NMC Systems Portfolio

November 1, 2013

Northwestern
Michigan
College

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NMC AQIP Systems Portfolio
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The Institutional Overview

Northwestern Michigan College (NMC), a publicly funded, two-year, rural college, is located in the Grand Traverse region of northwest lower Michigan. Our primary service area includes six counties in the region: Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse (taxing district), Kalkaska, Leelanau and Wexford. With the proximity to Lake Michigan, the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore and Grand Traverse Bay, as well as many inland lakes, and rolling hills, the Grand Traverse Region is a major tourist destination and known for its high quality of life. NMC is located in Grand Traverse County, whose county seat, Traverse City, is well known as the "cherry capital of the world."

Established by the citizens of northwest Michigan in 1951, NMC was the first community college in the state. NMC's earliest home was in borrowed facilities at the local airport, and in 1956 the college moved to a spacious pine tree filled 100-acre main campus. NMC also operates at four other locations: Great Lakes Campus, Aero Park Campus, University Center Campus, and the Traverse Bay Intermediate School District. All locations are within a four mile radius from the main campus.

In order to accomplish our mission, vision, and purposes, organizational activities focus on achieving our strategic directions and demonstrating competence in the institutional effectiveness criteria. With a mission to "provide lifelong learning opportunities to our communities," NMC's program offerings serve all ages and multiple educational goals. NMC's central purpose is to provide our learners with the skills, experiences, and values that allow them to create economic and social wealth during their life's journey.

NMC offers courses in more than 60 areas of academic study. The college offers transfer courses, certificates and four associate degrees. Students have access to bachelor's and advanced degrees through NMC's University Center and our eight university partners. We are poised to offer the first community college baccalaureate in the state of Michigan, a Bachelor of Science in Maritime Technology, in 2014, pending approval from the Higher Learning Commission. NMC enrolled 4727 learners in liberal arts and occupational programs (54.4% in-district) in fall 2013. About 41.2% are enrolled fulltime, 54.3% are women, and 87.0% are white. The median age of our for-credit learners is 21 years.

Some of NMC's occupational programs, such as aviation, culinary, the Great Lakes Maritime Academy, nursing, and the Great Lakes Water Studies Institute take advantage of the Grand Traverse area's regional assets in water studies, health care, arts and culture, advanced manufacturing, renewable energy, value-added agriculture, and entrepreneurship and innovation.

To support lifelong learning in the community, NMC's Extended Education Services offers non-credit programs from College for Kids (over 1800 students from age three through high school, enrolled in summer 2013) to Life Academy (for learners 55 and over) and the International Affairs Forum for professional and personal enrichment and development. Organizational and workforce training in NMC's Training Services offers customer-focused solutions, active learning model training, on and off-site delivery in leadership and team skills, lean business practices, and advanced manufacturing continuous quality improvement. NMC serves about 10,000 learners a year in our non-credit lifelong learning programs. NMC is also home to the Dennos Museum Center, Hagerty Conference Center, Rogers Observatory, WNMC 90.7 FM, and Lobdell's: A Teaching Restaurant, an important laboratory for the Great Lakes Culinary Institute.

NMC has four functional areas headed by a vice president: educational services; lifelong and professional learning; finance and administration; and enrollment management and student services. Executive directors head three areas: resource development; institutional effectiveness, and public relations and marketing. NMC's faculty and staff are classified into seven employee groups, with the maintenance and custodial group represented by a bargaining unit. In fall 2012, NMC had 761 employees (12% regular faculty, 28% adjunct faculty, 28% regular staff, and 32% students and supplemental employees).

Institutional Overview

NMC's Quality Journey

NMC joined AQIP in 2005 because we believed it to be a progressive opportunity to improve the quality of higher education outcomes and a fit with our continuous improvement culture. AQIP cycles for re-affirmation of accreditation, systems appraisal feedback, and action projects, have kept NMC continuously improving, checking our work and adjusting. Through the institutional effectiveness system (IE System), we manage these cycles of continuous improvement. Our results provide input into the college's strategic goals, and future improvement goals are tracked on the strategic plan.

Action projects are the primary way in which multiple stakeholders engage in our IE System. Since 2005, NMC has worked on 13 different quality projects. In the time since the last systems portfolio, we commenced several transformational projects, which are described in detail in the current systems portfolio. The academic program review (1P13) project streamlined program review eliminating duplication of effort, redundancy and defeated the mindset that program review was a non-value added add on. With success, the transformation accelerated into the Aligned Planning action project (8P1), which developed a framework for aligning strategic goals, operational goals, and individual level goals. The aligned planning process is the cornerstone for systematic decision-making on an annual basis. The Talent action project is in its third phase, and the results underpin the improvements documented throughout category 4, Valuing People, including the implementation of an Employee Engagement Survey. Beginning with Talent I, NMC revamped the on-boarding and orientation of employees. Talent II identified desired leadership capacities and overhauled the performance planning and assessment system. In Talent III, NMC has launched the Professional Development Institute and Foundations in Leadership training. Two other current action projects, Redesigning the Learning Experience and Enhancing Developmental Education, are transforming pedagogy practices in the classroom, and helping to focus resources for interventions for the most at-risk learners.

