SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

MINNEAPOLIS COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

October 27, 2007

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Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR MINNEAPOLIS COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

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

- MCTC's teaching and learning processes are aligned with the mission, vision, and values of the institution. Some gaps appear to exist in the development and deployment of processes in Helping Students Learn (absence of a process for building a course delivery system, for example). MCTC has embraced assessment of student learning and is already engaged in cycles of improvement and in making refinements to some processes to achieve positive student learning outcomes, and limited results are reported.

- MCTC's distinctive objective is aligned with the mission, vision, and values of the institution, and plans are in place to assess the effectiveness of this objective. MCTC has a commitment to access and success for all students, and has launched an overall goal of increasing the post-secondary participation and success of the urban youth.

- MCTC has in place processes for Understanding Students and Other Stakeholders that are aligned with the mission, vision, and values of the institution. There are some gaps, however, where processes for acquiring an understanding of all students and stakeholders do not cover some segments. The institution is making progress in collecting, analyzing, and using data to make decisions so that plans can be developed and implemented to better serve all stakeholders

- MCTC utilizes the shared governance model. Processes at MCTC focus on gathering data and evaluating the demographics for the area, the student body, and faculty and staff. MCTC has processes to recruit faculty and staff and provide professional development to meet diversity and retention goals. Extensive use of the Campus Quality Survey, and now the Personnel Assessment of the College Environment, has been made. More extensive use of survey data to additional areas and trends over time would present a stronger basis for continuous improvement.

- MCTC describes a collegial environment guided by shared strategic planning and consultative leadership to meet student needs. MCTC appears to have emerging

leadership and communication processes that may not demonstrate "closed loop" effectiveness. The new public dashboard will share institutional priorities more effectively, but without clearer measures for leading and communicating, the results may fall short. MCTC will realize significant improvement when they have more data to report from their new feedback system, PACE, and can track essential communication processes related to peers.

- MCTC has created many student support processes that are aligned with the mission, vision, and values of the organization. Collection of actual process results, however, is at the beginning stages. For the institution to have well-integrated processes and results that lead to refinements and improvements, collection and analysis of data is necessary.

- MCTC's data gathering processes are complicated by state and institutional directives. The higher education board directs, manages and collects data systems. MCTC administration has made progress in selecting, managing, and analyzing data so that it is aligned with the institution's mission, vision, and priorities. The institution recognizes that the next steps in measuring effectiveness have to do with making data more public, comparing its data to that of other institutions, and measuring the effectiveness of its own systems of data management.

- MCTC has an effective process for planning continuous improvement. Unit work plans drive institutional strategy. Strategy is articulated through a variety of venues: master academic plan, finance plan, facilities plan, among others. MCTC's plan is aligned with MnSCU priorities, and accountability is provided through aligned performance indicators. Nonetheless, the campus satisfaction with the planning process is not established and it is unclear how budget and strategy are formally linked. No trend or comparative data is provided to document the effectiveness of the process. Planning at MCTC may be enhanced by participation in the National Community College Benchmarking Study and through creation of an institutional dashboard.

- MCTC is very proud of its internal and external partnerships and has aligned these partnerships with the institution's mission, vision, and priorities. MCTC has a strong culture of collaboration among employees. Likewise, there are strong external collaborative relationships, especially with area K-12 schools, and other 4-year colleges and universities. Data selection and analysis is in the beginning stages, however.

Results data that reflect integration and higher levels of refinement - results that stretch beyond satisfaction and engagement data – provide an opportunity for improvement.

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

ELEMENTS OF MINNEAPOLIS COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL 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 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 Minneapolis Community and Technical 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 Minneapolis Community and Technical 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 Minneapolis Community and Technical College will discuss these strategic issues, give priority to those it concludes are most critical, and take action promptly, the Systems Appraisal Team identified:

- MCTC acknowledges that it is experiencing difficulty in hiring and retaining qualified faculty and therefore is looking closely at these issues. MCTC has effective hiring processes, but the appraisal team recommends that MCTC examine best practices associated with attracting and retaining faculty so that MCTC can remain competitive.

- MCTC has many opportunities to better articulate its processes. In some cases, there is reference to a general process rather than a specific process. As an example, MCTC indicates a process in Figure 3.8, but this process could easily be applied in any category. Quality tools, such as project planning, process mapping, and fishbone diagrams that get at root cause may help MCTC understand processes that are in need of improvement. Once elements of the process are understood, better processes and outcomes measures can be identified.

- Obtaining comprehensive survey data will provide MCTC with internal and external trends relative to stakeholder satisfaction. MCTC indicates that the Campus Quality Survey (CQS) was discontinued and the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) was recently adopted. Additional measures of stakeholder needs (i.e. student satisfaction data) will provide MCTC with a broader range of information on which to base decisions about improvements needed.

- MCTC would benefit from clarification and expansion of other distinctive objectives that make the institution unique. Additional focus on the process for deriving new distinctive objectives and the measures that document the institution's effectiveness would benefit MCTC.

- Decision making appears to be done in consultation with stakeholders in a hierarchical manner. Consistent with AQIP's philosophy of empowerment, MCTC may benefit from greater utilization of teams with autonomy to make decisions.

- Creation of an Institutional Dashboard will potentially benefit MCTC. MCTC should carefully consider the data points (perhaps through the strategic planning process) reported through its dashboard so that stakeholders will find it meaningful.

