

# **SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT**

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

## **MISSOURI WESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY**

**March 27, 2007**



**Academic  
Quality Improvement  
Program**

The Higher Learning Commission **NCA**

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**Table of Contents**

Executive Summary .....	3
Elements of the Feedback Report .....	5
Strategic and Accreditation Issues .....	7
Using the Feedback Report .....	9
Critical Characteristics Analysis .....	10
Category Feedback .....	13
<i>Helping Students Learn</i> .....	13
<i>Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives</i> .....	20
<i>Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs</i> .....	24
<i>Valuing People</i> .....	27
<i>Leading and Communicating</i> .....	33
<i>Supporting Institutional Operations</i> .....	36
<i>Measuring Effectiveness</i> .....	40
<i>Planning Continuous Improvement</i> .....	43
<i>Building Collaborative Relationships</i> .....	47

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR MISSOURI WESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY**

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

### Category One:

- Western's philosophy regarding its mission as an open enrollment institution is not clear.
- A number of processes are not clearly delineated, nor fully deployed.
- The processes of collecting results are not thoroughly depicted and therefore, cannot be easily analyzed.
- Western is collecting a significant amount of data regarding satisfaction and perception of student achievement. Coupled with the perception and satisfaction data, determining, gathering, and analyzing direct measures of student learning may enhance Western's ability to select objectives that have an impact on improved student learning.

### Category Two:

- It is unclear how data collection and analysis supports continuous improvement in the Student Engagement effort. Identification and selection of data used to inform decisions for change will be helpful. A feedback loop needs to be established for the success of the Student Engagement effort.
- The projects identified in "other distinctive objectives" are important to strengthening the institution. In the next round of projects, this AQIP segment might be better met with objectives that connect the institution to the external community.

### Category Three:

- Missouri Western might benefit from increased assessment of faculty satisfaction and faculty needs.
- Internal stakeholders do not appear to be represented.

### Category Four:

- There are limited results which serve as actual evidence of valuing people.

- The faculty to student ratios is given as 18:1, but actual numbers seem to indicate 31:1.
- While we acknowledge the increasing funding for market-based pay increases, it raises the question of how were the increases funded given state contribution reductions and what else was eliminated in the budget to support this initiative.

#### Category Five:

- Western has productively used data to lead and communicate; it can also attain useful data by surveying its stakeholders to learn more from the results in leading and communicating.

#### Category Six:

- Continuous improvement goals using data from multiple sources are exemplary. Many of Western's departments set specific and measurable targets for improvement.

#### Category Seven:

- A processes which focuses on the utilization of data that has been collected would close assessment loops and, as such, support effective decision making.
- Data could be analyzed at the point of collection. In doing so, it could provide for immediacy of results and better utilization of resources.
- Ongoing assessment of Banner utilization will be helpful for understanding the actual effectiveness of the technology.

#### Category Eight:

- The portfolio describes a productive process for planning continuous improvement. The addition and use of measures and tracking systems will strengthen this process.

#### Category Nine:

- Clearly, students benefit from the collaboration and relationship building conducted by Western; measurements that track results and impact could strengthen this effort.

Accreditation issues and Strategic challenges for Missouri Western State University are listed in detail within the Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis section of the Appraisal Feedback Report.

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## ELEMENTS OF Missouri Western'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.** Missouri Western State University is an institution that is clearly embracing the philosophic aspects of continuous improvement. Application of AQIP principles are applied via the administration. It appears that the use and understanding of AQIP principles are not fully embraced and incorporated throughout the institution, but with time and training that situation will be corrected. Inconsistencies between stated processes and results presented support this observation. The next logical step for Western would be to begin using collected data to drive decision-making across campus at all levels. This is beginning to happen in limited cases, but does not appear to be part of the culture yet. As the amount of annual data collected

increases, Western will notably increase its capacity for data driven decision-making. Overall, Missouri Western has demonstrated that they are a maturing AQIP Institution.

**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.

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## **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 Missouri Western State University 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 Missouri Western State University 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 Missouri Western will discuss will discuss these strategic issues, give priority to those it concludes are most critical, and take action promptly, the Systems Appraisal Team identified:

From reading the portfolio, it appears Western is pulled between it's assigned mission from the State of Missouri to be an open access institution and Western's desire and attempts to be "more" and position itself with the more selective higher education institutions in the state. This might muddy their mission and spread resources too thin, attempting to be all things to all people.

It often appears that there is confusion between what is the "process" being used and the "results" obtained from using the developed process, i.e., often descriptions of results are presented as being the process.

With the discussion about the impact on budgets from reductions in Missouri funding, there is not as much discussion about development and fundraising. The two big priorities seem to be recruitment and retention. Given the process of improvement culture at Western, adding focus toward development may provide some assistance for future projects/improvements.

While the document mentions Western's technology capabilities with pride, it states that 95% of all classes are held during the traditional 9-5 period and that upcoming classes are scheduled based on historic demands. With the increasing utilization of online for adult learners, Western may be well-served in its local community and beyond with increasing the availability of online classes as well as increasing the availability of classes after hours to serve the non-traditional student or the student who needs schedule flexibility to coordinate a job and education.

With the focus on increased student enrollment as well as improved entering student ACT scores as well as new student diversity, there is little to no discussion about Western using the strategy of tuition discounting to improve averages and diversity.



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## 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.

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## **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 Missouri Western, 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 Missouri Western 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    Originally founded in 1914 as Saint Joseph Junior College as two-year transfer program. First accredited by NCA in 1919, and has continuously maintained accreditation. Western was transformed into a four-year college in 1969, and in 2005 was designated a university. Western became the first four-year public university in Missouri to join AQIP (2003).
- O1b    Vision: Missouri Western State University will set the standard for excellence in student development and community leadership.
- O1c    Mission: Missouri Western State University is a learning community focused on students as individuals and as members of society. Western offers students at all stages of life the opportunity to achieve excellence in the classroom and beyond, as they prepare to be leaders in their work and in their communities. As a leader itself, Western is committed to the educational, economic, cultural, and social development of the people and the region it serves. (Western has a statewide mission in applied learning.)
- O1d    Western serves both traditional and non-traditional students.
- O1e    Western through its 5-year strategic plan (The Western Advantage) has identified the following seven strategic areas: 1) academic affairs and enrollment management, 2) applied learning and student development, 3) information technology, 4) facilities and

grounds,5) image and advancement, 6) community service, community partnerships and workforce development, and 7) planning and development.