In reflecting on our lessons learned along our quality journey, NMC recognized that the college should not have different processes for identifying AQIP action projects as for identifying other priorities of the college.   By this means, we can assure that AQIP action projects are a subset of the college's priorities, informed by the gaps in our processes as evidenced by the systems portfolio, and intentionally monitored on the strategic plan. Over time, we found that in some cases the scope of our action projects was too broad, and the goals overlapped other college initiatives making it difficult to understand the parameters of the project. Action project charters benefit from a narrowly defined scope of work, with goals that are specific, measureable, attainable, relevant, and timely.

Action project teams are most successful when resource people are identified and able to dedicate time to help accomplish the project goals. Faculty team leaders are given release time in order to ensure that we free-up needed resources to work on the action projects. When we engage key stakeholders early we leverage their experience and thinking, and cultivate buy-in for the maintenance and sustainability of the improvements. NMC recognized that a standard structure for managing projects and consistent and frequent check-ins by the team with the steering committee and campus community with a common communication device (the A3 project plan), helps keep the campus informed about our quality initiatives. Employee feedback on annual surveys indicates that a large majority is committed to continuous improvement and believes our IE System is working. While IE System information and results are available on the intranet, NMC would benefit from communicating progress more broadly and frequently to our stakeholders both internal and external. We can help the college community understand the IE System better by more simply linking the pieces together.

One of the most important lessons we have learned is that on a quality journey we must take the "long view." Institutional culture(s) do not change overnight, or within a semester, or within a year. This experience was also echoed by a Baldrige Award winner from a Continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN) Summer Institute, who advised all participants "Do not give up.   It takes years."

Institutional Overview

Scholarship: Category One, Helping Students Learn Introduction

Northwestern Michigan College's processes related to Helping Students Learn are at varying points on the process maturity scale. NMC's processes (1P1, 1P18, 1R3) related to its common learning objectives and the assessment processes are ***aligned***. NMC's goals for student learning are centered on our general education philosophy and outcomes (Staff Policy D-101.01). Communications, critical thinking, and quantitative reasoning are the three overarching skill sets, in part, that NMC has woven throughout the curriculum in order to ensure our students are able to function in a 21st-century global economy. The General Education Revision Team (see 1I1) is working on ***integrating*** the processes to provide results at the course and program level for improved student learning.

The scope of NMC's academic programs is broad, with over 60 program areas culminating in one of four Associate Degrees and several certificates. NMC's processes related to specific program learning objectives (1P2), and those that ensure responsive academic programming (1P4) in current programs (1P13) are ***aligned moving to integrated***.   The academic program review process is part of NMC's aligned planning process; monitored for efficiency and effectiveness, it prompts program managers to track performance and devise plans for improvement. NMC's processes for creating new programs and courses (1P3) and discontinuing programs (1P14) are ***systematic***. The stages of the decision-making process provide repeatable steps with clear deliverables and enough information to move to the next step.

The processes to determine the preparation required (1P5), communicating the required preparation (1P6), helping students select programs of study based on their interests and preparation (1P7), and dealing with students that might be underprepared (1P8), are ***aligned and moving to integrated*** as NMC continues to enhance the services provided by the Student Success Center and its coaches. The Enhancing Developmental Education action project team provides a collaborative mechanism to share tracking of processes and metrics related to placement and student success in their courses.

NMC's overarching approach to addressing learning styles (1P9) through a focus on active learning, both in activities and in space is moving from ***reacting to systematic*** with the work on the Learning Experiences action project. The way in which we identify the needs of student subgroups (1P10), build the course delivery system (1P12), and determine learning support needs (1P15) are ***systematic*** processes, designed to prevent issues. These processes would benefit from a feedback cycle to assess their effectiveness.

NMC's process for aligning co-curricular objectives (1P16) is ***reactive with the expectation that it will be more systematic*** with a new position to manage the process for the whole institution, promoting closer coordination among NMC's academic and service departments.

