SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

in response to the Systems Portfolio of

MID MICHIGAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

February 19, 2009
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR MID MICHIGAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The following are summary comments on each of the AQIP Categories crafted by the Appraisal Team to highlight Mid Michigan Community College’s achievements and to identify challenges yet to be met.

- Category 1: MMCC has a well-developed and effective educational delivery system. Its multifaceted faculty driven assessment includes the input from the program review process, and the curriculum committee’s goals and objectives to ensure that students achieve learning outcomes. As MMCC integrates learning outcomes to individual departments and formalizes the alignment of curricular and co-curricular goals, the learning processes will realize even greater performance.

- Category 2: MMCC’s objectives for areas not directly tied to student learning outcomes focus on improving the economic health and quality of life within the community. It believes achieving these objectives relates to building support for increased local tax revenue. Achieving the goals will benefit from improved, community-driven, outcomes-based planning, data-driven assessment, and continuous improvement processes.

- Category 3: MMCC has invested time and resources to define student and other stakeholder satisfaction measures. These ongoing efforts should provide additional meaningful input as the College seeks to improve relationships with internal and external stakeholder groups.

- Category 4: MMCC has fostered a set of processes to support most aspects of valuing people. The College’s continued exploration of these processes and cross-category analysis of survey results should support its efforts to value people.

- Category 5: MMCC is developing a system of evaluation to support its leadership and communication processes. The data collected, combined with the existing team structures, should enable effective and collaborative leadership at all levels of the organization.

- Category 6: MMCC has demonstrated an understanding of its key processes. MMCC aligns its continuous improvements processes for support services to specific key areas and links identified improvements to specific benefits to stakeholders.
• Category 7: Although MMCC has committed significant time and resources to data collection, storage, and analysis, it still recognizes the need to improve data analysis and comparative data. MMCC should continue to refine systems that will leverage the use of more advanced quality improvement tools.

• Category 8: MMCC’s board and senior leadership have invested resources and effort to enhance its quality improvement and planning processes. The institution has an opportunity to improve as it expands its use of data and performance measures in its improvement processes.

• Category 9: MMCC relies on collaborative relationships to grow enrollment and increase revenues from public and private sources. Since these collaborative relationships are needed to increase revenue, the College should accelerate the development of data-driven processes to measure its progress to this end.

Accreditation issues and Strategic challenges for Mid Michigan Community College are listed in detail within the Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis section of the Appraisal Feedback Report.

ELEMENTS OF Mid Michigan Community College’s 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 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 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.

**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 Mid Michigan Community College 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 Mid Michigan Community College 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 Mid Michigan Community College will discuss these strategic issues, give priority to those it concludes are most critical, and take action promptly, the Systems Appraisal Team identified:

- While MMCC acknowledges the importance of continuous improvement, the College should experience long-term benefits from a more disciplined commitment to greater use of data and analysis. A more consistent approach to analysis throughout the organization will require: (1) utilizing more quantifiable metrics; (2) establishing comprehensive sets of measures; (3) collecting and documenting data consistently over time; (4) analyzing data in a disciplined fashion, and; (5) setting specific, measurable goals. It is felt that a more consistent use of data and analysis will enhance MMCC’s ability to identify the major factors influencing its processes; increase its speed, responsiveness, and satisfaction for stakeholders; and result in better overall alignment throughout the institution.

- MMCC should benefit from more documentation and analysis of its processes, measures, and results regarding relationships between people within the organization. Although some processes, such as employee orientation and safety training, appear well documented, others, such as employee recognition, succession planning, internal
posting/hiring practices and supervisor training partially or completely lack adequate
documentation. Item analysis within the PACE survey results indicates documentation is
weak (“the extent to which my work is guided by clearly defined administrative
processes” was rated (.49 or 9.8%) below the national average). The data analysis in
this area is also weak. MMCC’s analysis of the PACE survey resulted in ten “areas of
efficiency,” six of which fall below the national average. Measuring the gap between the
national average and MMCC’s average could reveal better opportunities for
improvement. This gap is the largest (.25) in the category of “supervisory relationships.”
This result coupled with related individual factors, such as, “the extent to which my
supervisor expresses confidence in my work,” which earned a rating .37 below the
national average (but was listed as an “area of excellence”), provides a very clear focus
for improvement.