- O1f Western has three AQIP Action Projects—1) Applied Learning, 2) Student Engagement, and 3) Communicating Quality that received Strategic Planning Implementation Funds (SPIF) of \$100,000 each of the three years of implementation.
- O2a Western provides a blend of traditional liberal arts and professional programs. There are 51 bachelors and 10 associates degrees as well as 2 undergraduate and 1 graduate certificate program (Fig. 0.3). Academic departments are organized into the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the College of Professional Studies, and the Western Institute.
- O2b Western has created a graduate council to begin developing graduate courses and programs.
- O2c Western offers life-long learning opportunities, pre-professional transfer programs, continuing professional education opportunities, and self-enrichment courses.
- O2d There are some graduate programs and courses brokered through other universities.
- O3a Western students are first generation college students coming from families with one of the lowest average income levels in the Missouri four-year public sector.
- Western students qualify for need based aid at a level that is nearly 17% greater than the average at Missouri four-year public institutions. Eighty-three percent of students receive some form of financial aid; 58% receive need-based aid.
- O3b Seventy-seven percent of students are full time. As of 2005 student enrollment was 5,271.
- O3c In 2005, about 23% of the new degree seeking students transferred from other institutions.
- O4a A 2+2+2 partnership between Metropolitan Community Colleges (MCC), MWSU, and the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) offers students an associate degree from MCC the opportunity to complete a bachelors at MWSU, and then, a master's degree at UMKC.

- O4b Western has partnered with regional, national and international organizations to develop the workforce and to provide service opportunities and programs.
- O5a Western has 179 full-time and 128 part-time faculty and 484 employees (2005).
- O5b Eighty-four percent of full-time tenure track faculty have terminal degrees.
- O5c Ratio of student to FT faculty is 18:1.
- O6a Western primary service area is determined by statute and?
- O6b Western is an open access institution.
- O6c All classrooms at Western are technologically “smart classrooms.”
- O6d Western began replacing existing administrative computing software and hardware systems in 2004 with an integrated, technologically current Web-based system that empowers users with access to accurate, current information.
- O7a No other state supported four-year institutions exist within a 40-mile radius of Western. There are 17 two-year and other four-year colleges in Kansas City. Missouri has 13 public universities.
- O7b Competitive differentiators for students include location, cost, program quality, faculty-student ratio, support services and applied learning opportunities
- O8a Western’s 5-year strategic plan (The Western Advantage; O1f) identifies seven areas as opportunities for improvement. These areas are aligned with AQIP principles.
- O8b The level of state funding is a challenge for Western with a loss of \$6M in state funding since 2001.
- O8c Western is one of 12 members of Foundations of Excellence, a model to evaluate and improve the students first year of college.
- O8d Western was one of four colleges in the nation whose teachers education program (the only program in Missouri) was chosen by the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education and the Carnegie Foundation as an exemplary program in the areas of assessing student work and using the results to improve program quality.

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## 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.

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### 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 Missouri Western State University 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***

O1b    Vision: Missouri Western State University will set the standard for excellence in student development and community leadership.

- O1c Mission: Missouri Western State University is a learning community focused on students as individuals and as members of society. Western offers students at all stages of life the opportunity to achieve excellence in the classroom and beyond, as they prepare to be leaders in their work and in their communities. As a leader itself, Western is committed to the educational, economic, cultural, and social development of the people and the region it serves. (Western has a statewide mission in applied learning.)
- O1d Western serves both traditional and non-traditional students and will soon be offering graduate degrees.
- O1e Western through its 5-year strategic plan (The Western Advantage) has identified the following seven strategic areas: 1) academic affairs and enrollment management, 2) applied learning and student development, 3) information technology, 4) facilities and grounds, 5) image and advancement, 6) community service, community partnerships and workforce development, and 7) planning and development.
- O3a Western students are first generation college students coming from families with one of the lowest average income levels in the Missouri four-year public sector.
- Western students qualify for need-based aid at a level that is nearly 17% greater than the average at Missouri four-year public institutions. Eighty-three percent of students receive some form of financial aid; 58% receive need-based aid.
- O3c In 2005, about 23% of the new degree seeking students transferred from other institutions.
- O4b Western has partners with regional, national and international organizations to develop the workforce and to provide service opportunities and programs.
- O6b Western is an open access institution.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1C1a	S	Western expects all students completing courses in the general education program (Figure 1.3) to acquire the knowledge and skills to achieve nine common objectives: (1) Write and speak clearly and effectively, (2) Think

critically and reason analytically, (3) Locate, organize, evaluate and synthesize information from print and electronic sources, (4) Understand and appreciate moral values and ethical choices, (5) Gain a greater awareness of the present by understanding other cultures and times, (6) Understand and enjoy aesthetic experiences and share in related creative activities, (7) Develop an understanding of fundamental mathematical concepts and their applications, (8) Understand common phenomena in the physical and natural environment and understand the methods by which they are studied, (9) Understand and appreciate the means of gaining and maintaining mental and physical health.

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| 1C1b | S | Students are encouraged to complete an applied learning experience such as an internship, practicum, or faculty/student research. Seventy-nine percent of 2006 graduates participated in co-curricular and extracurricular activities through their involvement on campus and in volunteer service to the larger community. |
| 1C2a | S | AQIP Action Projects focus on the Strategic Plan areas of Student Engagement, Communicating Quality, and Applied Learning.  |
| 1C2b | O | Most units at Western, including academic departments, routinely assess their practices, monitoring usage patterns, student needs, and student evaluation of services. As a result of ongoing assessment, major changes in organizations and services occur routinely.  |
| 1C2c | S | All academic departments and campus units develop five year plans aligned with Western's strategic plan. They show points of articulation between their plans and the institutional strategic plan.   |
| 1C3d | S | Western offers distance education options, including Web-based courses, courses offered via television and videotaped courses. Instructors incorporate technology into daily presentations in all "smart" classrooms.   |
| 1C4  | S | Multiple methodologies and pedagogies are utilized to promote student learning by diverse students with diverse needs   |

1C5a	S	Courses throughout the curriculum address gender and ethnicity issues, particularly the Liberal Arts and Sciences focus areas.
1C5b	S	The intent of the Center of Multicultural Education is to increase students' levels of tolerance and acceptance of others.
1P1-1P2a	S	The General Studies Committee reviews the general studies curriculum and the philosophy/common learning objectives every three years.
1P1-1P2b	S	Advisory councils provide significant direction to many of the academic programs in terms of curriculum development and expectations of graduates.
1P1-1P2c	O	A standard process to be used for the analysis of need, population to be served, cost factors and possible effects on other programs for proposed course or program changes would promote consistency across all disciplines.
1P3a	S	Partnering with St. Joseph to prepare middle school students for their future entry into college is proactive and positive.
1P3b	SS	The process in place for assessing the success of the developmental course work is excellent.
1P3c	O	A standard process for all students which incorporates ACT scores, placement exams, high school transcripts to determine placement could provide a baseline from which future adjustments could be assessed.
1P3d	S	Under-prepared students in reading, writing, and math are placed in developmental courses and required to continuously enroll until the student satisfactorily completes the course(s).
1P4a	O	A process which presents program outcomes to students would communicate program expectations.
1P4b	S	Orientation for incoming freshmen begins when Western accepts a student and continues until the student has successfully made the transition.
1P4c	O	Transfer students who do not attend the incoming freshman orientation may need to be given more awareness of expectations.



