ENDs Monitoring Report

Accreditation
January 2017

Presented To:
President Daniel J. Phelan
Jackson College Board of Trustees

Presented by:
E. Rob Stirton, Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness
I. Executive Summary

In recent years, the college’s accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), through its Academic Quality Improvement Pathway (AQIP), has begun to more clearly re-emphasize its dual requirements imposed by the United States Department of Education (ED). The ED requires all regional accrediting agencies, including the HLC, to monitor the quality of education provided by colleges and universities and to ensure those colleges and universities are maintaining compliance with federal regulations.

The AQIP Pathway is based on the Malcolm Baldrige National quality framework and, since joining AQIP in 2003, it has helped the College frame the work we complete within a quality, continuous improvement context. Requirements under this Pathway include defining and carrying out annual Action Projects focused on high impact improvements within a division or across the College’s systems, a systems portfolio in which we formally document our processes, data points, benchmarks and how we use the results to make improvements, and a triennial attendance at a Strategy Forum that provides key employees and Jackson College Board Members an overview of the AQIP model and its quality-based components. These requirements come together through the AQIP framework to demonstrate and regularly document our quality improvements.

Recently, the HLC has also expanded its attention on ensuring colleges are in compliance with federal regulations. Jackson College, in addition to documenting and submitting evidence of its quality work, is now required to regularly document and submit its compliance with federal regulations. While we have always strived to comply with federal regulations, the HLC is now providing comprehensive forms for the College to routinely complete and submit. Thus, accreditation has returned to being the mechanism through which we will be required to regularly document compliance to federal regulations.

In February 2017, Jackson College will have an opportunity to showcase all of the quality work we are planning, completing and sustaining during the HLC Comprehensive Quality Review. This ‘site visit’ by a team of peer consultant-evaluators is a requirement of our AQIP participation and occurs every eight years. More particularly, our campus will host a team of five AQIP peer reviewers who will determine the context of the College’s reaffirmation of accreditation. The HLC reaffirmation context will include both a quality component and a compliance component.

The College and all of its supplementary accredited programs are currently in ‘good standing’ with no sanctions or outstanding issues to address.
II. Institutional Context

Soon, the College will begin using the Baldrige framework to supplement AQIP in order to better align operations and strategies for substantial systematic institutional improvements. The AQIP pathway was based in the Baldrige framework so including the Baldrige framework for our quality improvement approach will align to the reporting and action project requirements of AQIP. We believe the availability of Baldrige’s self-assessment tools, such as ‘easy-insight’, ‘are we making progress’, ‘are we making progress as leaders’, and ‘organizational profile’ documentation provides the College with a better, more guided methodology to accomplish its quality improvement work. Those tools will help Jackson College more comprehensively and systemically plan its quality improvement projects. This approach will also systemize this focused work that will exceed the tenure of any president or board which provides consistency and trend analysis opportunities.

Jackson College has been committed to continuous quality improvement even before choosing AQIP as our accreditation model in 2003. Indeed, Jackson College was a founding member of the Continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN), a national, president-member organization of about 50 institutions. These institutions are committed to improvement through the study of Baldrige annual award winners, Fortune’s 100 Best Companies to Work For, Forbes’ America’s Best Companies, and others.

In sum, we’ve attended three Strategy Forums, authored three Systems Portfolios, hosted two Comprehensive Quality Reviews and launched two baccalaureate degrees since choosing AQIP. We currently have three Action Projects, all of which were outcomes of our HLC Feedback Report. We have additionally completed over 20 Action Projects over the last 13 years. The College currently has three campus leaders and two faculty members as peer reviewers for the Higher Learning Commission. Continuous Quality Improvement has become second nature to our culture, our strategic development, and our operations and decision making. We developed our Total Commitment to Student Success (TCS²) initiative to frame our focus on quality and for achieving our mission.

