelled a large-scale remodeling project at both the Winona main and Red Wing campuses.

- O8a Institutional decision making occurs through the Colleges' annual strategic work plan and budgeting processes.

- O8b The College has established four strategic directions: increased access and opportunity; promote and measure high quality programs and services; provide programs and services integral to state and regional economic needs; and innovate to meet current and future educational needs efficiency.

- O8c Beginning in 2005, the College deployed a new planning process (IDEALS 2011).

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Minnesota State College Southeast Technical's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 8, Planning Continuous Improvement.

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
8P1	O	Since 2005, the College has put forth a major effort to reshape its planning process so that its mission, vision and values are unifying

- elements, and that departmental plans are aligned with the schools plans. Although the process has been developed, it is not entirely operational. Full implementation will allow the College to better serve its constituencies.
- 8P2 S Although long-term strategies are dependent upon MnSCU's plan, short term strategy efforts at the College have involved stakeholders in the creation of the 2007-2011 Strategic Plan.
- 8P3 SS Incorporating AQIP PDSA method and Six Sigma planning concepts into the annual departmental work plan has resulted in individual department continuous improvement "portfolios" that were finalized in October 2006.
- 8P4 SS The Executive Council, which is comprised of department heads, works to ensure that planning processes, strategies, and action plans are coordinated and aligned at all levels of the institution. This is accomplished by incorporating departmental work plans into the department annual planning cycle timeline.
- 8P5 O It is not clear how the College selects measures and sets performance projections for institutional strategies and action plans. Codifying the selection process could help maintain standards congruent with continuous improvement efforts.
- 8P6 S Departmental work plans are required to be fundable as well as having opportunities for cost-sharing identified before submission to the President. It is expected that plans will include projected budgets that account for staff, space, equipment, etc.
- 8P7 S The professional development provided on several levels ensures that faculty, staff and administrators are trained to address requirements regarding quality improvement processes, changing institutional strategies, and action plans.
- 8P8 O Although the College has identified effectiveness measures, they are limited to satisfaction surveys and action project results. Expanding

- methods for measuring effectiveness will provide valuable data for continuous improvement.
- 8R1 O Survey results from the 2004 Constellation Survey indicate key accomplishments related to continuous improvement. However, results from this survey are dated. Action Project results indicate success with the planning cycle and work plans.
- 8R4 O Although over 400 stakeholders were included in the planning process, evidence of process effectiveness is unclear. Documentation of process effectiveness will provide evidence that targets for continuous improvement are being met.
- 8I1 O The institution acknowledges that annual work plan coordination between departments will foster collective pursuit of strategic priorities and that analysis of results from the 2007 Climate Survey need to be incorporated into annual department planning processes. Incorporating these measures will help the College improve standards associated with continuous improvement.
- 8I2 OO While planning priorities are clearly identified, the College does not report measurable targets or timelines for completion. Developing targets and timelines will allow the College to accomplish planning-related goals in an organized and timely manner.

AQIP CATEGORY 9: BUILDING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Building Collaborative Relationships 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.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Minnesota State College Southeast Technical that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation

of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 9, Building Collaborative Relationships:

Item Critical Characteristic

- O1a The College participates in MN Online, a collaboration within the Minnesota State College and University system (MnSCU) to offer degrees and courses through the MnSCU central web portal.
- O2a The College's Center for Custom Training and Education (CTE) provides hour and credit-based contract training for area businesses, continuing education for non-degree seeking students, operates the Small Business Development Centers of Winona and Red Wing, and facilitates Minnesota Job Skills Partnership grants with its corporate partners. It is designed to be self-sufficient as well as a revenue-generating entrepreneurial division.
- O2b The College has identified three primary institutional objectives: integrate the College into business planning, development, sustenance and growth; develop the College Foundation; and integrate the College with local and regional communities.
- O8b The College has established four strategic directions: increased access and opportunity; promote and measure high quality programs and services; provide programs and services integral to state and regional economic needs; and innovate to meet current and future educational needs efficiently.
- O9a The College's engagement with MnSCU has made it a stronger force for civic and economic development. The College is focused on preparing individuals for employment and advancement and is responsive to community needs.
- O9b The College is working to change its traditional image of a "Vo-Tech" school to one of an institution of higher education with all of its programs, academic, trade, and technical meeting the standards of academic rigor normally associated with colleges and universities. At the same time, the College is striving to provide services and learning opportunities to meet the needs of its constituent communities.
- O9c The College has characterized each of its key collaborative relationships with an articulation of its partnership purpose, risks and mutual benefits, and relevance to vision and mission.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Minnesota State College Southeast Technical's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 9, Building Collaborative Relationships.

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
9P1	S	Relationships are created as a result of ideas generated in informal conversations, legislative mandate or approval, MnSCU special funding, or recognition of innovative or strategic opportunities, and are prioritized through annual department work plans. Relationships are built and maintained with external stakeholders through a variety of means.
9P2	S	The College uses partnership models to determine what each partner brings to and takes from the relationship.
9P3	S	The College has a number of internal activities designed to build relationships, both professionally and personally.
9P4	S	The College collects and analyzes indirect, performance, and advancement measures to gauge the building of collaborative relationships.
9R1	S	Results of collaborative relationships indicate that the College has served community needs, contributed to the economic health of the region, and provided educational opportunities in a variety of forms.
9I1-9I2	S	The College has identified a number of areas for improvement in building collaborative relationships. While the College did not address targets, there are objectives suggesting that the College is in the process of utilizing data toward continuous improvement.