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|------|---|---|
| 1P5  | S | Western provides a matriculation to graduation support system for exploring academic goals and career plans.  |
| 1P6a | S | A process for documenting and assuring learning through multiple methodologies is good.   |
| 1P6b | O | A process could be implemented for improving and documenting effective teaching using grades, general education requirements, assessments of applied learning activities, student scholarship, and licensing as inputs.   |
| 1P6c | S | Discipline-specific graduate senior exit assessments are a best practice and provide Western with valuable information about teaching and learning.   |
| 1P7a | O | Incorporating student needs, feedback from accrediting bodies, transfer institution requirements, business and industry needs, assessments, and planning and budgeting processes into a system for building effective course delivery could lay the foundation for a process that could be assessed and improved. |
| 1P7b | O | Western provides a mixture of classes taught in traditional settings as well as provides options using online and WebCT supported learning to meet the various learning needs of students. Western should assess its mix of classes to determine its appropriateness based on the mix of its student population.  |
| 1P8a | O | A five year review cycle for programs is very long for rapidly changing programs such as health or technology. Faculty role in program review is unclear.   |
| 1P8b | S | National organizations accredit many of Western's programs and contribute to monitoring for currency in program curriculum as part of the program review process (Figures 8.4, 9.2).  |
| 1P8c | S | Western reviews academic programs using external reviewers in nearly all cases as part of the program review process.   |

1P8d	O	While faculty at Western use student evaluation feedback for improvement, the process followed is not described.
1P9a	O	There is no formal process to identify faculty needs.
1P9b	S	There are processes to determine placement of students in foreign languages and developmental courses and many of the first-year courses have test-outs available.
1P9c	O	Student support processes to assess usability and satisfaction could be implemented.
1P10	SS	Western's use of its Strategic Plan for aligning curricular and co-curricular goals is an excellent model, and this alignment is also fostered by the focus on applied learning.
1P10-1P11	S	Western has begun efforts to integrate all students in service activity and applied learning. Western has created a position of Director of Applied Learning to support related initiatives.
1P11	O	A comprehensive process for the Assessment and Benchmark Committee might assist with determining the most effective tools for student assessment.
1P12a	S	Western has surveyed recent graduates since 1993.
1P12b	S	Alumni surveys completed annually capture valuable information.
1P13a	S	A combination of primary and secondary data on student performance are collected and analyzed for a mix of methodologies.
1P13b	OO	GPA and retention are key indicators of performance, but cannot capture learning. While all graduates take a standardized test (ETS Academic Profile), it is unclear what process is in place to use the results to improve student performance.
1R1a	SS	The table shown in Figure 1.1 clearly identifies results for the strategic goals and objectives and aligns with AQIP's nine categories.

- 1R1b O Western administers the ETS Academic Profile Exam to graduating seniors. Over eight years, Western students have declined in student performance (from 58% to 45 percent over the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile).
- 1R1-2a OO Western's learning objectives (figure 1.2) contain areas that are not measured by the chosen assessment tool, perhaps additional assessment methods might be employed to provide results on those areas.
- 1R1-2b OO Missouri Western might consider presenting the data in Figure 1.1 for several consecutive years to identify weaknesses and strengths, as well as trends.
- 1R1-2c O Western has an opportunity to address its decline in student performance. Although this decline is statewide, Western can identify its own processes for improvement, as well as examine its students scoring lower than a national sample on foundational skills, the decline in senior exit exams and the 2004-2005 decline in the National Council Licensing Examination for Nursing.
- 1R2a S A high percentage of Education (96%), nursing (90%), physical therapy (89%) students pass necessary exams to practice.
- 1R2b O Some majors have nationally normalized tests to use as a comparison. Criminal Justice has a national discipline specific test, but Western did not report it. An opportunity exists to be creative in the assurance of learning.
- 1R2c S Accreditation standards for the PTA program have been maintained for the past five years. Western is to be commended for its 2005 100% pass rate for the Physical Therapist Assistant exam.
- 1R3a O Figures 1.15 & 1.16 provide information concerning academic support at Western. Student use of academic support services suggest that they are being helped. This might be an opportunity to develop a process for measuring the effectiveness of the Center for Academic Support (CAS).

1R3b	S	The Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory given in 2005 to 737 Western students, showed a mean score of 5.46 compared to a four-year public comparisons group score of 5.16.
1R4a	S	MWSU graduates perform average on content and above average on license exams. MWSU's graduation rate improved from 34% in 2002 to 41% in 2004, and is higher than other similar Missouri schools.
1R4b	S	Missouri's standard for freshmen success rate is 55%. Western was the highest in Missouri in its non-selective category (52% in 2002; Figure 1.19 – nine year average equals 50%)
1I1	S	Through its Griffon Gateway Program, Western has reduced the number of credit hours to 11 that incoming freshmen with low ACT scores, incomplete Missouri high school cores, and bottom half of their high school class ranking can take.
1I2a	O	Western is implementing a mandatory attendance policy starting in Fall 2006 in order to improve retention. Western might consider collecting and analyzing the data to test if this policy is beneficial.
1I2b	S	During Spring 2006, Western hosted the First Annual Conference on Applied Learning in Higher Education.

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## **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 Missouri Western State University 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**

- O1b Western has a statewide mission in applied learning.
- O1c Vision: Missouri Western State University will set the standard for excellence in student development and community leadership.
- O1d Mission: Missouri Western State University is a learning community focused on students as individuals and as members of society. Western offers students at all stages of life the opportunity to achieve excellence in the classroom and beyond, as they prepare to be leaders in their work and in their communities. As a leader itself, Western is committed to the educational, economic, cultural, and social development of the people and the region it serves.
- O1e Western serves both traditional and non-traditional students and will soon be offering graduate degrees.
- O2c Western offers life-long learning opportunities, pre-professional transfer programs, continuing professional education opportunities, and self-enrichment courses.
- O4b Western has partners with regional, national and international organizations to develop the workforce and to provide service opportunities and programs.
- O6d Western began replacing existing administrative computing software and hardware systems in 2004 with an integrated, technologically current Web-based system that empowers users with access to accurate, current information.

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

<b>Item</b>	<b>S/O</b>	<b>Comment</b>
2C1a	S	Western places a high priority on partnerships and service within the community.
2C1b	S	Student engagement, communicating quality, and applied learning are listed as objectives.