- MCTC is encouraged to take fuller advantages of trend and comparative data (NCCBS, PACE, CCSSE) to improve its processes.

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 Minneapolis Community and Technical 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 Minneapolis Community and Technical 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   Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC) is the only public two-year college located in downtown Minneapolis and enrolls nearly 12,000 students annually.

O1b   MCTC has a unique heritage resulting from a Minnesota State College and University (MnSCU) mandated merger of two institutions – a technical college managed by the K-12 system and an open-enrollment community college.

O1c   MCTC strives to foster a culture of intentional, transparent processes and procedures that identify their diverse stakeholders' duties and responsibilities.

O2a   MCTC has 47 liberal arts and 50 career programs, and offers the A.A., A.S., and A.F.A. degrees in diverse areas. Several programs are unique to the region, and coursework supports goals in the strategic plan. Assessment for all programs is in place.

O3a   MCTC is the most ethnically diverse college in Minnesota, with 43% students of color. English is a second language for over 25% of the student body and more than 80 languages and dialects are spoken on campus.

O3b   About 50% of MCTC students receive financial aid, 26% of students are on public assistance, and 19% of students are single parents. Nearly one-third of MCTC's students are first-generation and 90% are Minnesota residents.

O3c   MCTC has seen significant enrollment growth over the past two years.

O4a   Collaborations are important to MCTC's mission. MCTC has five types of partners: industry, K-12/post-secondary education, donors, government, and community. In addition, MCTC founded a Metropolitan Alliance consisting of 11 institutions in the Minneapolis urban area that work collectively to meet student and community needs.

O5a   MCTC has 928 employees - 157 full-time faculty, 479 part-time faculty, 264 full-time staff, and 28 part-time staff. Employees are represented by four unions. About 20% of the employees are racially diverse, and the employees are approximately split evenly between male and female.

O6a   MCTC consists of nine buildings on seven acres in downtown Minneapolis. A new Science and Allied Health Center will open in 2008 and a library opened in 2003. Other sites include the Criminal Justice center in St. Paul and the Aviation Center in Eden Prairie.

O6b   MCTC has 78 smart classrooms and 28 multimedia classrooms, as well as 10 computer classrooms and 2 open computer labs.

O7a   MCTC chooses to be collaborative rather than competitive. MCTC competes with other MnSCU institutions, online colleges, private schools, and for-profit institutions.

O8a   Vulnerabilities for MCTC include: students' under-preparation, low-income students, the political environment, and a human resource shortage.

O8b   Opportunities for MCTC include building an institutional dashboard that will allow it to monitor performance as well as creating compelling learning environments.

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 Minneapolis Community and Technical 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:

Item   Critical Characteristic

01a   Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC) is the only public two-year college located in downtown Minneapolis and enrolls nearly 12,000 students annually.

02a   MCTC has 47 liberal arts and 50 career programs, and offers the A.S., A.S., and A.F.A. degrees in diverse areas. Several programs are unique to the region, and coursework supports goals in the strategic plan. Assessment for all programs is in place.

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

Item   S/O   Comment

1P1   S   Over a three-year period, following the merger of the two schools that comprise MCTC, faculty came together and identified four General Education Competencies and sub-competencies (Fig. 1-1). The General Education Competencies are imbedded in programs, along with MnTC Competencies, as appropriate. Learning objectives for individual programs are developed on a program-to-program basis by faculty. The Academic Council oversees the process to ensure that learning outcomes are articulated for both programs and for individual courses.

1P2   S   MCTC uses the Academic Council to guide the development process for new courses and programs, which also must meet the requirements of MnTC and align with the College mission and industry objectives. New courses and programs can originate from recommendations from advisory committees or faculty or students' needs. MnSCU provides the structure for MCTC to balance the educational market issues with students' needs by requiring that any award over nine credits meet certain State objectives.

1P3   S   MCTC complies with the MnSCU system for ensuring appropriate preparation of students. This includes use of Accuplacer assessment for college readiness. MCTC aligns its cut off scores with those of neighboring institutions, and each year individual academic divisions evaluate student performance relative to the cut off score. Preparation for individual programs of study is determined by the faculty overseeing those programs. Advisory committees, accrediting bodies, and others may have input into determining appropriate student preparation.

1P4   S   MCTC uses a variety of methods to communicate expectations regarding student preparation and learning objectives. These include the College catalog, the College website, course syllabi, community outreach, partnerships with K-12 schools, and materials provided by the State concerning student preparedness. In addition, MCTC has a College Readiness Initiative involving early testing of students at local high schools to give students some indication of their needs for college learning.

1P5   S   MCTC uses a variety of methods to help students select programs of study. These include counselors and advisors who offer numerous programs such as Student Orientation, Campus Rescue Fairs, and Student Success Days. In addition, specialized student service advisors provide services for students with special needs, and the OSD serves students with disabilities. MCTC also provides services for students with diverse backgrounds through the Multicultural Student Service Department. An email group called "Advising Network" allows departments to share information among the service groups. Discrepancies in student preparation are addressed through developmental coursework and ESOL.