• MMCC first used its new planning model during the 2007-2008 planning cycle, and itself
assesses that much work needs to be accomplished to fully align the various
components of MMCC’s planning. One area of process improvement the College should
consider is to specifically document how all components of the planning process funnel
into the annual budgeting process, as depicted in Figure 8c. Additionally, MMCC should
consider depicting how feedback data from the annual budget process is reintegrated
into the broader conceptual components, such as the Strategic Plan, in the planning
process. Since MMCC states that it is faced with continuing challenges to obtain
increased state and local funding, such documentation will help insure that resource
realism is considered in all phases of the planning process and communicated to internal
and external stakeholders.

**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 Mid Michigan Community College, 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 Mid Michigan Community College 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**  MMCC sources of revenue per FYE are state aid (23%), local property taxes (13%), tuition & fees (60%), and other revenues (4%). Increases in state aid are unlikely; the local property tax rate was reduced in 2008. Future increases in MMCC’s revenues appear largely dependent upon MMCC’s ability to increase tuition and fees without adversely affecting access or current enrollment levels.

**O1b**  Despite its size and appropriations level, MMCC plays a large role in Michigan’s Virtual Learning Collaborative, ranking 7th of the 28 colleges based on the number of students enrolled.

**O1c**  MMCC’s service area of five school districts and three counties can be characterized by a recent significant loss of jobs, shortages of healthcare workers, and significant differences in age demographics.

**O2**  MMCC programs are largely driven by transfer opportunities for students seeking General Instruction (48.2%) and local employer demands for Business and Public Service (20.6%), Trade Industrial & Technology (4.1%), Personal and Human Development (7.2%), and Health Occupations (19.7%).

**O3a**  Components of Mid Michigan’s student base experienced a significant increase between 2004 and 2008, increasing from 2,452 degree seeking students to 3,912. First time freshman enrollments increased from 892 to 1188.

**O3b**  MMCC demographic is mostly white (89%) and female (60%) with nearly equal percentages of part and full-time students.

**O3c**  In 2007, more than 90% of students required some form of remedial education, with the greatest majority needing assistance in math. A significant number of students also needed remedial education in writing and reading. In light of the listed academic deficiencies, MMCC relies on academic support services.
O4  MMCC has collaborations with local school systems, a regional educational service
district, state and local universities, community colleges, workforce development groups,
development centers, a tribal college, and health care institutions.

O5  MMCC has two bargaining units: full-time faculty (43 people and 19% of all faculty) and
hourly staff (44 full-time and 9 part-time). The college also has 48 full-time
administrators and 187 part-time faculty.

O6a  MMCC has two main campuses with distinct geographic and demographic differences
separated by 25 miles. The Harrison campus (established at inception in 1965) has
three buildings on 560 acres. The Mt. Pleasant campus (established in 1995) has one
building on 5 acres. A recent land purchase for a new science and health center will add
another building to the Mt. Pleasant campus.

O6b  MMCC’s accreditation was reaffirmed by the HLC in 2008 and six programs have
additional approvals. The College was also recently approved for candidacy for a new
physical therapy assistant program.

O6c  MMCC embraces technology and has over 530 computers for student use (7:1 student
to computer ratio).

O7a  MMCC’s competition for on-campus students is chiefly Central Michigan University
(CMU) in Mt. Pleasant, which is also its collaborator on transfer. Competition in the
online realm is tempered by the Michigan Community College Virtual Learning
Collaborative, which allows for the sharing of courses and programs.

O7b  MMCC is not able to compete with CMU on salary for faculty. This condition affects
MMCC’s capability to recruit and retain faculty. To deal with this issue, MMCC is
revising its faculty staffing plan and working with CMU on a collaboration project in which
their graduate students could serve as adjunct faculty in appropriate settings.