The way in which NMC identifies, documents, and shares expectations for effective teaching and learning (1P11) and the process for determining whether students have met those expectations (1P17) are ***aligned***. NMC's policies, employee handbook, and catalog define processes that are stable and regularly evaluated for improvement. Academic program review ensures that metrics are established and tracked and related to achieving our strategies and goals. The aligned planning process leads us to coordinate among departments and committees in order to create action plans that will help us help students achieve their learning goals.

Scholarship: Category One, Helping Students Learn

1P1   NMC's learning objectives are embodied in its degree requirements and in the general education outcomes. The Curriculum Committee, a subcommittee of Faculty Council, is charged every five years to review NMC's degree requirements and general education philosophy and outcomes. Revisions to degree requirements and the general education outcomes may also occur outside the five-year cycle as necessary when informed by programmatic and institutional assessment results. The process for degree requirement and general education outcome review seeks broad input from multiple constituencies. The process is outlined by staff policy D-105-01 (Figure 1.1).

NMC's philosophy of general education and its three outcomes are articulated publicly in staff policy D-101-01, in the NMC Catalog (p. 45), on course outlines and course syllabi (**Accreditation Core Component 3B2**). How NMC determines the common learning outcomes is a sub-process identified on the process map by the three asterisks (Figure 1.1, Curriculum Committee lane). Specifically, sub-teams charged by the Curriculum Committee defined NMC's three General Education Outcomes - Communication, Critical Thinking, and Quantitative Reasoning. The faculty sub-teams developed rubrics for use in creating or revising assignments across the curriculum and for assessing student work. The rubrics define the competencies for the general education outcomes and are available on the assessment intranet site. In this system, every student in a program of study is exposed to collecting, analyzing, and communicating information, creating insights through pan-curricular support of the general education outcomes. Faculty members and academic leadership declare which courses support the general education outcomes based on course level learning outcomes, and changes are recorded on an annual basis. The spreadsheet of outcome support is available on the Office of Research, Planning and Effectiveness (ORPE) assessment intranet site (**Accreditation Core Component 3B3**). Students take courses that expose them to cultural perspectives and diversity as part of the Associate for Science and Arts (ASA) and the Associate of General Studies (AGS) degree requirements which are documented in the catalog and online. NMC is implementing an opportunity for students to achieve a *Global Endorsement* on their transcripts. The endorsement is achieved by earning points for co-curricular experiences for which NMC will verify completion. The *Global Endorsement* is another way in which the education we offer recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work (**Accreditation Core Component 3B4**). With faculty sub-teams defining the general education outcomes, evaluating and refining degree requirements, and individual faculty members supporting those outcomes in their courses they are contributing to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge in their programs to the extent appropriate for NMC's mission (**Accreditation Core Component 3B5**).

These faculty teams are purposely cross curricular and are given the task of determining what should constitute the most broadly applicable and far-reaching intellectual skills all students should share, regardless of the degree or program certification they are pursuing. To develop the descriptions of those skills determined to be most essential across the curriculum, these teams scan definitions of outcomes used by other post-secondary institutions or offered by professional organizations such as the American Association of Colleges and Universities in the Degree Qualifications Profile or The Foundation for Critical Thinking. Such definitions are adapted for use by NMC or serve to inform what the teams develop as tailored definitions of shared objectives and then to construct the rubrics used to measure them as outcomes (**Accreditation Core Component 3B1**).

We assess achievement on the general education outcomes one a semester on a three-semester assessment cycle. Our assessment plan (further explained in 1P18) is available for the campus to review on the ORPE assessment intranet site. ORPE shares the results of each assessment by publishing formal reports available to all faculty members and for focused review by Curriculum Committee, its Gen Ed sub-teams, the Educational Services Instructional Management Team (ESIMT) comprised of the academic

chairs, and individual academic areas. These review processes use the assessment results to guide the Adjust phase of the improvement cycle. Curriculum Committee minutes posted to a Google Site show how, at the institutional level, faculty and staff review results. Typically, the most detailed form of adjustment takes place at the course level, as instructors fine-tune assignments and other learning activities, assisted by the assessment coordinator, who reviews assignments for their alignment with the Gen Ed rubrics.

1P2   Program area faculty members determine specific programmatic learning objectives and review and revise them annually through the program review process (see 1P13). The outcomes are developed by program faculty and resource staff in collaboration with advisory committee members and documented on the annual planning document (A3). Program areas consider industry standards, requirements of external accreditation bodies or state and federal regulating agencies to develop relevant program outcomes. Program areas set goals for their learning outcomes, measure them on their annual planning documents, and use those metrics and past performance to guide improvement action plans (**Accreditation Core Component 4B1**).