1P6   S   MCTC employs a twelve-year cycle of assessment, with three years of focus for each General Education Competency, to determine effectiveness of teaching and learning. Assessment of individual programs involves creating an assessment plan, collecting data,

analyzing the data, and reporting the results to the Assessment Committee. Academic deans then evaluate program effectiveness by using a standard grid (Fig. 1-8) that indicates on a continuum if the program is vulnerable, sustaining, or thriving. In addition, student learning is documented through licensure exams, juried portfolios, and pass rates. Effective teaching is determined by student evaluations, peer review, administrator review, and creation of a faculty portfolio. Expectations about effective teaching and learning are communicated in a number of ways, including Academic Council oversight of processes, administrative oversight of assessment, faculty involvement in assessment committees, peer training, and sharing of best practices.

1P7	O	MCTC does not appear to have a systematic process for building an effective and efficient course delivery system. While MCTC offers various modes and places of delivery (Fig. 1-3), MCTC does not make clear how the institution determines the need for example, for online programs, weekend programs, or short-term programs. Without a systematic process for determining prioritization and design of delivery, the institution risks developing models of delivery that don't meet students' needs and are not aligned with institutional priorities.
1P8	S	MCTC monitors the currency and effectiveness of career and technical programs by making sure that skills and competencies in programs meet industry standards. In General Education, faculty determine the currency of courses and programs through assessment of student learning outcomes. The Program Review process (Fig. 1-8) provides the focal point for determining program currency, and student learning data is collected and analyzed, as are enrollment patterns, course offerings, faculty evaluations, etc.
1P9	O	While MCTC notes that it is developing an online tutoring support for students in the AA online program, there does not appear to be a systematic process for determining faculty needs relative to learning support. As an example, MCTC mentions that faculty participate in

teaching circles, but no information is provided about how those teaching circles directly address faculty needs relative to learning support. Ongoing faculty development needs might include, for instance, the use of new technologies or understanding different student learning styles.

1P10   O   MCTC notes that there are 32 special interest clubs in support of diverse students (such as the Association of Black Collegiates) as well as special activities to improve student retention. However, in the Organizational Overview MCTC notes that it has unique programs specific to the geographic region, such as Air Traffic Control and Homeland Security, yet there is no indication that there are co-curricular activities to support these unique programs.

1P11-1P13   S   MCTC determines the assessment process at many levels, including course, program, college, and individual student level. At the course level, faculty and the Academic Council work together; at the program level faculty and the Assessment Committee work together; deans assess program review. Finally, at the college level, Competency Caucuses, consisting of faculty, determine the processes for student assessment.

1R1   S   MCTC presents two years of data that show that the deans have evaluated programs in the Program Review process—a process that involves measuring results of student learning outcomes. In one year the number of programs involved in assessment grew from 33 to 40. Improvements in planning and data collection grew 17% and 27% respectively (Fig. 1-10). Some improvement has also occurred in analysis and integration of results. In addition, MCTC's college-wide *Competency Caucuses* reports provide information about the extent of faculty and student involvement in assessment. As an example, the 2006 Report indicates that 32 faculty were involved in a cross-institution writing assessment initiative in which 752 writing samples were collected from across the disciplines, and the skills of 286 sophomore-level students from this sample were assessed. The College exceeded its goal of 70% of participating students performing in writing at the appropriate level (Fig.

1-9). In the Occupational areas, pass rates for four years appear to be high in six programs, with most above 80% (Figs. 1-11-14).

1R2	S	MCTC provides evidence that students have acquired the knowledge and skills base required by presenting graduate placement data—with over 50% (732) of students continuing their education in 2004-05, and of that percent, 63.8% are working full-time in jobs related to their fields of study (Fig. 1-16). Likewise, Fall 2006 data show course completion (percent of students receiving a grade other than W) at 89%. In addition, a 2002 study of developmental learners indicates that "native speaker developmental completers" performed as well as college-prepared students (Fig. 1-18).
1R3	O	MCTC provides no results for processes associated with Helping Students Learn. As an example, there is no data provided for processes related to scheduling, or design of new courses and programs, or the use of technology. Given MCTC's unique demographics and urban focus, such data may provide many opportunities for improving processes critical to helping students learn.
1R4	S	Even though MCTC provides six years of retention data in which MCTC's retention is consistently lower than that of the MnSCU system's rate, MCTC has made improvement in its retention and is improving at a faster rate than the rest of the Minnesota system.
1R4	O	MCTC's disparity data in the success rate of white students and people of color is consistently higher than the MnSCU average for six years. Also, the transfer rate of MCTC students is more than six percent lower than the MnSCU system's (Figs.1-19-21). There are no trend data and data that are presented in these figures are now four years old.
1I1	O	MCTC indicates that many positive outcomes have resulted from assessment initiatives and the study of results of the assessment, including revision of curriculum, improved student success, inter-reader reliability, implementation of cut-score verification processes, etc. However, no process for creating these improvements is presented.

1I2	S	Based on scrutiny of assessment data, MCTC has established seven goals, each with a target—among them improved retention, transfer, and graduation rates; increased enrollment, increased service learning, expanded technical programs, and an increase in the number of programs that have been assessed.

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 Minneapolis Community and Technical 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:

Item   Critical Characteristic

O1a   Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC) is the only public two-year college located in downtown Minneapolis and enrolls nearly 12,000 students annually.

O1b   MCTC has a unique heritage resulting from a Minnesota State College and University (MnSCU) mandated merger of two institutions – a technical college managed by the K-12 system and an open-enrollment community college.