O8a  MMCC’s significant and steady enrollment growth in resident and online programs has
raised capacity issues, including classroom space, technology capabilities, complexity of
managing three locations serving different socio-economic demographics, developing
more formal and consistent procedures, supporting newly developed programs, and
recruiting and retaining qualified faculty and staff.
O8b Areas of opportunity include the potential for increasing enrollment at Mt. Pleasant, regional population growth, current collaborations, and strong leadership support from the new president.

**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 Mid Michigan Community College 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Critical Characteristic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O2</td>
<td>MMCC programs are largely driven by transfer opportunities for students seeking General Instruction (48.2%) and local employer demands for Business and Public Service (20.6%), Trade Industrial &amp; Technology (4.1%), Personal and Human Development (7.2%), and Health Occupations (19.7%).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O3c</td>
<td>In 2007, more than 90% of students required some form of remedial education, with the greatest majority needing assistance in math. A significant number of students also needed remedial education in writing and reading. In light of the listed academic deficiencies MMCC relies on academic support services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O4</td>
<td>MMCC has collaborations with local school systems, a regional educational service district, state and local universities, community colleges, workforce development groups, development centers, a tribal college, and health care institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O8a</td>
<td>MMCC’s significant and steady enrollment growth in resident and online programs has raised capacity issues, including classroom space, technology capabilities, complexity of managing three locations serving different socio-economic demographics, developing more formal and consistent procedures, supporting newly developed programs, and recruiting and retaining qualified faculty and staff.</td>
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</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>S/O</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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</table>
| 1P1  | O   | MMCC acknowledges that consistent application of learning outcomes across curriculum is flawed, but continues to strive for standardization by working with individual departments. It will be critical to continue to work across individual departments to assure there is a common understanding of the general education learning goals and assure course
objectives, instructional strategies, and assessments are aligned with general education learning goals.

1P2 S MMCC demonstrated the ability to use cross-functional teams and data-based decision making in the development of its courses and programs.

1P3 S MMCC’s collaboration with high schools and the development of the liaison position is of great benefit for the College’s effort to prepare students for continued post-secondary education.

1P4 S MMCC demonstrated a successful communication process by using multiple methods to share course level outcomes and other learning requirements to prospective students.

1P5 S MMCC’s advising and placement process uses multiple phases throughout the student’s academic career to support academic success and target unique student needs.

1P6 S The faculty has identified three areas that define the effectiveness of teaching and learning at MMCC: general education, technical/occupational education and transfer education. MMCC has identified metrics for each of these to support continuous quality improvement.

1P7 S MMCC’s techniques to evaluate the need for and provide instruction to student stakeholders are comprehensive.

1P8 S The curriculum committee, which is composed of faculty and student service personnel, successfully assesses curricular currency and effectiveness using a structured program review process.

1P9 O An opportunity may exist to further define student and faculty needs by looking at other quantifiable factors such as hours student services are most used, numbers of students using the services, number of students unable to participate or on waiting lists, correlations between faculty in-service activities, and improvement in student learning measures.

1P10 O Alignment of curricular and co-curricular goals appears to be an informal process with the exception of some globalizations in the general education curriculum. More formal processes may strengthen this
objective, which at the course development and administrative levels, could include determining how each set of course objectives could be improved by exposure to co-curricular opportunities.

1P11  S  MMCC has a multifaceted faculty driven assessment process that considers the program review process, general education, and the curriculum committee’s goals and objectives to ensure that students achieve learning outcomes.

1P12  O  MMCC attempts to track the performance of its transfer students may be enhanced through services like National Student Tracker that can show what institutions receive the students, enrollment trends, concurrent enrollment, degrees received and if the student continues their education after completing the initial defined academic goal.

1P13  O  MMCC has the opportunity to collect more data relating to general education goals. Analyzing these data will help MMCC to develop a general understanding of overall student performance. A more comprehensive set of measures could gain a clearer sense of student outcomes.

1R1  O  It may be of value to conduct a study considering all major factors that could effect student success, use quantifiable measures (repeatable and reproducible) to determine those factors that have the greatest impact, and devise possible corrective actions.