The annual planning documents with annotated program objectives for all program areas are submitted annually to the Coordinator for Planning in the ORPE and made available on the intranet. Moreover, every course has annotated learning outcomes on the course outlines. The course outline is reviewed by the Curriculum Committee for new courses. All course outlines are available on the shared drive for each academic area (**Accreditation Core Component 4B1**).

1P3 Through scanning of industry standards, literature from professional associations, local and national trends, NMC's faculty develop new program ideas in collaboration with advisory committees. Faculty members and instructional leadership consider emerging demand, new technological advancements and the ability of students in determining learning needs when making a new program proposal.

The process for initiating and considering new program proposals is documented in staff policy D-502.02. A map of the four-stage process is diagrammed in Figure 1.2. In stage 1, the program point of contact completes an Idea Summary that outlines the opportunity, the fit with NMC's mission and strategic directions, and a preliminary market review. Curriculum Committee reviews the proposal and its fit with the curriculum. President's Council determines whether the proposal goes to the next stage for a more comprehensive Market Research analysis. President's Council is comprised of the President, four Vice Presidents, and four Executive Directors, and the Executive Assistant to the President. NMC uses market research to inform the competitiveness of new program design.

The President's Council assesses market information and considers various business models in stage three and their potential impact on the college. The Planning and Budget Council evaluates resource allocation for the business models. In the implementation plan, program faculty develop course curriculum and model schedules for degree programs. The Curriculum Committee and Planning and Budget Council review the implementation plans. Upon the recommendation of the President's Council, the Board of Trustees has the final approval to implement new programs. New courses required for a new program are developed in the implementation plan stage.

New course proposals for existing programs are developed by faculty and presented to the Curriculum Committee. The Curriculum Committee uses a shared Google site to provide access to all the required documents. The Committee assesses the fit of the course in the curriculum, the course's support of the general education outcomes, course transferability to other colleges and universities, and the quality of the course outcomes. The Curriculum Committee recommends whether to approve the course to the Vice President for Educational Services, who makes the decision on whether to add the course to the curriculum portfolio.