2C2	S	The objectives relate directly to Western’s vision, mission, and strategic goal.
2C3	S	Distinctive objectives support the goals of general education and the objectives of the College of Liberal Arts and the College of Professional Studies.
2P1	S	More than 400 students, faculty, staff, administrators, Western’s Board of Governors, and other influential members within Western’s immediate community participated in developing distinctive objectives through strategic planning processes.
2P2	S	Communications of expectations regarding identified objectives are achieved through multiple distinct paths (e.g., <i>Strategic Plan</i> and Steering Committees Report, First-Year Programs, Dean’s Council, and campus-wide meetings/events for employees).
2P3a	S	The Academic Affairs Enrollment Management (AAEM) team for Student Engagement examined enrollment management issues for critical student cohort groups and other enrollment management concerns and with the assistance of the Noel-Levitz consulting firm developed annual tactical recruitment and retention plans represented through the following groups: (1) high-ability students, (2) students of color, (3) returning adult students, (4) international students, (5) transfer students, (6) continuing and professional education, (7) assessment, evaluation and benchmarking, (8) institutional resources and capacity, and (9) marketing and public relations.
2P3b	O	Faculty and staff needs relative to other distinctive objectives are not clear, nor is it clear that faculty and staff were surveyed or part of a needs assessment, except for the Communicating Quality initiative.
2P4a	S	The institution was selected as 1 of 12 universities chosen nationally to participate as a founding member of the Foundations of Excellence in the First College Year project. As a founding member, Western administered the faculty survey developed by the Center for the Study of Higher

- Education (CSHE) at Pennsylvania State to establish baseline results for measuring student engagement improvements.
- 2P4b O Western has undertaken a thorough review and assessment of other distinctive objectives, but it is not clear what actions or adjustments resulted due to the review and assessment.
- 2P5 S Each year, Western publishes an Annual Progress Report on the Strategic Plan that tracks the progress made within Other Distinctive Objectives.
- 2R1a S Figure 2.1 indicates progress on many of the strategic planning objectives.
- 2R1b O A significant marketing focus for the past two years has been on new students coming to Western. The surveys point to a need to increase communication with employees and business leaders in the community.
- 2R2 O NSSE data for Student Engagement indicates that first year students scored lower than expected on the level of academic challenge, active and collaborative learning and student-faculty interaction.
- 2R3 S MWSU is to be commended for its charter membership in the Foundations of Excellence work and those results. Of particular note is the assistance Western provides students in identifying a major, the active learning model and the citizen-scholar model.
- 2R3b S The institution is in the process of implementing the *Banner Gold* system that will provide a singular, consistent database without duplication of data fields. This integrated system allows information updates to occur in real-time across departmental boundaries within the Banner System.
- 2I1a O With the assistance of Noel-Levitz, a retention plan is being developed.
- 2I1b S In 2005, Public Relations completed surveys and focus groups with prospective and orientation students. As a result, the institution increased advertising on television, radio, and in high school newspapers.

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### **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 Missouri Western State University 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***

- O1b Vision: Missouri Western State University will set the standard for excellence in student development and community leadership.
- O1c Mission: Missouri Western State University is a learning community focused on students as individuals and as members of society. Western offers students at all stages of life the opportunity to achieve excellence in the classroom and beyond, as they prepare to be leaders in their work and in their communities. As a leader itself, Western is committed to the educational, economic, cultural, and social development of the people and the region it serves. (Western has a statewide mission in applied learning.)
- O1d Western serves both traditional and non-traditional students.
- O1e Western through its 5-year strategic plan (The Western Advantage) has identified the following seven strategic areas: 1) academic affairs and enrollment management, 2) applied learning and student development, 3) information technology, 4) facilities and grounds, 5) image and advancement, 6) community service, community partnerships and workforce development, and 7) planning and development.
- O1f Western has three AQIP Action Projects—1) Applied Learning, 2) Student Engagement, and 3) Communicating Quality that received Strategic Planning Implementation Funds (SPIF) of \$100,000 each of the three years of implementation.



- O2c Western offers life-long learning opportunities, pre-professional transfer programs, continuing professional education opportunities, and self-enrichment courses.
- O3a Western students are first generation college students coming from families with one of the lowest average income levels in the Missouri four-year public sector. Western students qualify for need based aid at a level that is nearly 17% greater than the average at Missouri four-year public institutions. Eighty-three percent of students receive some form of financial aid; 58% receive need based aid.
- O3c In 2005, about 23% of the new degree seeking students transferred from other institutions.
- O4a A 2+2+2 partnership between Metropolitan Community Colleges (MCC), MWSU, and the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) offer students an associate degree from MCC the opportunity to complete a bachelors at MWSU, and then, a master's degree at UMKC.
- O4b Western has partners with regional, national and international organizations to develop the workforce and to provide service opportunities and programs.
- O8a Western's 5-year strategic plan (The Western Advantage; O1f) identifies seven areas as opportunities for improvement. These areas are aligned with AQIP principles.
- O8c Western is one of 12 members of Foundations of Excellence, a model to evaluate and improve the students first year of college.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
3C1-2	S	Other stakeholders are identified as DOE, Missouri state, accreditors, students, parents, employees and partners.  Faculty is not included in the stakeholder groups.
3P1	S	As shown in Figure 3.4, Western uses multiple methods to identify and analyze student needs.

3P2	SS	Feedback from a retention and recruitment review led to changes in how academic departments handle campus visits.
3P3	OO	Although Figure 3.5 identifies the range of inputs gathered from various stakeholder groups, faculty's changing needs are not included, and examples of analysis and use of data regarding stakeholder needs are lacking.
3P4	S	Western uses a wide range of processes to build and maintain relationships with stakeholders, other than with faculty.
3P5	S	The strategic planning five year process identifies new and changing stakeholder groups.
3P6	S	A mechanism which ensures that Western's response to complaints from both students and other stakeholders is communicated to the Western community is an important step in the process.
3P7	O	Figure 3.6 describes the various tools for measuring student and stakeholder satisfaction, yet it does not address the process for responding to results of the data once it has been analyzed. This step can provide the first input for continuous improvement.
	S	Multiple measures are used to ensure satisfaction.
3R1-3R2a	O	SSI results indicate students would like more attention given to registration effectiveness and to safety and security, as noted in Figure 3.7
3R1-3R2b	S	SSI results shown in figure 3.7 indicate students' satisfaction is comparable to other four-year institutions with strengths noted in advising and concern for the individual.
3R1-3R2c	O	Western's cites their second-year return rate in 2004 of 59.5 percent is higher than the national average of 55.1 percent at open access four-year schools; however, the data is unclear, and an apparent inconsistency

exists between Figure 1.9 and Figure 3.9. The results listed appear confusing and incomplete.

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| 3R4 | S | Western published the following four documents to communicate with its stakeholders: Points of Pride, Annual Progress Report on the Strategic Plan, Missouri Western and the Personal Impact Survey. |
| 3I1 | S | Missouri Western recognizes opportunities in safety, math, retention, and compensation.  |
|     | O | Ongoing opportunities exist for improvement.   |
| 3I2 | S | Strategic plan unit goals are reviewed annually and priorities for improvement have been identified.   |

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#### **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 Missouri Western State University 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***

- O1b    Vision: Missouri Western State University will set the standard for excellence in student development and community leadership.
- O1d    Western serves both traditional and non-traditional students.