O3a   MCTC is the most ethnically diverse college in Minnesota, with 43% students of color. English is a second language for over 25% of the student body and more than 80 languages and dialects are spoken on campus.

O4a   Collaborations are important to MCTC's mission. MCTC has five types of partners: industry, K-12/post-secondary education, donors, government, and community. In

addition, MCTC founded a Metropolitan Alliance consisting of 11 institutions in the Minneapolis urban area that work collectively to meet student and community needs.

O8b   Opportunities for MCTC include building an institutional dashboard that will allow it to monitor performance as well as creating compelling learning environments.

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

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
2C1	S	MCTC is distinguishing itself in its commitment to access and success for the urban youth with its *Power of YOU* program. This program guarantees graduates of Minneapolis and St. Paul high schools three years of tuition-free attendance.
2P1	S	MCTC initiated conversations with MSU, Saint Paul College, public school leaders, churches, donors, public officials, government agencies, and others to develop a program that serves as an incentive for urban students to pursue a college education. This initiative is in line with MCTC's vision and mission. This initiative was data driven and based on stakeholder needs.
2P2	O	It's not clear if there are processes that support systematic communication about the *Power of YOU* program.
2P3	O	There does not appear to be a systematic plan for faculty development needs relative to the *Power of YOU.* Faculty orientation, training, and development targeted to serve this segment of students is essential for their success.
2P4	O	MCTC used an external research group to evaluate perceptions of program processes, challenges and success. The College has the opportunity to include information in the Systems Portfolio on how the feedback provided by this outside agency will be used.

2R1/2	O	MCTC reports a 60% increase in the number of students enrolled through the *Power of YOU* program. MCTC will benefit from a more robust set of measures of assessment for other distinctive objectives that allow it to benchmark with other institutions with at-risk programs.
2R3	O	MCTC presents anecdotal data suggesting that the *Power of YOU* program has been utilized, but no satisfaction or outcomes data is included.
2I2	O	MCTC has set ambitious improvement goals to grow and develop the *Power of YOU* program. The College fails to describe a comprehensive process for setting and communicating targets based on stakeholder input.

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 Minneapolis Community and Technical 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

O1a   Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC) is the only public two-year college located in downtown Minneapolis and enrolls nearly 12,000 students annually.

O1c   MCTC strives to foster a culture of intentional, transparent processes and procedures that identify their diverse stakeholders' duties and responsibilities.

O3a   MCTC is the most ethnically diverse college in Minnesota, with 43% students of color. English is a second language for over 25% of the student body and more than 80 languages and dialects are spoken on campus.

O3b   About 50% of MCTC students receive financial aid, 26% of students are on public assistance, and 19% of students are single parents. Nearly one-third of MCTC's students are first-generation and 90% are Minnesota residents.

O4a   Collaborations are important to MCTC's mission. MCTC has five types of partners: industry, K-12/post-secondary education, donors, government, and community. In addition, MCTC founded a Metropolitan Alliance consisting of 11 institutions in the Minneapolis urban area that work collectively to meet student and community needs.

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

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
3C1	S	MCTC analyzes stakeholders and their needs and expectations through a variety of methods, including student advising, satisfaction surveys, student evaluations, individual interviews, and academic program review. In addition, MCTC engages the community and employers to analyze needs and expectations.
3P1	S	MCTC's Student Affairs staff completed a SWOT to identify internal and external factors that describes a five-step process for identifying students' needs, beginning with seeking information during the admissions process, placement and testing, advising, and orientation. Other methods for gathering information include a database of answers to students' most frequently asked questions, use of surveys, customer service comment cards, and other mechanisms.
3P3	S	MCTC identifies the changing needs of stakeholders in a variety of ways, among them by tracking student demographics, through internal and

external meetings with school counselors and advisors, by reviewing placement information, and through special programs such as *Power of YOU*.

3P4	S	MCTC has a systematic process for building and maintaining relationships including a Student Success Pathway program (Fig. 3-2), through presence at several multicultural locations, meeting regularly with community committees.
3P5	O	MCTC does not describe a defined set of metrics or benchmarks that allow it to understand the needs of new students. Without data MCTC will not be able to drive process improvement in a critical area like stakeholder needs.
3P6	O	MCTC describes a system of gathering and resolving stakeholder complaints but does not appear to have a systematic process for collecting and analyzing student complaint data across the college. While MCTC does have a Judicial Affairs Officer, there is no indication that, as an example, across academic divisions student complaints are aggregated, analyzed, and issues addressed in a systematic way. Without such a systematic process, MCTC may be overlooking common patterns of student dissatisfaction with programs, facilities, or employees.
3P7	O	MCTC has an opportunity to gather effective feedback from students through implementation of the CCSSE.
3R1	O	MCTC effectively implemented several improvements based on their 2004 satisfaction survey results. It is encouraged to gather, analyze, and report on how processes satisfy student needs. Improvements to student services resulted from students' suggestions and complaints in satisfaction surveys. These changes will be assessed and provide opportunity for additional improvement. No trend or comparative data is included and the reported data is four years old.
3R2	O	MCTC reports enrollment and retention information rather than student satisfaction data. Numerous initiatives and improvement projects were

put in place over the years to address the institution's issues with respect to building relationships with students. MCTC is encouraged to gather, analyze, and report on how processes satisfy student needs.