Figure 1.1 Process for reviewing Degree Requirements and General Education Outcomes
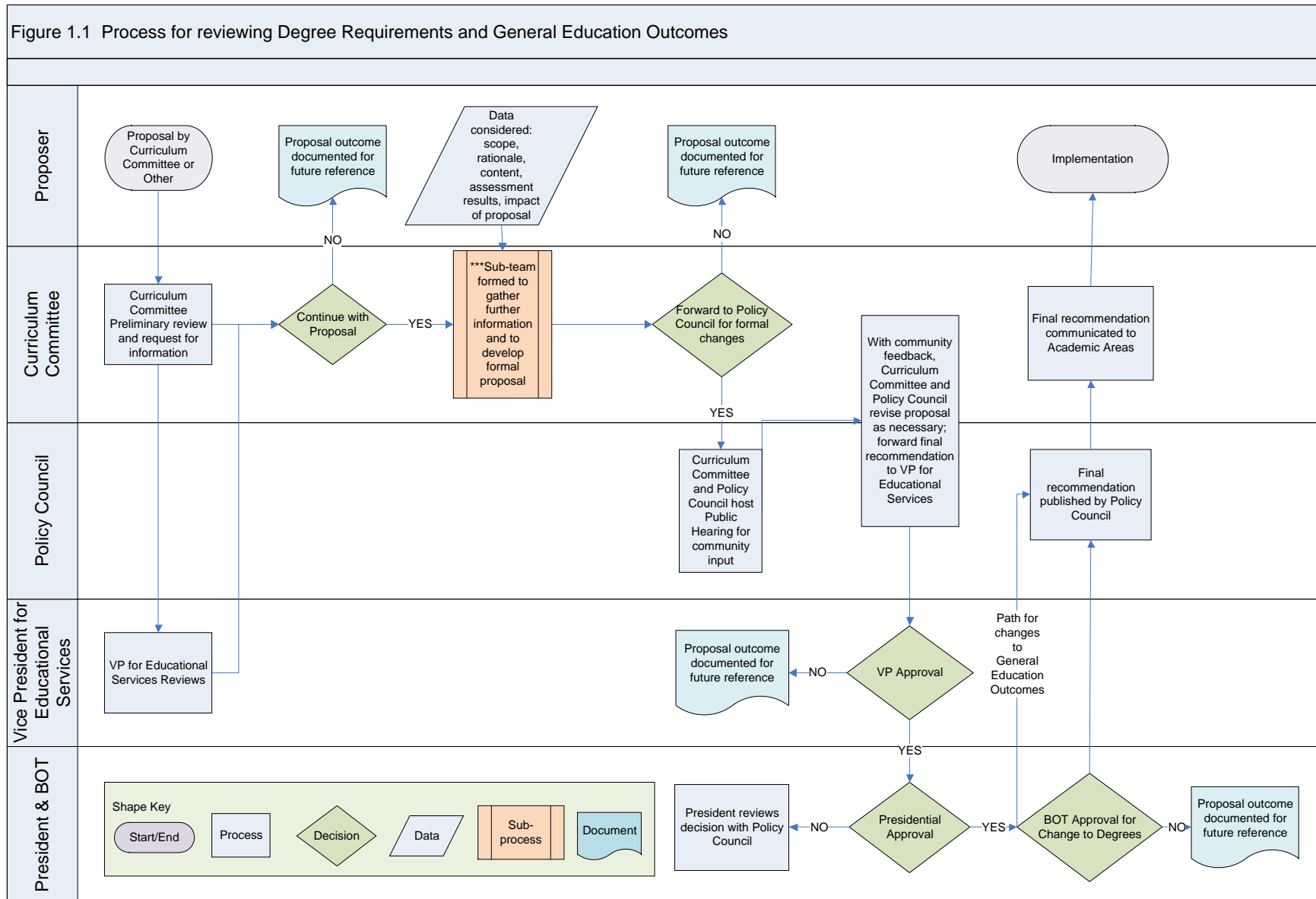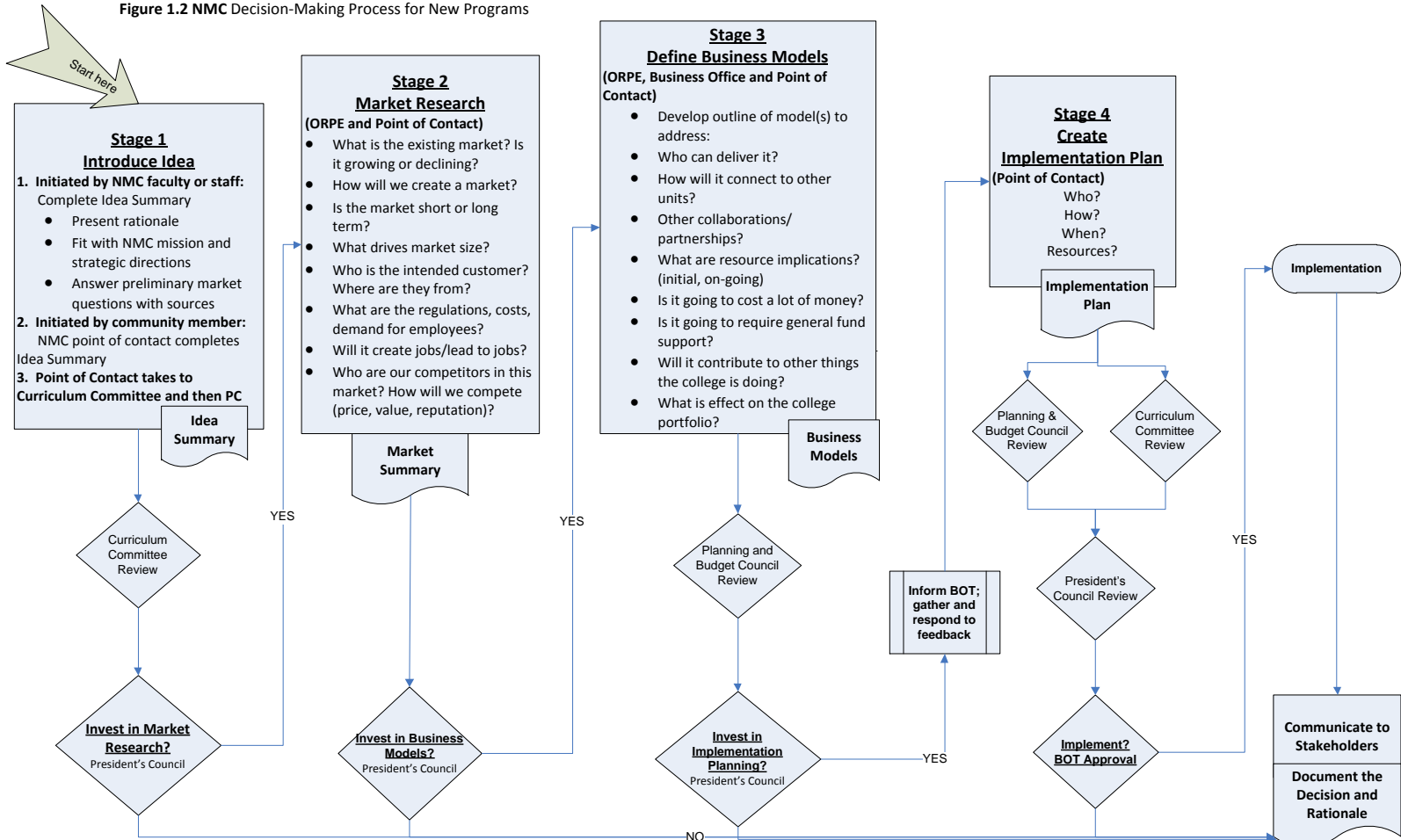
Proposer