- O1f Western through its 5-year strategic plan (The Western Advantage) has identified the following seven strategic areas: 1) academic affairs and enrollment management, 2) applied learning and student development, 3) information technology, 4) facilities and grounds, 5) image and advancement, 6) community service, community partnerships and workforce development, and 7) planning and development.
- O1g Western has three AQIP Action Projects—1) Applied Learning, 2) Student Engagement, and 3) Communicating Quality that received Strategic Planning Implementation Funds (SPIF) of \$100,000 each of the three years of implementation.
- O1h The purpose of Western is to serve students, the community, the region, and the State.
- O2c Western offers life-long learning opportunities, pre-professional transfer programs, continuing professional education opportunities, and self-enrichment courses.
- O3a Students are characteristically first generation college students coming from one of the lowest average incomes levels in the state.
- O3b Eighty-three percent of students receive some form of financial aid, 58 percent receive need based aid.
- O4a Key stakeholders include students, employees, Board of Governors, CBHE, Department of Higher Education, accrediting bodies, advisory councils, employers, community members, and alumni and friends.
- O4b Western has partners with regional, national and international organizations to develop the workforce and to provide service opportunities and programs.
- O5a There were 170 full-time and 307 total faculty in Fall 2005.
- O5b Eighty-four percent of full-time tenure track faculty have terminal degrees.
- O6d Western began replacing existing administrative computing software and hardware systems in 2004 with an integrated, technologically current Web-based system that empowers users with access to accurate, current information.
- O8a Western's 5-year strategic plan (The Western Advantage; O1f) identifies seven areas as opportunities for improvement. These areas are aligned with AQIP principles.
- O8c Western is one of 12 members of Foundations of Excellence, a model to evaluate and improve the students first year of college.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
4C1a	S	Multiple committees focus on learning at Missouri Western.
4C1b	S	Service, quality, freedom, enthusiasm, respect, and courage are values that create the environment in which faculty, staff, and administrators at Western organize their work to strengthen the institution's focus on student learning.
4C1c	S	One of the distinctive ways the University approaches its work environment is through its inclusive strategic planning process.
4C2a	S	A new job description classification system was developed from data.
4C2b	O	Market surveys for a compensation process will be reviewed every 5 years.
4C3a	S	Western considers several demographic trends that include aging population (employee attrition), work force needs, and diversity.
4C3b	O	Missouri's decision to change the Missouri State Employees' Retirement System (MOSERS) impacts staffing at Western.
4C3c	S	Regional plant closures have required retraining of dislocated workers resulting in increased enrollment in programs such as Physical Therapy Assistant and Health Information Technology.
4C3d	O	Aging demographics of the working force is a regional Missouri challenge.
4C3e	O	Little diversity in the work force is a regional challenge.
4C4a	S	Programs exist for staff education and departments provide orientation for faculty and staff.
4P1-4P2a	S	Western has processes and procedures in place to organize appropriate search committees for exempt, some non-exempt, and faculty positions.

- 4P1-4P2b S Western conducts background checks, verifies employment, makes reference calls, and examines transcripts to establish a base of information to ensure the candidate's credentials and fit with the Western community.
- 4P1-4P2c S Employee retention is addressed through orientation, training, pay, performance review, and development for each employee.
- 4P1-4P2d S Western has included promotion, tenure, awards, and pay-for-performance procedures in its current Policy Guide.
- 4P1a O While Western states that positions can be filled internally, the process for this is unclear.
- 4P2a S MWSU might consider developing an anticipatory process with participation from other stakeholders beyond the President's Cabinet for job vacancies, including retirements.
- 4P2b S Succession planning includes on going needs analysis to handle changes in personnel.
- 4P2c O The pay-for-performance evaluation process could include data and assessment over time to ascertain its impact.
- 4P3a S The opportunity to participate in shared decision-making is available through organizational structure and the opportunity for involvement and service on committees.
- 4P3b O While Western states that shared decision-making is used through organizational structure and committee participation, it is unclear how this results in shared decision-making.
- 4P4a S Time release and tuition are provided for 3 credits of course work each term for staff at MWSU.
- 4P4b S Faculty, staff, and administrators are encouraged and supported to attend various professional meetings, conferences, or engage in appropriate professional development activities.
- 4P4c O It is unclear how much funding is allocated to each faculty for professional meetings and conferences

- 4P5a S The use of and method of deployment of the Applied Learning Action Project as part of training has the potential to be an innovative, progressive best practice.
- 4P5b S Strategic planning at Western drives many of the training and development needs of employees through facilitated focus groups where feedback is received from individuals about specific training needs.
- 4P5c S Western has demonstrated a leadership role in the area of applied learning by holding the First Annual Conference on Applied Learning in Higher Education in Spring 2006. Later, Western provided support for a group of faculty to participate in a learning communities summer institute.
- 4P6a S Several employee and faculty awards are provided for excellence in service and teaching.
- 4P6b O MWSU might consider a consistent annual evaluation of the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs.
- 4P6c S The quality of faculty teaching, service, and scholarship are evaluated annually through goal setting, self-evaluation, peer, chair, and appropriate academic administrator review.
- 4P6d O Linking personnel evaluation with Category 1, Helping Students Learn, can work to support this objective.
- 4P7a S The Governor's Distinguished Professor awards recognize and reward faculty with excellent records in teaching, scholarship/creative activity, and professional service with a base salary increase above any normal increase in the next contract year.
- 4P7b S Western's Outstanding Staff Employee Award program supports the institution's mission, strategic planning and community service.
- 4P8a S MWSU utilizes employees creating their own annual goals as a motivator and improvement process.
- 4P9a S Western is developing a faculty and staff salary and benefits survey.