As part of the HLC February 2017 visit, the College completed and submitted a Federal Compliance Filing form, consisting of forty-seven questions, with sub-component questions a-e, that documents and details compliance with federal regulations. The College also submitted a Quality Highlights Report that updates the team of peer reviewers with quality initiatives we have undertaken since submitting our AQIP Systems Portfolio and receiving the HLC Feedback Report in 2014.
Our HLC Comprehensive Quality Review will occur February 5-8, 2017. The HLC peer review team will provide a verbal summary of its findings on February 8th to the campus. The team will provide the HLC and Jackson College with its written reaffirmation of accreditation report findings sometime in April. Based on findings from their visit, the written report may contain suggested improvements for the college’s consideration. The report may also identify any non-compliance with federal regulations.

III. External Context

The ED has begun reinforcing their accreditation requirements on the agencies charged with helping to oversee the outcomes for individual students and society in general from the field of education. This is primarily accomplished through oversight of the work conducted by the accrediting agencies, such as HLC, as well as through direct relationships with individual colleges and universities. The clarified expectations for the HLC cascade down to the college as more forms, questionnaires, and documents to complete, and policies to draft and approve. Jackson College is well-positioned to respond to this increased focus from external agencies because it has been using a quality improvement frame for over 13 years.

The AQIP Categories of Accreditation are:

1. Helping Students Learn;
2. Meeting Student and Other Key Stakeholder Needs;
3. Valuing Employees;
4. Planning and Leading;
5. Knowledge Management and Resource Stewardship; and
6. Quality Overview

The goal of AQIP is that the college’s processes, results and improvements align to produce an integrated quality system across these categories with a primarily focus on student success.

While maintaining accreditation has always been important, it is becoming more and more critical as the government moves to regulate more stringently the requirements for our reaffirmation of accreditation. The HLC has been handed some of the measures for reaccreditation directly from the ED. For the first time ever, they include metrics derived by the ED; they are using academic compliance data we submit to calculate measures for every college and university, sometimes at the program level. For example, the College Scorecard, financial aid default rates, gainful employment rates, and graduation rates above or below a minimum threshold of 25% for universities and 15% for
community colleges. These performance metrics are being used as criteria by which colleges are eligible for accreditation or to require improvement plans as a condition of reaccreditation.

The importance of accreditation is also becoming more critical, comprehensive and challenging for some of our programs that are accredited by external agencies. All of Jackson College’s programs are in good standing with their accreditation agencies, but the documentation and systems to support their required submissions are substantial undertakings; but the benefit is immeasurable. One of the many benefits of externally accredited programs is the established process, set of policies, learning outcomes, expected competency thresholds and minimum licensure pass rates provided through participation – the framework of expectations with the measures to monitor are identified and known.

With more focus on maintaining compliance, the ED is more stringently enforcing the HLC to adhere to the standards it has in place for institutional accreditation. This increased focus offers the college an opportunity to demonstrate the culture of continuous improvement it has built over many years of quality projects.

**IV. Institutional Performance Reporting and Assessment**

Jackson College has participated in the Academic Quality Improvement Pathway of the HLC since 2003, based upon a comprehensive review and support by faculty and staff. We participated in Strategy Forums in 2007, 2011 and 2015. Our first action projects were submitted in 2003; the college has submitted a total of twenty-one action projects. Our first Systems Portfolio was submitted in 2006 and a second in 2010. We submitted our most recent Systems Portfolio and received the HLC Feedback Report in 2014.

*Comprehensive Quality Review (see Appendix)*

On February 6-8, 2017 the College will have an HLC Consultant-Evaluator Team on campus to conduct a Comprehensive Quality Review; this is a key component of our eight-year AQIP accreditation cycle. A key information resource reviewed by the team prior to arrival is the Systems Portfolio. The portfolio was submitted to the HLC in 2014. In response, the HLC prepared a feedback report as a formal critique and review of our portfolio. The College has used that feedback report to identify the improvement projects we’ve recently undertaken. The HLC team will also focus attention on the Federal Compliance Filing submitted by the college in December 2016. While on-campus, they will meet with the Board of Trustees, leadership, college employees and students to provide the context for their reaffirmation of accreditation.
AQIP Action Projects
Since 2014, to be sure we are focusing on improvements across each AQIP category, we’ve been intentional in selecting action projects with each representing one of the AQIP categories. Most of our efforts have been spent on planning and implementing our transition to the Guided Pathways model.