3R3	O	MCTC is encouraged to systematically collect more data documenting effectiveness of process in this area. MCTC provides information about stakeholder satisfaction, but the data presented represents a one-time snapshot and it is not clear what the survey size is. Many of the percentages are high - in the nineties - suggesting positive results, but without trend or comparative data, the results appear serendipitous and may not effectively inform process improvement.
3R4	O	MCTC provides anecdotal evidence but no data for its five segmented stakeholders (3C1). As an example, there is no data about how community groups and supporters are loyal to the college, although MCTC does note that scholarship contributions have doubled in three years.
3R5	O	MCTC presents data from the ACT survey for the year 2005 only, although the survey has been administered four times, most recently in 2007 (see also 3R1 above). The MCTC results are very close to the average of all two-year colleges, although in some areas the difference is as much as five percent. No comparative data from other institutions related to other stakeholders is provided. Trend data is not included.
3I1	O	MCTC seems to take database improvement initiatives very seriously and is addressing students and stakeholders' requirements in a systematic fashion. Fig. 3-8 shows process; however it is not clear how MCTC is improving processes specifically related to meeting student and stakeholder needs. Derivation and communication of targets is not fully documented as a process.
3I2	O	MCTC identified clear improvement priorities based on student dissatisfaction in key areas. Because of this process, satisfaction increased significantly. The process is ongoing and will likely yield increasingly positive results.

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 Minneapolis Community and Technical 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:

Item   Critical Characteristic

O1c   MCTC strives to foster a culture of intentional, transparent processes and procedures that identify their diverse stakeholders' duties and responsibilities.

O5a   MCTC has 928 employees - 157 full-time faculty, 479 part-time faculty, 264 full-time staff, and 28 part-time staff. Employees are represented by four unions. About 20% of the employees are racially diverse, and the employees are approximately split evenly between male and female.

O8a   Vulnerabilities for MCTC include: students' under-preparation, low-income students, the political environment, and a human resource shortage.

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

Item   S/O   Comment

4C1   S   MCTC has organized a work system that evaluates the working environment, work activities, and job classification that strengthens focus on student learning and development. Review of the MCTC work system

is accomplished with the job audit process. The college uses a shared governance model.

4C2	O	There are five key factors that define the work environment: 1) access to educational opportunity, 2) high demand urban location, 3) collective bargaining agreements, 4) collegiate-management relations, and 5) MCTC's required affiliation in the Minnesota State College and Universities System (MnSCU). Therefore, salary ranges and job classifications are determined on a state level.
4C4	S	The college has 11 programs and opportunities that address continual faculty and staff professional development. Three of these are departmental funding, departmental professional development programs, and faculty sabbaticals. The staff development committee uses a new tool for performance management that includes individual development plans.
4P1	S	MCTC has a college-wide systematic hiring process that focuses on job requirements and applicant qualifications. MCTC has adopted the MnSCU mandated credentialing policy that assures that all faculty members meet system-established minimum qualifications.
4P2	SS	A flexible, systematic plan is used to recruit and hire college personnel. Multiple stakeholders are included on search committees. Staff diversity is addressed with job postings including trade journals, professional listings (including those that target specific minorities), and the Chronicle of Higher Education. Providing funds for interviewing expenses significantly helps expand the pool of applicants.
4P3	S	Communication and cooperation are fostered via shared governance, college website, All-College meetings, and opening day activities using breakout sessions with specific topics. Best practices are shared among MnSCU at the higher levels. Ethics training occurs during new employee orientation.
4P4/5	S	The Staff Development Committee (SDC) is responsible for comprehensive training and development of all College employees. This

committee has developed three initiatives: Individual Staff Development Funds, Departmental Development & Training, and a Strategic Plan. Administrators may propose projects through the Administrator Development Program. Supervisors are required to attend training in various supervisory topic areas. The MnSCU system conducted a training needs survey in 2005. The staff provide training and development needs to the SDC.

4P6	O	The College implemented a new performance management process in 2006 with the cornerstone being an effective performance appraisal tool. Competencies and responsibilities are focal points. Staff members have attended training sessions. Supervisors and employees reflect on employee performance. However, there is no upward evaluation (from employee to supervisor) reported.
4P7	S	Each year a large employee recognition event is hosted by the College. Merit awards are given based on supervisor nominations.
4P8	S	A semi-annual "climate" survey is conducted. Surveys are analyzed, summarized for employees, and used to provide departmental work plans. No data, trends, or work plan information is provided.
4P9/10	S	MCTC administered the Campus Quality Survey which addressed eight categories. This has been replaced with the shorter Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) Survey (see 4P8). Averages are compared with other 2-year and 4-year colleges. Health and safety issues are the responsibility of the Safety Committee.
4R1	O	Trend data is presented for only two of the eight Campus Quality Survey areas; Employee Training & Recognition and Employee Empowerment & Teamwork. General Employee Satisfaction trend data is also presented. These data indicate improvements have been made in employee satisfaction, training & recognition, and empowerment & teamwork from 1999-2005. There is a decrease in the gap between employee perceptions and reality. No data are presented for the new PACE Survey.

MCTC may find real advantage in correlating the new PACE survey with the Campus Quality Survey.