- 4P9b S Western provides a comprehensive support system for employee satisfaction, health, safety, and well-being as well as 80 percent tuition waivers for full-time employees/dependents.
- 4P10a S Western's personnel evaluation process is designed to function as an employee development tool.
- 4P10b S In 2004, Western identified the need for supervisor training in implementing the personnel evaluation process. The result was to create training for all supervisors that resulted in the development of a clearly defined process and rating criteria.
- 4P10c S Evaluation of faculty is a continuous process that gathers information for annual reviews, promotion and tenure decisions, and special recommendation reviews.
- 4P10d O Western might explore why its turnover rate and select crime rates have increased.
- 4R1a S MWSU faculty appear to support community activity as a value.
- 4R1b S Wellness screening was conducted in 2005 with N=285 staff, retirees and spouses participating.
- 4R1c S In 2005, Western participated in HERI survey and found that Western faculty ranked higher in several categories than peer institutions.
- 4R1d O Longitudinal data collection allows benchmarks to be determined and trends to be detected.
- 4R1e O While several results are presented (see Fig. 4.4,4.5.4.6), comparison data is lacking.
- 4R1f S Crime statistics have been monitored from 2002-2004 in multiple areas.
- 4R2a S During a two-year period (2004-2005), Western expended \$500,000 to improve salaries. The resulting market-based pay increases affected 65 percent of the faculty and staff at Western.
- O While Western has 67% tenured faculty and the number of tenured faculty has increased from 54% to 67% over the past four years, a



- comparison with other peer institutions in Missouri to determine a standard percentage would be of benefit.
- 4R3a            O      Western has an opportunity to compare and track the distribution and results of spending related to faculty development.
- 4R3b            O      While employees are encouraged to further their education, with the approval of their supervisor, it is not stated what number and percent of requests are submitted or how many are approved.
- 4I1a            O      The “anticipated outcome” of improvements is vague and cites no targets. Citing of targets establish concrete goals for attainment.
- 4I2a            S      Western is attempting to increase the percentage of faculty with terminal degrees from 84% to 100% to meet the requirements of accreditation agencies.
- 4I2b            O      Western does not explain why and how it will increase the percentage of faculty with terminal degrees.

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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 Missouri Western State University 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 Vision: Missouri Western State University will set the standard for excellence in student development and community leadership.
- O1d Mission: Missouri Western State University is a learning community focused on students as individuals and as members of society. Western offers students at all stages of life the opportunity to achieve excellence in the classroom and beyond, as they prepare to be leaders in their work and in their communities. As a leader itself, Western is committed to the educational, economic, cultural, and social development of the people and the region it serves.
- O1e Western serves both traditional and non-traditional students and will soon be offering graduate degrees.
- O1f Western through its 5-year strategic plan (*The Western Advantage*) has identified the following seven strategic areas: 1) academic affairs and enrollment management, 2) applied learning and student development, 3) information technology, 4) facilities and grounds, 5) image and advancement, 6) community service, community partnerships and workforce development, and 7) planning and development

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
5C1a	S	The Systems Portfolio is published on the Western Website along with active links which enable various stakeholders to access relevant information.
5C1b	O	Figure 5.2 outlines Western’s leadership structure. Email listserv for employees is the daily mode to internal communication.
5C2	S	A Steering Committee guides systems through the strategic plan of the institution.
5C3a	S	Values are established as: service, quality, enthusiasm, freedom, respect, and courage.
5C3b	S	Goals are established as: engagement, quality, using data, and applied learning.

- 5P1a S Western has interdepartmental groups of campus decision-makers that coordinate and align planning processes with overall institutional strategies and action plans. For example: institutional oversight and alignment with mission, vision, and values is controlled through the interactions between the Strategic Planning Steering Committee and the AQIP Portfolio/Accreditation Team (figure 8.3). Representation from across campus is used on these committees.
- 5P1b S Expansion to their many constituents throughout the region was accomplished through the creation of the Western Institute in 2004.
- 5P1c S Use of the citizen scholar model is innovative in its promotion of leadership and applied learning.
- 5P2 O A process designed to keep Western looking for future opportunities would help ensure that the type of changes listed under 5P2 will continue to occur.
- 5P3 S Western utilizes consensus decision-making with representation from a cross section of campus constituents. Policy recommendations are reviewed by the Governance Advisory Council.
- 5P4a S Data is collected and archived in the institutional research office. Each semester an institutional fact sheet is posted to the Web by the Office of Institutional Research.
- 5P4b S Western annually assesses progress on the Strategic Plan.
- 5P4c S Budget data and the priorities articulated in the Strategic Plan shape the decisions made by key administrative positions.
- 5P5-P6a S Communication is achieved through governance groups, forums, and regular meetings in which representatives from across the institution report on action items, strategic planning, and the progress related to the Strategic Plan.
- 5P5-5P6b S The mission, vision, and values statements and the Strategic Plan are distributed to each employee, members of the Foundation and Alumni Association Boards, the Board of Governors, and several members of the community. New employees receive the Strategic Plan at the time of employment.

- 5P7a O Western indicates resources are available to support a number of faculty and staff professional development activities. The demographic information about the faculty and staff (or the type of activities) that has been supported is not reported.
- 5P7b S Western encourages employees to take undergraduate credit courses for degree completion and professional development. Western provides a full tuition waiver for full-time employees and a partial tuition waiver for half-time employees.
- 5P8 O A leadership succession plan designed to continue Western's mission, vision, and values would help ensure that the direction the strategic plan has set is maintained.
- 5P9 S Figure 5.6 lists six measures of Leading and Communicating Effectiveness.
- 5R1a S Western's Annual Progress Report on the Strategic Plan provides some of the institution's most compelling evidence for leadership's careful planning and implementation of strategic initiatives.
- 5R1b SS Every faculty member produces an annual self-evaluation focused on teaching, scholarship/creative activity, and service.
- 5R1c O Campus safety is determined as a need and addressed in 2006 with an audit and proposed action plan.
- 5R2a S Western has provided leadership support to AQIP and has representation on the Advisory Council, the Admissions Panel, the Peer Review Corps, and the Systems Appraisal process.
- 5R2b S Western was one of founding public institutions selected to participate in "Foundations of Excellence in the First Year of College," and has joined approximately 200 other colleges and universities in the American Democracy Project.

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## **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 Missouri Western State University 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***

- O1d Mission: Missouri Western State University is a learning community focused on students as individuals and as members of society. Western offers students at all stages of life the opportunity to achieve excellence in the classroom and beyond, as they prepare to be leaders in their work and in their communities. As a leader itself, Western is committed to the educational, economic, cultural, and social development of the people and the region it serves.
- O1e Western through its 5-year strategic plan (The Western Advantage) has identified the following seven strategic areas: 1) academic affairs and enrollment management, 2) applied learning and student development, 3) information technology, 4) facilities and grounds, 5) image and advancement, 6) community service, community partnerships and workforce development, and 7) planning and development.
- O1f Western has three AQIP Action Projects—1) Applied Learning, 2) Student Engagement, and 3) Communicating Quality that received Strategic Planning Implementation Funds (SPIF) of \$100,000 each of the three years of implementation.
- O4a A 2+2+2 partnership between Metropolitan Community Colleges (MCC), MWSU, and the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) offers students an associate degree from MCC the opportunity to complete a bachelors at MWSU, and then, a master's degree at UMKC.
- O5c Ratio of students to FT faculty is 18:1.