- Proposal by Curriculum Committee or Other
- Proposal outcome documented for future reference
- Data considered: scope, rationale, content, assessment results, impact of proposal
- Proposal outcome documented for future reference
- Implementation

NO   NO

Curriculum Committee

- Curriculum Committee Preliminary review and request for information
- Continue with Proposal — YES → ***Sub-team formed to gather further information and to develop formal proposal
- Forward to Policy Council for formal changes
- With community feedback, Curriculum Committee and Policy Council revise proposal as necessary; forward final recommendation to VP for Educational Services
- Final recommendation communicated to Academic Areas

YES

Policy Council

- Curriculum Committee and Policy Council host Public Hearing for community input
- Final recommendation published by Policy Council

Vice President for Educational Services

- VP for Educational Services Reviews
- Proposal outcome documented for future reference — NO ← VP Approval
- Path for changes to General Education Outcomes

YES

President & BOT

Shape Key
- Start/End
- Process
- Decision
- Data
- Sub-process
- Document

- President reviews decision with Policy Council — NO ← Presidential Approval — YES → BOT Approval for Change to Degrees — NO → Proposal outcome documented for future reference

Figure 1.2 NMC Decision-Making Process for New Programs

Start here

Stage 1
Introduce Idea
1. **Initiated by NMC faculty or staff:**
Complete Idea Summary
   - Present rationale
   - Fit with NMC mission and strategic directions
   - Answer preliminary market questions with sources
2. **Initiated by community member:**
NMC point of contact completes Idea Summary
3. **Point of Contact takes to Curriculum Committee and then PC**

Idea Summary

Stage 2
Market Research
(ORPE and Point of Contact)
- What is the existing market? Is it growing or declining?
- How will we create a market?
- Is the market short or long term?
- What drives market size?
- Who is the intended customer? Where are they from?
- What are the regulations, costs, demand for employees?
- Will it create jobs/lead to jobs?
- Who are our competitors in this market? How will we compete (price, value, reputation)?

Market Summary

Stage 3
Define Business Models
(ORPE, Business Office and Point of Contact)
- Develop outline of model(s) to address:
- Who can deliver it?
- How will it connect to other units?
- Other collaborations/ partnerships?
- What are resource implications? (initial, on-going)
- Is it going to cost a lot of money?
- Is it going to require general fund support?
- Will it contribute to other things the college is doing?
- What is effect on the college portfolio?

Business Models

Stage 4
Create
Implementation Plan
(Point of Contact)
Who?
How?
When?
Resources?

Implementation Plan

Implementation

Curriculum Committee Review

Planning and Budget Council Review

Planning & Budget Council Review

Curriculum Committee Review

Inform BOT; gather and respond to feedback

President's Council Review

Invest in Market Research?
President's Council

Invest in Business Models?
President's Council

Invest in Implementation Planning?
President's Council

Implement? BOT Approval

Communicate to Stakeholders

Document the Decision and Rationale

YES   YES   YES   YES

NO

Revision Date: 8/8/2013

1P4 In order to design academic programming that balances learning goals, students' career needs and the employment market, program faculty collaborate with their advisory committees to develop proposals for academic programming. Every program is required to have an Advisory Committee (as outlined in the [Dean's Guide for the state of Michigan](#)) and meets at least annually. Meeting minutes are available to the campus community on the intranet. Program faculty members consider the following questions in the [Idea Summary](#) for a new program proposal (Figure 1.2, Stage 1):

- How does the proposed idea fit with the NMC Mission?
- How does the proposed idea fit with NMC's strategic directions?
- At a high level, how does the idea impact other areas of the college?
- What courses exist or would need to be created as part of the proposal?
- Is the market for the program existing or new? What are the market time horizons?
- Is the market expanding or declining?
- What drives market sizing?
- Who are the likely consumers of the program?
- Where is the market (local, state, regional, national, international)?
- Who are our competitors in this market?
- How will we compete (price, value, reputation)?