1R2  O  Results from transfer students show that MMCC students do not do as well as students that matriculate as freshman at senior institutions. These results should be analyzed to better understand student needs. In addition, it may be of some value to track multiple years of performance data, as evaluated by employers (Figure 1p), to determine if specific factors change over time.

1R3  O  It may be of value to evaluate and document how the results from course level assessment are tied to program level assessment and how the evaluation of these data result in actions that improve teaching and learning processes.
For some of its occupational/technical programs, MMCC benchmarks against state and national board examination results (but not other colleges). The Michigan Total Quality Improvement Program (MiTQIP) provides an opportunity for Mid Michigan to share comparable data.

MMCC is working on defining its processes in a more organized and rigorous manner and is using the continuous quality improvement methodology as a structuring tool in its improvement efforts.

**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 Mid Michigan Community College 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Critical Characteristic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O1c</td>
<td>MMCC’s service area of five school districts and three counties can be characterized by a recent significant loss of jobs, shortages of healthcare workers, and significant differences in age demographics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O2</td>
<td>MMCC programs are largely driven by transfer opportunities for students seeking General Instruction (48.2%) and local employer demands for Business and Public Service (20.6%), Trade Industrial &amp; Technology (4.1%), Personal and Human Development (7.2%), and Health Occupations (19.7%).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
O4  MMCC has collaborations with local school systems, a regional educational service
district, state and local universities, community colleges, workforce development groups,
development centers, a tribal college, and health care institutions.

O8b  Areas of opportunity include the potential for increasing enrollment at Mt. Pleasant,
regional population growth, current collaborations, and strong leadership support from
the new president.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Mid Michigan Community
College’s most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to
processes encompassed by Category 2, Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Item</th>
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<th>Comment</th>
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| 2P1  | S   | MMCC’s revised strategic planning process increases the role of external
      |      | stakeholders in establishing programs related to meeting community
      |      | objectives. This process improvement directly supports improving
      |      | connectivity with the College’s tax base and regional employers. |
| 2P2, 2P4-5 | S | Quantitative and qualitative feedback data are collected and widely
      |      | monitored at MMCC, to assess performance related to accomplishing
      |      | other distinctive objectives. Expectations and assessments of
      |      | programmatic effectiveness are widely communicated within the
      |      | institution and community to build support for the College. |
| 2P3  | O   | Faculty and staff needs related to accomplishing other distinct objectives
      |      | are determined through dialogue, and department and strategic planning
      |      | meetings. The College should benefit from improving documentation of
      |      | how needs are communicated to senior leadership and tied to the annual
      |      | planning and budgeting process to improve faculty and staff
      |      | understanding of their roles. |
| 2R1  | S   | Data presented provides evidence of continuous improvement in many
      |      | areas of other distinctive objectives, such as achievement of Foundation
      |      | funding objectives and increasing the number of dual enrolled students. |
MMCC also demonstrates increased participation in student life activities and workforce and economic development initiatives.

2R2  O  Joint development of benchmarks for other distinctive objectives with regional community colleges that participate in AQIP presents a significant opportunity to standardize data sharing between institutions. The use of such data should facilitate MMCC’s assessment of its effectiveness compared with peer institutions.

2R3, 2I2  O  MMCC states that more community interaction and praise is a result of its focus on other distinctive objectives; yet the efforts have not resulted in increased local tax support. The implementation of the recent Action Project that outlined alignment of MMCC’s various planning processes can highlight the importance of achieving goals that increase millage and improve the socio-economic health of the community.

2I1  O  MMCC recognizes that it must improve its relationship with the community to increase enrollment and financial resources. It is unclear what initiatives or targets for improvement it has established to improve relationship with external stakeholders.

**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 Mid Michigan Community College 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 MMCC’s service area of five school districts and three counties can be characterized by a recent significant loss of jobs, shortages of healthcare workers, and significant differences in age demographics.

O2 MMCC programs are largely driven by transfer opportunities for students seeking General Instruction (48.2%) and local employer demands for Business and Public Service (20.6%), Trade Industrial & Technology (4.1%), Personal and Human Development (7.2%), and Health Occupations (19.7%).