4R2	O	Employee diversity has increased from 16.1% in 2002 to 19.6% in 2007(Figure 4-7). The chart does not indicate how this compares with the student body or area demographics. Employee ethnicity data is presented for 2007, but trend data is not presented (Figure 4-7). MCTC's goal of alignment between student body demographics and employee demographics may be jeopardized without more robust data in this area.
4R3	S	There has been an increase in employee perception of quality as determined by an increase from 44% to 84% good and excellent ratings by employees from 1999 through 2005. Quality/Productivity Improvement has grown from 2.86 to 3.37 between 1999 and 2005.
4R4	O	MCTC rates slightly better than all other institutions and other 2-year colleges in three of the eight categories. However, data from the other five categories are not discussed, presenting an opportunity for MCTC to better understand their performance relative to peers.
4I1	S	Valuing people is being improved by including activities in Diversity Improvement, Customer Service Research, Staff Mentoring Program, and Exit Interviews.
4I2	S	The Staff Development Committee evaluates prior year performance, makes changes to the programming, and makes recommendations to President's Cabinet for specific targets for improvement. Five specific targets were identified for 2007. The results and improvement targets are communicated in multiple ways to employees. It is unclear how the specific targets were chosen.

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 Minneapolis Community and Technical 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:

Item   Critical Characteristic

O1c   MCTC strives to foster a culture of intentional, transparent processes and procedures that identify their diverse stakeholders' duties and responsibilities.

O4a   Collaborations are important to MCTC's mission. MCTC has five types of partners: industry, K-12/post-secondary education, donors, government, and community. In addition, MCTC founded a Metropolitan Alliance consisting of 11 institutions in the Minneapolis urban area that work collectively to meet student and community needs.

O5a   MCTC has 928 employees - 157 full-time faculty, 479 part-time faculty, 264 full-time staff, and 28 part-time staff. Employees are represented by four unions. About 20% of the employees are racially diverse, and the employees are approximately split evenly between male and female.

O8a   Vulnerabilities for MCTC include: students' under-preparation, low-income students, the political environment, and a human resource shortage.

O8b   Opportunities for MCTC include building an institutional dashboard that will allow it to monitor performance as well as creating compelling learning environments.

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

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
5C1/2	S	MCTC articulates a collaborative and collegial communication system. Institutional oversight for policy and strategy is held by the faculty and staff unions. Input at the ground level is sought in the strategic planning process. MnSCU audits MCTC for compliance with state and federal regulations.
5C3	S	MCTC assures ethical and equitable behavior through enactment of its Affirmative Action Plan and by distributing institutional policies through its website and handbooks for various stakeholders.
5P1/2	S	MCTC's leaders set direction through the strategic planning process and then by deploying the strategic plan. In seeking opportunities, leaders appear to use students' needs as a way of determining what's important for building and sustaining the institution's learning environment.
5P3	O	While MCTC's leaders indicate that decision making is a consultative process, and some cross-functional teams are used to address issues, it is not clear how widely cross-functional teams are used for institutional decision making in a quality, continuous improvement environment. The institutional structure appears to be hierarchical and segmented.
5P4	O	MCTC maintains an Office of Strategy, Planning, and Accountability, but it is not apparent the extent to which information is proactively and effectively shared through the MCTC culture.
5P5	S	MCTC uses the institution's hierarchical structure to communicate priorities - including various division, staff, and coordinators' meetings. The institution has also recently implemented a public dashboard to communicate the College's progress in meeting its goals and objectives. External communication is achieved through participation in programs that promote social responsibility.
5P6	O	Although processes are in place to involve all levels of supervisors, senior college staff, administration, and the broader community, it is not clear how staff members are involved in a closed loop system.

5P7/8	S	MCTC supports employee participation in leadership development opportunities like the LEAD Academy.
5P9	O	It is unclear the extent to which MCTC links key communication and leadership measures to its processes.
5R1/2	O	MCTC fails to report data within the last two years for leading and communicating processes. Furthermore, MCTC offers few comparative results and the reporting parameter is not evident. Without data, MCTC cannot take full advantage of process improvement in a critical area like leading and communicating.
5I1/2	O	MCTC fails to detail strategy or targets for improving leadership and communication processes.

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 Minneapolis Community and Technical 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:

Item   Critical Characteristic

O3a   MCTC is the most ethnically diverse college in Minnesota, with 43% students of color. English is a second language for over 25% of the student body and more than 80 languages and dialects are spoken on campus.

O3b   About 50% of MCTC students receive financial aid, 26% of students are on public assistance, and 19% of students are single parents. Nearly one-third of MCTC's students are first-generation and 90% are Minnesota residents.

O3c   MCTC has seen significant enrollment growth over the past two years.

O6a   MCTC consists of nine buildings on seven acres in downtown Minneapolis. A new Science and Allied Health Center will open in 2008 and a library opened in 2003. Other sites include the Criminal Justice center in St. Paul and the Aviation Center in Eden Prairie.

O6b   MCTC has 78 smart classrooms and 28 multimedia classrooms, as well as 10 computer classrooms and 2 open computer labs.

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

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
6C1	S	MCTC identifies student support service needs through a continuous process of evaluation that gathers feedback from student satisfaction surveys and focus groups.
6P1	S	MCTC identifies student support needs by seeking input from students through Student Comment Cards, Student Concern Forms, and by involving students on committees, such as AQIP teams and student technology planning. In addition, a Student Opinion Survey is administered, and information is gathered from individual students at orientation, through testing and placement, and through such programs as Bridge to Success and *Power of YOU* (Fig. 6-1).
6P2	O	MCTC identifies administrative support process needs through the Campus Quality Survey, which was last done in 2005. MCTC would benefit from having a current measure to improve support processes.