The initial work of the program faculty feeds into a more detailed Market Summary conducted by the Office of Research, Planning & Effectiveness (ORPE) (Figure 1.2, Stage 2). Specific information gained from the Market Research stage includes:

- What is the nature of the opportunity being considered
- What decisions are pending about the proposal?
- Description of the likely consumers of the program and/or service
- Description of existing market
- Time horizons of the market
- Location of the market
- Size of the market and market drivers
- Demand – enrollment projections
- Supply – job placement projections
- Unique challenges
- Potential for job creation
- Competitive analysis

    In understanding the market for a program, NMC considers the diversity of the communities it serves which is captured by the questions of the market summary (**Accreditation Core Component 1C1**). Templates for gathering the information for each stage of the decision-making process are available on the internet with the policy. An implementation plan is developed that includes goals for student success, and program productivity and efficiency as informed by the business modeling stage. The program area and feedback from advisory groups and results from placement may suggest additional program accreditations. NMC maintains several [programmatic accreditations](#) and is currently seeking national accreditation from the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) and in the near future from the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) (**Accreditation Core Component 4A5**). Program accreditations include:

- American Culinary Federation
- American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation
- Bureau of Automotive Regulation - State of Michigan
- Federal Aviation Administration / Federal Aviation Regulation Part 141 approved

- International Accreditation by United States Coast Guard
- International Accreditation by the United States Maritime Administration
- Michigan Board of Nursing
- Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards
- Michigan Corrections Officers Training Council

Academic areas are continually updating and integrating new industry requirements into the curriculum. The Curriculum Committee reviews updates through the course proposal/change process in order to maintain the integrity of the curriculum. Academic programs determine the preparation required for each course, including placement test competency and pre-requisites. In the course proposal process, the Curriculum Committee has oversight for the recommendations for pre-requisites and learning outcomes (**Accreditation Core Component 4A4**). Early college programming is equivalent in its learning outcomes and levels of achievement to the outcomes for its regular college-level learners.

The Curriculum Committee in its review of course proposals evaluates the course outline, which defines the course learning outcomes and the supported general education outcomes. The oversight ensures that course outcomes are appropriate to the degree or certificate level. More recently, the Curriculum Committee made a crosswalk of the skills and capabilities required in the three general education outcomes to the similar skills outlined in Lumina's Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP), which recommends specific outcome wording for different degree levels (**Accreditation Core Component 3A1**). NMC differentiates learning outcomes of its degrees and certificates in the catalog (**Accreditation Core Component 3A2**). The learning outcomes by course or program are consistent regardless of delivery modality and assessed similarly through regular course evaluations, and by tracking course success metrics (**Accreditation Core Component 3A3**). Course level outcomes are categorized into six different significant learning areas on the outline: 1) knowledge, 2) application, 3) integration, 4) human dimension, 5) caring about learning, 6) learning how to learn. Course outcomes are assessed by course-level assessment techniques as documented on the syllabi.

NMC's processes intentionally seek diverse perspectives. The process (Figure 1.2) for developing new programs requires feedback from advisory groups, governance councils, and faculty committees (**Accreditation Core Component 1C2**). Students also provide feedback on their courses and programs through course evaluations and through the Student Program Perceptions survey administered annually.

Once a program is established, program managers engage in NMC's annual program review and planning process (**Accreditation Core Component 4A1**). Annual program review ensures that program managers are designing improvement action steps based on metrics for student success and advisory group feedback. The process has four levels of evaluation: Learner Perception and Behavior, Learning and Program Outcomes, Skill Transfer, and Results (see 1P13).

For Level One, Learner Perception and Behavior, the college measures learner assessment of the quality of the course instruction and of the course itself, and learner satisfaction with the program as a whole. Enrollment tracking and participation of non-traditional students in the program are measured.   For Level Two, Learning and Program Outcomes, the program areas track course completion rates, enrollee success rates, completer success rates, graduation rates, student retention or transfer rates, and non-traditional student completion rates. For Level Three, Skill Transfer, NMC assesses student success on industry tests, such as licensure, and student placement in employment. Finally for Level Four, Results, program managers query their industry advisory groups for feedback on the curriculum, equipment, graduates, and program administration. NMC has college targets or state baselines to measure progress for improvement. When any of these measures fall short of the college targets or state baselines, the program establishes goals and activities designed to improve its performance in these areas (**Accreditation Core Component 4A6**).

At the individual learner level, NMC evaluates the credit on transcripts through several credit inventory processes. Staff procedures guide experiential and prior learning evaluation and the acceptance of transfer credit (**Accreditation Core Components 4A2 and 4A3**). From the website, students are able to see how their credits can be transferred in through a Michigan schools transfer guide.

In order to help students receive credit for all coursework leading to a degree, NMC signed eleven Reverse Transfer Agreements with universities in the State of Michigan. These agreements assist students in transferring credits earned at their transfer institutions back to NMC in order to complete associate degree requirements. By working with the universities, both schools track where the students are in their progress to obtain credentials for which they are entitled.