O4 MMCC has collaborations with local school systems, a regional educational service district, state and local universities, community colleges, workforce development groups, development centers, a tribal college, and health care institutions.

O8a MMCC’s significant and steady enrollment growth in resident and online programs has raised capacity issues, including classroom space, technology capabilities, complexity of managing three locations serving different socio-economic demographics, developing more formal and consistent procedures, supporting newly developed programs, and recruiting and retaining qualified faculty and staff.

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

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<th><strong>Item</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3P1</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>MMCC uses multiple qualitative data collection methodologies within its strategic, committee, and department level planning processes to determine if and where improvement is warranted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3P2</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>MMCC builds and maintains relationships with prospective and current students through substantial activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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3P3-3P5  S  MMCC uses environmental scanning processes to respond to changing stakeholder needs. This information is then integrated into the strategic planning process to prioritize, and give direction to operational planning.

3P6  O  There is an opportunity to improve the complaint process with tools that track stages of complaint resolution and total time to resolution. This could provide important data to MMCC and provide a system to assure that all complaints are resolved and in a timely manner.

3P7  O  MMCC can realize improved understanding of student and stakeholder needs through student satisfaction surveys, which have the potential of eventually improving overall support processes.

3R1  O  More evidence of using data to develop, implement, and continuously improve student satisfaction will support the value of the narrative data already collected.

3R2  S  MMCC data on high school penetration rates and dual enrollment rates indicates a clear upward trend. Retention rates from 2002 through 2007 have increased by more than ten percent.

3R3-3R4  S  MMCC’s community opinion survey indicates positive responses regarding the quality of education at MMCC. The College has responded to the community’s needs by developing specific training programs.

3R5  O  MMCC has a potential opportunity to explore comparisons with other institutions/organizations. Although the College is concerned about drawing comparisons with non-similar organizations, the ability to compare even one process with multiple input factors would be beneficial.

3I1-3I2  S  MMCC uses a variety of quality tools to improve processes and systems. The strategic counsel with input from other stakeholders sets key performance indicators.
AQIP CATEGORY 4: VALUING PEOPLE

Valuing People explores your institution’s commitment to the development of your employees since the efforts of all of 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 Mid Michigan Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 4, Valuing People:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Critical Characteristic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O3b</td>
<td>MMCC demographic is mostly white (89%) and female (60%) with nearly equal percentages of part and full-time students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O5</td>
<td>MMCC has two bargaining units: full-time faculty (43 people and 19% of all faculty) and hourly staff (44 full-time and 9 part-time). MMCC also has 48 full-time administrators and 187 part-time faculty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O7b</td>
<td>MMCC is not able to compete with CMU on salary for faculty. This condition affects MMCC’s capability to recruit and retain faculty. To deal with this issue, MMCC is revising its faculty staffing plan and working with CMU on a collaboration project in which their graduate students could serve as adjunct faculty in appropriate settings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O8a</td>
<td>MMCC’s significant and steady enrollment growth in resident and online programs has raised capacity issues, including classroom space, technology capabilities, complexity of managing three locations serving different socio-economic demographics, developing more formal and consistent procedures, supporting newly developed programs, and recruiting and retaining qualified faculty and staff.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Mid Michigan Community College’s most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 4, Valuing People.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
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<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4P1</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>MMCC has developed credentials and skills required for each position, as well as selection criteria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4P2</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>The MMCC campus community may experience better understanding of these processes if they provide information about how current employees are considered for openings, prior to searching externally. This could provide the College an opportunity to grow their talent internally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4P3</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>MMCC has processes that support all applicable standards and involves employees in multiple activities to monitor processes internally regarding ethical practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4P4-4P5</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>MMCC has established multiple forms of employee training to include job specific training. It appears current training is meeting the needs to support operations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4P6</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>A separate evaluation system exists for each employee group. Feedback for all evaluations, which are shared both face-to-face and in writing, are intended as a professional development guide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4P7</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>MMCC recognizes that it has limited recognition practices. The College has the opportunity to do more in the area, especially for employees who are advancing strategic initiatives and a service culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4P8</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>MMCC uses multiple forms of data collection to determine employee issues. The College has begun using a survey called the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE), which allows comparison of MMCC’s environment to the national average.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4P9</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>MMCC has a written emergency plan, conducts (safety) training, and complies with governmental safety regulations to provide for the safety and well being of its employees.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4P10  S  MMCC currently uses the PACE survey to conduct comparative analysis and have plans in place to implement additional measures regarding employee satisfaction/experience at MMCC.