Action Project #1: Ensure Data Quality through Data Governance
AQIP Category: #6 Quality Overview
Project Start: July 2016
Project Goal: The primary goal of the project is to reduce the number of data anomalies in our critical data (i.e., data reported annually to external agencies) and measured through both external and internal data error reports.
Project Lead: Dr. Oren Christmas
Project Status: updated December 2016

Action Project #2: Implement a Leadership Academy
AQIP Category: #3 Valuing Employees & #5 Knowledge Management & Resource Stewardship
Project Start: July 2016
Project Goal: The annual goal of the project is to have colleagues identify a minimum of 15 current administrators and/or staff who, through interactions with peers, demonstrate and exemplify the educational, professional and character qualities desired in our future leadership. This is a component of succession planning.
Project Lead: Dr. Michelle Shields
Project Status: updated December 2016

Action Project #3: Create Streamline Student Instructional Pathways
AQIP Category: #1 Helping Student Learn
Project Start: December 2014
Project Goals:
1. Creation of streamlined and structured instructional pathways for all academic programs including “meta-majors”
2. Creation of career assessments and advising models to support students during the intake process in the selection of a program of study
3. Creation of default curriculums with pre-sequenced program course schedules for all programs including developmental entry into pathways
4. Robust tracking and feedback systems in place for students, advisors, and instructors
5. Hybrid advising system implemented for transitions between professional advisors and faculty advisors
6. Integrated supports embedded within each pathway
Project Lead: Dr. Rebekah Woods
Project Status: Reviewed March 2016 – Status update December 2016
Program-Level Accreditation
All of Jackson College's supplementary accredited programs are in good standing with their program accrediting agencies. It is worth noting that our Nursing program is completing the planning and requirements for accreditation by the National League of Nurses. The College currently has individual program accreditations through:

- National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation;
- Michigan Department of Community Health;
- Michigan Department of Corrections;
- Michigan Board of Nursing;
- Committee on Accreditation for Respiratory Care;
- Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology;
- Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs; and
- Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs.

All of our accredited programs operate with full accreditation status from these agencies (see Appendix).

As a requirement of benefiting from Federal Perkins funds, Jackson College meets regularly with advisory committees, comprised of industry experts, to supplement the knowledge, skills and abilities our graduates need for a particular career path.

V. Institutional Performance Improvement Planning

In November 2016, Jackson College was approved to offer its second Bachelor's degree; Culinary Management and Hospitality. This achievement is the culmination of three years of work starting with Dr. Todd Butler earning the ability to award our first Bachelor’s degree in Energy Systems, the Culinary Management and Hospitality curriculum content and instructional design prepared by Chef David Hooper and the exceptional leadership of Jeremy Frew.

Currently, the HLC requires the College to obtain approval prior to offering 50% or more of the courses in a program at a location other than Central, Adrian, Lenawee or Maher. In March 2016, Jackson College was approved by the HLC to offer instructional programs at any additional location without receiving prior approval which can be a cumbersome process. This was a critical approval for the Prison Education Initiative (e.g., Second Chance Pell).

The College has also begun mapping critical business processes including Housing, Paying Adjuncts for Instruction, and Gainful Employment Compliance Reporting. Backing Out Students for Non-Payment is close to being finished. The goal of this work
is to document the work flow, systems used, problems, colleague forms, decisions, and customers in each and every step within the process. The outcome of this work is two-fold: It provides a basis for new employees to immediately understand their service or function within a given process, as well as provides evidence for the HLC’s upcoming review visit of our commitment to quality initiatives and new, innovative, systems.