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

<b>Item</b>	<b>S/O</b>	<b>Comment</b>
6C1	S	Figure 6.2 is list of key student and administrative support services.
6C1-2	S	The provision of a counselor for multi-cultural and women's issues, diversity awareness and a Center for Multicultural Education, are all assets for Western.
6C1-2	S	Using data to drive changes supporting learning includes: co-join academics and students services, scheduling office changes and re-organization to student development.
6P1a	S	Western provides multiple support activities including an "at-risk" mentor program, community service outreach, life skills programs, additional medical services, and fifth year scholarships for athletes.
6P1b	O	While Western collects a great deal of information concerning the support needs of its students, the correlation of data is not seen. The development of a systematic process implementing changes based upon this data would allow measured results to drive future improvements and the communication of data can be improved across all areas.
6P2	O	Western uses information from 5-year program reviews and feedback from accrediting bodies as well as key stakeholders to identify support service needs of faculty, administration, staff, and other stakeholders. The development of a systematic process implementing changes based upon this data would allow measured results to drive future improvements. An assessment initiative could be an unifying event.
6P3a	O	While each department and unit develops strategic plans in alignment with the institution's goals and objectives, a method of insuring that day-to-day support service processes are meeting the needs of students would help document Western's processes and communicate the importance of these services to staff.
6P3b	O	The budget process is managed through the president and cabinet and vice presidents. Extending this process to the grass roots of the organization may allow for greater engagement

- 6P4a O While Western states that employees are encouraged to identify needed improvements, the role or input from faculty is unclear.
- 6P4b O While surveys and feedback are used to improve recruitment, retention, graduation, improve programs for first year students and instructional technologies, a process for improvement or a feedback loop to use data to drive action is needed.
- 6P5 S Figure 6.3 and figure 6.4 list a number of measures for student and administrative support services and collection measures by department are identified.
- 6R1 O Western awarded \$276,458 less in institutional funds in 2004-2005 as a result in a downward trend in endowments and endowment interest.
- 6R1&2 OO While the results presented with the processes listed in 6P5, Figure 6.3 and 6.4 describe processes, results and analysis would provide meaningful information to guide the institution.
- 6R2a S Western has identified six peer institutions for comparing certain internal results and is benchmarking and building comparative data for student support services.
- 6R2b S Western reduced the Stafford loan cohort default rate from 13.7 percent to 5 percent over the last five years.
- 6R3 S Western emphasizes instruction and spends over 80 percent of its operating budget on instruction and other direct student support, more than any other public four-year institution in Missouri.
- 6I1 S Based upon the Noel-Levitz survey, targeted improvements for student engagement have been implemented. Goals are grounded in improvement and guided by the strategic plan, the data base, and progress reports. Use of the AQIP reporting process as the annual strategic plan report is good leveraging of resources.

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| 7P5b | O | It is not clear how data for applied learning is collected, which data is collected, how it is analyzed, or what improvements have been made or are planned to assure learning is effective. |
| 6I2  | S | Continuous improvement goals using data from multiple sources are exemplary. Many of Western's departments set specific and measurable targets for improvement.                              |

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## **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 Missouri Western State University 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***

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| O2d | Courses are offered on semester schedules with day, evening and weekend courses. Most are delivered traditionally, but technology supported courses are available.   |
| O4a | Key stakeholders include students, employees, Board of Governors, CBHE, Department of Higher Education, accrediting bodies, advisory councils, employers, community members, and alumni and friends.   |
| O4b | There is a 2+2+2 partnership between Metropolitan Community Colleges, Western, and the University of Missouri-Kansas City.; Heartland Health; Regional Workforce Development; Missouri Small Business Development Corporation; Institute for Industrial and Applied Life Sciences, and the Regional Law Enforcement Academy, among others. |



O7b There are 17 two-year and other four-year colleges in Kansas City. Missouri has 13 public universities.

O8a Western's 5-year strategic plan (The Western Advantage; O1f) identifies seven areas as opportunities for improvement. These areas are aligned with AQIP principles.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
7C1a	S	Reports are generated for departments in the Institutional Research office through requests.
7C1b	S	Western collects information about students, human resources, financials, technology, and strategic initiatives from units across the system and stores it so that it can be accessed by authorized individuals for purposes of review, modification, analysis, and reports while avoiding duplication.
7C1c	S	An integrated relational database is key to consolidating and retrieving systems-wide academic and administrative operational and strategic information.
7C2	S	Table 7.2 notes multiple collection tools by departments for direct data collection and tracking effectiveness.
7P1a	S	The end of course evaluation process is robust and well utilized.
7P1b	S	Academic departments use 5-year plans, directly linked to the strategic plan to evaluate progress.
7P1c	S	Western assess student outcomes in general education objectives, freshman success, and senior exit exams in the major field area.
	SS	Western uses a rubric to measure how the strategic planning goals and objectives capture AQIP's nine categories. These are presented at the beginning of each category in its portfolio.

- O Heavy reliance on senior exit exams reduces opportunities for improvement earlier in the student learning experience.
- 7P2a S Western used the Student Engagement Action Project to facilitate determining informational data needs.
- 7P2b O Western has identified the need to determine informational needs across the system and plans to address this need in the next strategic plan.
- 7P3a S The institution has identified a set of peer institutions across the state with which it compares program and institutional data.
- 7P3b O MWSU might consider shortening the cycle of collection to reflect the students experience ie: a term vs. annual collection.
- 7P4a S Western uses their Annual Progress Report to report key information. They collect, analyze, and share performance data through both formal and informal processes.
- 7P4b O The measures presented at the beginning of each category in Western's portfolio assist in addressing the analysis of information. However it does not describe a process for analysis of the data.
- 7P5a S Western requires that units, academic departments, and the Colleges of Liberal Arts and Sciences and Professional Studies create five-year goals that reflect the institutional goals in the strategic plan.
- 7P5b O It is not clear how data for applied learning is collected, which data is collected, how it is analyzed, or what improvements have been made or are planned to assure learning is effective.
- 7P6a S Data integrity, reliability, process training, access, security and confidentiality are both identified and addressed appropriately.
- 7P6b S Western is beginning to develop an institutional research Web access that makes much of its data accessible within the system.
- 7P6c S The Technology Management Team and Information Technology Services department work to make and support technological decisions for Western and its users.

- 7P7a            S        In 2004, Western installed and implemented its hardware and software system with SunGard SCT Banner System with a goal to empower users with access to current, accurate information. The software system is improving accessibility, overall accuracy, reliability, and validity of data, including annual data review and trend analysis.
- 7P7b            O        Western has an opportunity to use the Support Log and Information Technology Help Desk to ascertain the effectiveness of its system for measuring effectiveness. This could create a consistent source of data that could be used to document continuous improvement and note trends.
- 7R1a            S        System accessibility is ensured through an ongoing program for rotational replacement of computers for faculty and staff whereby no computer is older than four years. Accessibility has been enabled through widespread installation of a wireless network across campus in 2006.

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## **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 Missouri Western State University that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 8, Planning Continuous Improvement:**

***Item      Critical Characteristic***

- O2b    Western has created a graduate council to begin developing graduate courses and programs.
- O4b    Western has partners with regional, national and international organizations to develop the workforce and to provide service opportunities and programs.