4R1  O  The PACE survey has yielded much data regarding employee satisfaction. The data needs further analysis compared to the national average, both by category and by item, to determine true opportunities for improvement.

4R3-4R4  S  MMCC participates in the states annual Activities Classification Structure report that provides comparisons with similar colleges in Michigan. Based on this report, MMCC has identified a lower than average cost for all programs and a lower than average Revenue and Cost per FTE.

4I1-4I2  S  MMCC’s use of the PDSA cycle to improve processes and systems, multi disciplinary teams, and a 3-5 year plan to effectively set targets and improvement priorities.

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**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 Mid Michigan Community College 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
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</table>

©2009 Academic Quality Improvement Program, The Higher Learning Commission. All rights reserved. This report may be reproduced and distributed freely by Mid Michigan Community College.
O1c  MMCC’s service area of five school districts and three counties can be characterized by a recent significant loss of jobs, shortages of healthcare workers, and significant differences in age demographics.

O4  MMCC has collaborations with local school systems, a regional educational service district, state and local universities, community colleges, workforce development groups, development centers, a tribal college, and health care institutions.

O5  MMCC has two bargaining units: full-time faculty (43 people and 19% of all faculty) and hourly staff (44 full-time and 9 part-time). MMCC also has 48 full-time administrators and 187 part-time faculty.

O8b  Areas of opportunity include the potential for increasing enrollment at Mt. Pleasant, regional population growth, current collaborations, and strong leadership support from the new president.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Mid Michigan Community College’s most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 5, Leading and Communicating.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5P1</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>MMCC demonstrated the importance of broad stakeholder input by developing four standing objectives (Enduring Goals) that are aligned with the institution’s mission, vision, values, and AQIP categories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5P2</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>MMCC’s robust environmental scanning and its collaborations with local, regional, and statewide partners have identified key opportunities in health care, other occupational/technical programs, and transfer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5P3</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>MMCC is aware of its opportunities to decentralize decision making and leadership throughout the organization with a view to making decisions at the lowest appropriate level for increased efficiency and stakeholder involvement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5P4  O  MMCC monitors multiple sources of performance data and is deploying an electronic dashboard that it plans to expand when additional, key performance metrics are defined and utilized.

5P5  S  MMCC revised some of its mechanisms for communications based on recent leadership changes, employing both formal and informal processes, to pass information from programs and departments to senior leadership.

5P7  O  While MMCC identifies its efforts in professional development, the institution may benefit from articulating a comprehensive and consistently applied process for development to attract and retain qualified employees.

5P8  O  MMCC’s process of handling succession planning on a case-by-case basis may be improved by developing an overall, strategic approach to leadership succession.

5P9  O  MMCC can benefit by identifying its measures for leadership and communication.

5R1  OO  By collecting more historical trend data and combining it with PACE survey results, MMCC may be able to reveal areas that hold potential for better analysis and improvement.

5I1-5I2  O  MMCC’s strategic planning process includes the use of quality improvement tools to select targets for improvement. This will benefit the institution as it identifies specific improvement targets.