The goals associated with accreditation for 2017 include:

- Completing the HLC visit in February 2017
- Improving the response rates for the college’s required Perkins survey of graduates – the data is used for Perkins compliance reporting;
- Documenting two critical processes through process mapping
- Compiling the KPIs for the Guided Pathway initiative – a vital component of the College’s next AQIP Systems Portfolio

VI. Conclusion

Jackson College has submitted all the requisite forms to the HLC for the upcoming reaffirmation for accreditation visit taking place February 6-8, 2017. This site visit offers the College an opportunity to demonstrate and showcase its quality improvement culture.

During 2017, we’ll transition our nursing program to the National League of Nursing for its accreditation agency. This designation aligns to shifts in student and hospital expectations. The College will also ensure that all of its other programs accredited by external agencies maintain their good standing.
### VII. Appendix

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<tr>
<th>Cycle Year</th>
<th>Institutional Activities</th>
<th>Peer Review</th>
<th>HLC Decision-Making¹</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>New AQIP Institutions: First-Year Mentoring</td>
<td>Annual Actions Projects Update² ¹</td>
<td>Annual Actions Projects Review² ¹</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Attend one Strategy Forum³ ¹</td>
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<td>Year 2</td>
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<td>Year 3</td>
<td>Submit Systems Portfolio⁴ ¹</td>
<td>Conduct Systems Appraisal⁴ ¹</td>
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<td>Year 4</td>
<td>Possible Comprehensive Quality Review⁵ ¹</td>
<td>Conduct possible Comprehensive Quality Review (with visit)⁵ ¹</td>
<td>Action on possible Comprehensive Quality Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>Attend one Strategy Forum³ ²</td>
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<td>Year 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 7</td>
<td>Submit Systems Portfolio⁴ ²</td>
<td>Conduct Systems Appraisal⁴ ²</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 8</td>
<td>Submit Comprehensive Quality Review⁵ ²</td>
<td>Conduct Comprehensive Quality Review (with visit)⁵ ²</td>
<td>Action on Comprehensive Quality Review and Reaffirmation of Accreditation⁶ ¹</td>
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February 17, 2010

President Daniel Joseph Phelan
Jackson Community College
2111 Emmens Road
Jackson, MI 49201

Dear President Phelan:

This letter is formal notification of the action taken concerning Jackson Community College by The Higher Learning Commission. At its meeting on February 8, 2010, the Institutional Actions Council (IAC) voted to continue the accreditation of Jackson Community College through the Academic Quality Improvement Program and to adopt any new items entered on the attached Statement of Affiliation Status (SAS). The Commission Board of Trustees validated the IAC action on February 17, 2010. The date on this letter is the effective date of your new status with the Commission.

I have enclosed your institution’s Statement of Affiliation Status (SAS) and Organizational Profile (OP). The SAS is a summary of your institution’s ongoing relationship with the Commission. The OP is generated from data you provided in your most recent (2007-08) Annual Institutional Data Update. If the current Commission action included changes to the demographic, site, or distance education information you reported in your Annual Institutional Data Update, we have made the changes on the Organizational Profile. No other organizational information was changed.

The attached Statement of Affiliation Status and Organizational Profile will be posted to the Commission website on Monday, March 1. Before this public disclosure, however, I ask that you verify the information in both documents and inform Stephen D. Spanghel, your staff liaison, before Friday, February 26, of any concerns you have about these documents. Information about notifying the public of this action is found in Chapter 8.3-3 and 8.3-4 of the Handbook of Accreditation, Third Edition.

Please be aware of Commission policy on planned or proposed institutional changes that require Commission action before their initiation. You will find the Commission’s change policy in Chapter 7.2 of the Handbook of Accreditation. Please review it with care. If you have questions about how planned institutional changes might affect your relationship with the Commission, I recommend that you write or call Stephen D. Spanghel.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I thank you and your associates for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Sylvia Manning
President

Enclosures: Statement of Affiliation Status
Organizational Profile

cc: Chair of the Board