- O1b Vision: Missouri Western State University will set the standard for excellence in student development and community leadership.
- O1c Mission: Missouri Western State University is a learning community focused on students as individuals and as members of society. Western offers students at all stages of life the opportunity to achieve excellence in the classroom and beyond, as they prepare to be leaders in their work and in their communities. As a leader itself, Western is committed to the educational, economic, cultural, and social development of the people and the region it serves. (Western has a statewide mission in applied learning.)
- O1e Western through its 5-year strategic plan (*The Western Advantage*) has identified the following seven strategic areas: 1) academic affairs and enrollment management, 2) applied learning and student development, 3) information technology, 4) facilities and grounds, 5) image and advancement, 6) community service, community partnerships and workforce development, and 7) planning and development.
- O1f Western has three AQIP Action Projects—1) Applied Learning, 2) Student Engagement, and 3) Communicating Quality that received Strategic Planning Implementation Funds (SPIF) of \$100,000 each of the three years of implementation.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
8C1	S	Western’s strategic planning is a continuous 5-4-1 improvement cycle in which a five-year strategic plan guides the institution, a new strategic plan is shaped in the fourth year, and progress reports occur annually.
8C1	S	Processes already underway for the next five to ten years include continued development of programs in applied learning, applied research and service, and producing citizen-scholars.
8C1	O	Western’s capacity for contributing to the region has been enhanced through the development of the Western Institute and external funding for regional projects is growing.
8C1	S	Figure 8.2 lists Western’s strategic planning priority areas and goals.

- 8C2 O Western does not mention any vision or strategies related to faculty and staff.
- 8C2 O A report of the plan appears to exist, but broad communication of process seem informal at best, with annual reporting only
- 8P1 S The planning process for the strategic plan is diverse and robust. Western utilizes a Strategic Planning Steering Committee including more than 30 representatives from across the campus. Committees are made up of students, faculty, staff, administrators, the Board of Governors, and regional stakeholders. Western plans continuously, moving from strategic planning to implementation, annual progress reports, and review of the Strategic Plan. Western has aligned its strategic planning with its AQIP planning very seamlessly; the use of teams for each of the nine categories should further facilitate quality planning.
- 8P1 O The strategic plan reporting process could be more frequently than annually and expand beyond the VP level and could strengthen campus communication.
- 8P2 O While annual reports on progress relative to strategic planning are provided by Academic and Student Affairs, Financial Planning and Administration, and Institutional Advancement, the process for strategy selection is not described, so it is unclear how the Steering Team resolves conflicting needs. A clear process for selecting short and long-term strategies can be refined based upon the results obtained over time
- 8P3a S Through Ready..Set..Go...Discover College, Admissions at Western works with regional school districts to increase the number of students who come to Western having completed the state-required high school core.
- 8P3b S Plans for strategic areas are made public through MWSU's Web site.
- 8P4 S Western coordinates and aligns institutional strategies and action plans across all areas of the organization. The coordination and alignment of plans appears to be an inclusive process, guided by the Governance Advisory Council (GAC).
- 8P5 S The Steering Committee receives regular progress reports for the goals and objectives in each action plan. Western utilizes several strategic

planning groups to define annual action items. Measurable goals are selected by Deans, directors, chairs, VP and the cabinet

- 8P6 O While the institution designates \$350,000 each year in the Strategic Planning Implementation Fund (SPIF) to assist in promoting Strategic Plan objectives, a process which determines the best use of the funds to meet strategic planning needs would institutionalize continuous improvement.
- 8P6 O Western could detail here exactly which measures and performance projections it uses.
- 8P8 O The process for measuring the effectiveness of planning continuous improvement might be enhanced if a formal mechanism was developed to direct the results of the analysis of the data collected as input to improve planning. Western could track the effectiveness of its planning continuous improvement over time and thereby evaluate the impact of various planning strategies.
- 8P8 O Missouri Western has established a goal of integrating the program review process with accreditation and improvement.
- 8R1 SS As stated in Figure 1.1, applied learning activities increased from 72% to 80% from 2002-2005.
- 8R1,2, & 3 S Western has implemented 217 out of 246 action items from their enrollment management planning. 6 of 7 enrollment management goals have been met. Western has accomplished an impressive number and type of its objectives, and its projections are attainable.
- 8R2 OO Western completed its final updates on its first three AQIP Action Projects in September 2006 and will update new AQIP projects in 2007. Projections of performance for strategies and action plans in regards to 8R1 over the next three years are not given. New goals are not noted as part of the annual report with the exception of AACSB accreditation and sustainability.
- 8R3 S Western compares favorably with other peer institutions, and Missouri public four-year institutions based upon annual results shown.
- 8R3&4 SS Western's strategic planning has been recognized as a "Best Practice" by the Higher Learning Commission.

- 811            S        Banner software is providing the basis for collection and analysis of data. Baselines are established. The goal of Sustaining Institutional Priorities is an important area of consideration.

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## **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 Missouri Western State University 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***

- O1c    Mission: Missouri Western State University is a learning community focused on students as individuals and as members of society. Western offers students at all stages of life the opportunity to achieve excellence in the classroom and beyond, as they prepare to be leaders in their work and in their communities. As a leader itself, Western is committed to the educational, economic, cultural, and social development of the people and the region it serves. (Western has a statewide mission in applied learning.)
- O1e    Western through its 5-year strategic plan (*The Western Advantage*) has identified the following seven strategic areas: 1) academic affairs and enrollment management, 2) applied learning and student development, 3) information technology, 4) facilities and grounds, 5) image and advancement, 6) community service, community partnerships and workforce development, and 7) planning and development.
- O2d    There are some graduate programs and courses brokered through other universities.
- O4a    A 2+2+2 partnership between Metropolitan Community Colleges (MCC), MWSU, and the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) offers students an associate degree from

MCC the opportunity to complete a bachelor's at MWSU, and then, a master's degree at UMKC.

O4b Western has partners with regional, national and international organizations to develop the workforce and to provide service opportunities and programs.

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

<i>Item</i>	<i>S/O</i>	<i>Comment</i>
9C1	S	Western's network of partnerships is noteworthy.
9P1-2	O	Western could develop and strengthen a mechanism for ascertaining needs and ensuring that those needs are met.
9P3	S	The Big Event Community Service Day, a campus-wide service project, is an exemplary practice.
9P4	O	No measure of building relationships with faculty is listed. Western would benefit from indicators of the success of its internal relationship building.
9R1	S	Results for collaboration with external partners are substantive and indicative of success in this area.
9I1	O	MWSU self-discloses that it would benefit from more data relative to collaborative relationships. Western has also cited sustainability as an issue.
9I2	O	Western may choose to set targets for internal collaboration as well as for external collaboration building.