6P3	S	At MCTC processes are managed on a day-to-day basis using data management practices - that is, giving managers access to needed data and putting policies and procedures online where they are accessible. In addition, the College meeting structure is used to manage the business.
6P4	S	A Student Affairs database tracks student inquiries and uses the information to improve current student services. Each support area has undergone a process whereby primary responsibilities based on stakeholders' needs are identified and measures of success determined (see Fig. 6-1, 6-2).
6P5	O	Although the student opinion survey gathers information on college services, MCTC does not indicate that the survey measures "administrative support service processes." An opportunity exists to gather data from students and use the results to improve the support services provided to them.
6R1	O	MCTC shows a three-year trend (FY03-05) of student responses to a satisfaction survey in thirteen student support areas. The responses show no more than a two or three percent variation in response, except for College Sponsored Social Activities, which improved in the three-year period by seven percent (Fig. 6-3). MCTC also has the opportunity to present data documenting processes in the areas of library usage, numbers of students who registered online or in person, increased involvement in the Academic Support Center, etc
6R2	O	MCTC provides positive trends in Campus Quality Survey data up to 2005 (Fig. 6-4), but does not provide continuing data in this area.

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 Minneapolis Community and Technical 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:

Item   Critical Characteristic

O1c   MCTC strives to foster a culture of intentional, transparent processes and procedures that identify their diverse stakeholders' duties and responsibilities.

O8b   Opportunities for MCTC include building an institutional dashboard that will allow it to monitor performance as well as creating compelling learning environments.

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

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
7C1	S	MCTC collects, stores, and accesses data using its student information system, the Integrated Statewide Records System (ISRS), maintained by the Information Technology Services of MnSCU. MCTC continues to make a concerted effort to use its secure connection to the Web for grade submission, online tuition payment, and registrations. In addition, MCTC uses a decentralized system to share files, information, forms, and other data to all employees.
7C2	S	MCTC uses program review data to measure the effectiveness of its academic programs, financial data to measure its fiduciary responsibilities, and qualitative data to measure employee performance. Improvement decisions are data driven.

7P1	S	MCTC selects and manages data by complying with State and Federal mandates, and then by complying with MnSCU requirements. In addition, MCTC's Cabinet sets priorities and selects data, and faculty manages assessment data (Fig. 7-3). Other internal mechanisms for managing data include the Finance Unit website and Data Book.
7P2	O	Requests for data are analyzed on a weekly basis and timelines are determined for each request by the Office of Strategy, Planning and Accountability. An opportunity exists for MCTC to implement a process that allows staff to access frequently-used reports and data without processing a formal request.
7P3	O	MCTC compares itself to other institutions in the MnSCU system, as required, and recognizes that it has an opportunity to find a cohort of institutions similar to MCTC for a better comparison given the institution's unique characteristics (urban, minorities, under-prepared, etc.).
7P4	S	Recently, the institution adopted an Institutional Dashboard for making information public and accessible to everyone. MCTC has recently decided to implement nationally-normed instruments such as SIR II and CCSSE to gather satisfaction and engagement information. Executive summaries compiled by the Budget Office and Office of Strategy, Planning and Accountability provide foundational information that help ensure continued improvement within the college.
7P5	S	MCTC indicates that the Strategic Plan and Program Review provide a framework for ensuring analysis of data that is aligned with institutional goals and objectives. All departments and programs are required to conduct annual assessment activities. Data is shared with deans and directors who then align this with the Strategic Planning goals. Information is shared on the College website, in the student newsletter, and recently television monitors have been situated around the campus to broadcast important information. The Dashboard will hold the institutional data that is considered most relevant to the broader academic community.

7R1	O	MCTC provides no data in this area and recognizes that college-wide there is a desire for data to inform decision making. This is evidenced by the widespread requests for research and data coming from a wide variety of units. The number of research requests has increased significantly, and the demand for data presently exceeds the capacity of current staffing in the Office of Strategy, Planning, and Accountability.
7R2	O	MCTC does not currently have a method for comparing its system for measuring effectiveness to those of other educational institutions. However, the college does compare the results of its measures of effectiveness with others in the MnSCU system and will now be doing so with National Community College Benchmarking Project institutions.
7I1	O	Several external requirements and changes have promoted refinement and further development of processes. For example, changes to MnSCU system targets, IPEDS, and Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Act requirements have provided direction in altering processes.
7I2	O	MCTC does not yet have a systematic and consistent method for setting targets. The criteria used to set targets include previous MCTC trends and stretch goals in key performance areas are also not articulated. The goal is to create a scorecard for initiatives with criteria for goal achievement. Results and improvement priorities are communicated to senior leadership through quarterly updates of the institutional work plan and an annual institutional work plan report, which is discussed in an All-College meeting. This process will be enhanced by the increased availability of data and benchmarks from NCCBP.

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 Minneapolis Community and Technical 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

O1b   MCTC has a unique heritage resulting from a Minnesota State College and University (MnSCU) mandated merger of two institutions – a technical college managed by the K-12 system and an open-enrollment community college.

O1c   MCTC strives to foster a culture of intentional, transparent processes and procedures that identify their diverse stakeholders' duties and responsibilities.