**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 Mid Michigan Community College 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O3a</td>
<td>Components of Mid Michigan’s student base experienced a significant increase between 2004 and 2008, increasing from 2,452 degree seeking students to 3,912. First time freshman enrollments increased from 892 to 1188.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O3c</td>
<td>In 2007, more than 90% of students required some form of remedial education, with the greatest majority needing assistance in math. A significant number of students also needed remedial education in writing and reading. In light of the listed academic deficiencies, MMCC relies on academic support services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O6a</td>
<td>MMCC has two main campuses with distinct geographic and demographic differences separated by 25 miles: the Harrison campus (established at inception in 1965) has three buildings on 560 acres and the Mt. Pleasant campus (established in 1995) has one building on 5 acres. A recent land purchase for a new science and health center will add another building to the Mt. Pleasant campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O8a</td>
<td>MMCC’s significant and steady enrollment growth in resident and online programs has raised capacity issues, including classroom space, technology capabilities, complexity of managing three locations serving different socio-economic demographics, developing more formal and consistent procedures, supporting newly developed programs, and recruiting and retaining qualified faculty and staff.</td>
</tr>
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Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Mid Michigan Community College’s most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 6, Supporting Institutional Operations:

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</table>
6P1 S MMCC has developed a process for determining the support service needs of students using a variety of instruments. MMCC has also successfully integrated its developed improvement processes.

6P2 O Although multiple forms of data are collected, MMCC may benefit from collecting more quantifiable data.

6P3 S MMCC uses a traditional oversight process and collects feedback from stakeholders via national and locally developed surveys and focus groups. Documenting feedback enables informed decision making regarding changes in processes.

6P4 S Feedback from the Noel-Levitz SSI, focus groups and internal evaluations are documented and analyzed in an effort to choose action projects. Feedback determines initiatives chosen.

6P5,6R1 S MMCC uses multiple performance measures including comparisons against national standards to evaluate student support service activities. Measures for MMCC against the national average show comparable performance in all areas of student services.

6R2 O Financial health is typically more than a reflection of fund balances. Additional measures of financial performance may benefit the institution.

6R3 O MMCC could benefit from increasing the use of available quantitative data already reported to the HLC and governmental entities.

6I1-6I2 S The process used to focus on improving human resources by reviewing major systems is commendable. In particular the action project to increase retention demonstrates direct use of metrics to seek improvement.

**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 Mid Michigan Community College that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 7, Measuring Effectiveness:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Critical Characteristic</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O1a</td>
<td>MMCC sources revenues per FYES are state aid (23%), local property taxes (13%), tuition &amp; fees (60%), and other revenues (4%). Increases in state aid are unlikely; the local property tax rate was reduced in 2008. Future increases in MMCC’s revenues appear largely dependent upon MMCC’s ability to increase tuition and fees without adversely affecting access or current enrollment levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O1b</td>
<td>Despite its size and appropriations level, MMCC plays a large role in Michigan’s Virtual Learning Collaborative, ranking 7th of the 28 colleges based on the number of students enrolled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O1c</td>
<td>MMCC’s service area of five school districts and three counties can be characterized by a recent significant loss of jobs, shortages of healthcare workers, and significant differences in age demographics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O8a</td>
<td>MMCC’s significant and steady enrollment growth in resident and online programs has raised capacity issues, including classroom space, technology capabilities, complexity of managing three locations serving different socio-economic demographics, developing more formal and consistent procedures, supporting newly developed programs, and recruiting and retaining qualified faculty and staff.</td>
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Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Mid Michigan Community College’s most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 7, Measuring Effectiveness.

<table>
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<th>Item</th>
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</thead>
</table>
MMCC developed a systematic system to define what information is collected and how it is distributed.

MMCC has the opportunity to improve its use of comparative data to impact all parts of the College. This may be realized by formalizing the processes associated with how data is collected and analyzed.

MMCC developed data management system that supports its continuous quality improvement activities.

MMCC may benefit from increasing its efforts to define data tracking and reports requirements. The College also recognizes the opportunity for developing comparative data from audit reports provided by independent entities.

MMCC may benefit from developing a formalized improvement process for both the data management system and the data collection and usage processes.

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 Mid Michigan Community College 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**

O1a MMCC sources revenues per FYES are state aid (23%), local property taxes (13%), tuition & fees (60%), and other revenues (4%). Increases in state aid are unlikely; the
Mid Michigan Community College
Systems Appraisal Feedback Report
February 19, 2009

local property tax rate was reduced in 2008. Future increases in MMCC’s revenues appear largely dependent upon MMCC’s ability to increase tuition and fees without adversely affecting access or current enrollment levels.