O3c   MCTC has seen significant enrollment growth over the past two years.

O4a   Collaborations are important to MCTC's mission. MCTC has five types of partners: industry, K-12/post-secondary education, donors, government, and community. In addition, MCTC founded a Metropolitan Alliance consisting of 11 institutions in the Minneapolis urban area that work collectively to meet student and community needs.

O7a   MCTC chooses to be collaborative rather than competitive. MCTC competes with other MnSCU institutions, online colleges, private schools, and for-profit institutions.

O8a   Vulnerabilities for MCTC include: students' under-preparation, low-income students, the political environment, and a human resource shortage.

O8b   Opportunities for MCTC include building an institutional dashboard that will allow it to monitor performance as well as creating compelling learning environments.

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

Item   S/O   Comment

8C1/2   S   MCTC clearly articulates a master academic plan, guiding principles, finance master plan, and facilities master plan emergent from their Strategic Plan. In addition, eight focus areas and four strategic goals included in the 2004-2010 Plan inform the direction of the institution. The college vision and mission is used as a basis for the planning process.

8P1-3   S   MCTC's planning process involves selecting short- and long-term strategies, and developing key action plans that result in the Institutional Work Plan (Fig. 8-1). The process begins with the Budget Report which determines financial parameters for plans, and the Strategic Plan Data Book which provides performance indicators and measures. Individual work units provide quarterly updates, and this information is used as input into the larger plan. The Cabinet assesses the planned outcomes and makes adjustments as necessary and allocates resources. The institutional plan is aligned with MnSCU priorities (Fig. 8-2).

8P4   O   MCTC does not make clear how the Facilities Master Plan, the Finance Master Plan, and the Information Technology Services Strategic Plan are specifically aligned with the Institutional Work Plan. Integrating the separate strategic plans will maximize opportunities for focused strategic planning and better alignment of resources.

8P5   S   MCTC's Strategic Plan is measured by Key Performance Indicators that are aligned with MnSCU's System Accountability Indicators and Measures (Fig. 8-2). MnSCU's indicators are the driver for MCTC. During the planning process, targets are set for each department and unit and are approved as a component of the budget and annual Institutional Plan.

8P6   O   MCTC encourages innovation and improvement through resource allocation, and budgeting is tied to college priorities. New initiatives are funded and defunct initiatives are identified and removed from the budget cycle. Though MCTC acknowledges the link between strategy and resources, the process for funding action plans is not fully articulated.

		Without shared processes, some campus stakeholders may not be able to take advantage of action planning.
8P8	O	MCTC uses the Campus Quality Survey to assess satisfaction with planning. However, the process of how information is gathered and incorporated into the plan for continuous improvement is not clear.
8R1	O	MCTC reports no data for accomplishing strategies and action plans. The college is in the process of developing a framework for an Institutional Dashboard to make data accessible to all College stakeholders.
8R2/3	O	MnSCU priorities provide targets for performance improvement and the college will participate in the National Community College Benchmarking Project in FY08. However, MCTC does not report targets relative to other MnSCU institutions. Comparative data will assist MCTC in learning about the effectiveness of its strategic planning process.
8R4	S	Improved employee satisfaction with the processes, improvement of late registration, and college-wide assessment of communications skills are three areas of positive results of the institution's planning processes.
8I1/2	O	MCTC articulates proposed improvements to the institution, but the relevance of such improvements to the planning processes is not clear. Furthermore, it is not clear why targets are established, how they were derived, or if the communication strategy is appropriate to generate the desired results.

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 Minneapolis Community and Technical College 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

O4a   Collaborations are important to MCTC's mission. MCTC has five types of partners: industry, K-12/post-secondary education, donors, government, and community. In addition, MCTC founded a Metropolitan Alliance consisting of 11 institutions in the Minneapolis urban area that work collectively to meet student and community needs.

O7a   MCTC chooses to be collaborative rather than competitive. MCTC competes with other MnSCU institutions, online colleges, private schools, and for-profit institutions.

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

Item   S/O   Comment

9C1   S   MCTC works in collaborative partnership with industry, K-12 school districts, donors, post-secondary educational institutions, government agencies and community leaders.

9P1-2   S   MCTC is systematic about the way it engages in external partnerships and in the way it ensures that the needs of partners and others are being met. MCTC has identified four criteria for establishing potential partnerships and building on those relationships. MCTC has a strong collaborative relationship with service area schools which focuses on the college-readiness of students.

9P3	S	MCTC has strong teamwork throughout the organization and units and departments work together collaboratively. MCTC offers professional development opportunities for all staff.
9P4	S	MCTC identifies three broad areas that it creates measures for: program/department measures, partnership measures, and K-12 partnership measures. For each area, MCTC indicates two to five measures, such as participation rate, cost, perception, visibility, and numbers of students who enroll, graduate, transfer, etc.
9R1	OO	MCTC lists many partners and expected outcomes (Fig. 9-1) and those with whom it has agreements (Fig. 9-2). It also emphasizes the importance of its relationship with *Power of YOU*, Health Careers Institute, Urban Teacher Program, Lake Street Center, and others. MCTC does not, however, provide results of these partnerships. Such data may include numbers of students who come from high schools to MCTC, numbers of students who transfer, graduation rates of the under-prepared and under-served, etc. Without results of these partnerships, MCTC risks taking action on anecdotal information and perhaps misaligning resources.