O8a MMCC’s significant and steady enrollment growth in resident and online programs has raised capacity issues, including classroom space, technology capabilities, complexity of managing three locations serving different socio-economic demographics, developing more formal and consistent procedures, supporting newly developed programs, and recruiting and retaining qualified faculty and staff.

O8b Areas of opportunity include the potential for increasing enrollment at Mt. Pleasant, regional population growth, current collaborations, and strong leadership support from the new president.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Mid Michigan Community College’s most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 8, Planning Continuous Improvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8P1</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>To align its planning and budgeting processes, MMCC recently developed an inclusive planning process and restructured its decision-making bodies by integrating its senior leadership, the Strategic Council, the Administrative Council, and the Quality Action Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8P2</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>MMCC’s new communication and decision-making structure appears to be an effective plan that should facilitate its ability to prioritize short-term and long-term strategies in light of available human and financial resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8P3</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>MMCC has placed the responsibility for developing key action plans on the Quality Action Council and created a system of data collection and distribution to support the development process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8P4-8P5</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Once MMCC develops a more comprehensive and inclusive processes in regards to setting measures and performance projections it should realize improved alignment in planning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MMCC’s new strategic planning process and decision-making structure will enable it to identify and address resource requirements in light of the institution’s growth and a regionally deteriorating economy.

See response in Category 5, Process Question 7 (5P7).

MMCC’s strategic plan was rewritten and many of its objectives represent a continuation of existing projects with some improvement, but MMCC may benefit by developing specific improvement goals with improved quantifiable performance standards.

The Board of Trustees and Quality Action Council aid in developing MMCC’s continuous improvement strategies, supporting effective policy integration and implementation.

It is unclear if MMCC is using quantifiable measures to set targets and standards for the improvement of its processes.

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O1a</td>
<td>MMCC revenue sources per FYES are state aid (23%), local property taxes (13%), tuition &amp; fees (60%), and other revenues (4%). Increases in state aid are unlikely; the local property tax rate was reduced in 2008. Future increases in MMCC’s revenues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
appear largely dependent upon MMCC’s ability to increase tuition and fees without adversely affecting access or current enrollment levels.

O1b Despite its size and appropriations level, MMCC plays a large role in Michigan’s Virtual Learning Collaborative, ranking 7th of the 28 colleges based on the number of students enrolled.

O4 MMCC has collaborations with local school systems, a regional educational service district, state and local universities, community colleges, workforce development groups, development centers, a tribal college, and health care institutions.

O7a MMCC’s competition for on-campus students is chiefly Central Michigan University (CMU) in Mt. Pleasant, which is also its collaborator on transfer. Competition in the online realm is tempered by the Michigan Community College Virtual Learning Collaborative, which allows for the sharing of courses and programs.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Mid Michigan Community College’s most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 9, Building Collaborative Relationships.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>S/O</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9P1</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Priorities are driven by resource and government mandate. Yet, MMCC relies upon new collaborative relationships originating from stakeholders and personal interaction in the community. It recognizes the need to develop formal planning and continuous improvement processes in order to improve utilization of collaborative relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9P2</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>MMCC self-identified that it is using informal practices to build collaborative relationships and identified the need to develop data-driven planning and assessment processes to ensure collaborations benefit all members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9P3</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>MMCC uses continuing education, communications, and employee recognition to build internal relationships that support achieving goals with collaborative partners.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9P4 O MMCC self-identified that it has limited specific measures for assessment of its collaborative relationships. By accelerating its plans to develop data-driven planning and assessment processes, MMCC’s can improve its capabilities to assess benefits of these relationships.

9R1 S Narrative descriptions and information presented in Figure 9b provide evidence of MMCC’s broad-based efforts to build and maintain collaborative relationships, and their value to the College.

9R2 O As MMCC collects the data generated from the work done with other colleges, it will receive a better comparative understanding of how it is performing in the area of its collaborative relationships.

9I1-9I2 O MMCC recognizes the potential benefits for better managing collaborative relationships by using a formal system of assessing the benefits derived from those relationships.