Most recently we have been working in collaboration with all of Michigan's community colleges and universities on the Michigan Transfer Agreement, a block transfer initiative, in which 30 credits of general education requirements would transfer automatically to universities. NMC has multiple articulation agreements with specific colleges and universities related to academic programs.

1P5 Faculty members collaborate with advisory committees to determine the level of preparation students are required to have for specific programs and courses. Through evaluation research, such as pre-requisite analysis, academic areas establish pre-requisites and basic competency levels in reading, writing, and math. Student aptitude is measured by the ACT test and COMPASS placement test. Periodic analyses by ORPE determine the primary academic criteria for student success. Cut-off scores for the COMPASS placement test for placement into college-level coursework is based on expected success rates in college level English and math.

Some programs have specific criteria that students must meet before entry (i.e., Nursing and Aviation). These criteria were established after identifying the indicators of student success regarding preparation. Required levels of preparation for programs and for courses are documented in the catalog. Certain cut scores on placement tests are required for entry into some programs and courses as determined by faculty members in those academic areas.

Research conducted to support the AQIP action project Enhancing Student Preparation, on the success rates of those students completing the developmental sequence showed higher success rates in ten primary transfer classes than those who had not completed their developmental course work. Given this, professional and faculty advisors strongly encourage students to take their developmental courses first.

1P6 Generally, for communicating the required preparation and specific learning outcomes to academic students, NMC publishes an online catalog. The NMC Catalog details NMC's programs, requirements, faculty and staff, and costs to students. It identifies our governing authorities and lists NMC's accreditation status. On the website, the catalog is a public document for all current and prospective students (**Accreditation Core Component 2B**). Program requirements and model schedules are available on the specific program websites. Faculty members develop course outcomes and annotate those on the course outlines and syllabi. Pre-requisite information is programmed into the student data management system (i.e., Banner), and available to students when registering. We are in the process of implementing My Academic Plan (MAP) that will show students required courses needed for their program of study in a self-service format.

Prospective students are informed of preparation requirements and learning objectives through a variety of ways. Students that have registered for orientation receive a mailing called "How to Prepare for Orientation," with information on the COMPASS placement test requirements and how to prepare for advising. Making use of NMC's orientation process, direct mail and email communications, and

College Information Nights, students receive the information needed to match their interests and abilities to NMC's courses and programs. Faculty and instructional leadership periodically meet with area high schools to communicate standards to teachers who provide pre-collegiate English and math classes.

For all students, Student Services staff and academic advisors provide personalized attention through the admissions, orientation and registration processes. Professional Advisors and faculty knowledgeable about program requirements serve as academic advisors and meet face to face with new students at orientation through the registration process.

1P7   Academic advising is the primary way in which NMC helps students select programs of study that match their interests. Upon enrolling at NMC, students in their first semester are assigned an advisor who will follow them through their NMC education. Students are required to meet with their advisor prior to registering for classes in their first and second semesters at NMC. Professional advisors and faculty from specific program areas participate in orientation, where students receive one-on-one help in selecting programs that match their needs, interests, and abilities (**Accreditation Core Component 3D3**). At orientation students also develop a model schedule and register for their first semester at NMC. As NMC cultivates a culture of advising, an outcome of an AQIP action project Pathways to Completion, continuing students are strongly encouraged to connect with their advisor after the second semester throughout their college experience. A worksheet called "Preparing for Advising" goes to every student at orientation and is provided in each advisor workbook (**Accreditation Core Component 3D2)**.

NMC learns about individual student needs at orientation through COMPASS placement testing, through conversations with advisors, and through self-reported support service needs. In this way, NMC can provide the learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of students (**Accreditation Core Component 3D2**). The process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which they are prepared includes considering the results of the COMPASS placement test, and mandatory placement into appropriate math and English courses. Periodically NMC analyzes the appropriateness of the COMPASS placement cut off scores. Faculty matches the level of knowledge evidenced by each COMPASS score with the math and English curriculum. ORPE assesses the likelihood of success in math and English courses, given certain COMPASS placement cut off scores.

While several occupational programs include internships systematically as part of those programs' model schedules (i.e., Social Work, Business Administration, Computer Information Technology, and Accounting, etc), one of NMC's strategic goals is to create a more integrated process for experiential learning. A new Internship Coordinator position is being developed to lead this effort. In this way, students get experience in their program area outside the classroom.

Additionally, NMC's Maritime Academy has an on-board sailing experience prior to the cadet's entering the academic portion of the program. Maritime cadets experience firsthand the roles and responsibilities associated with training to be a deck or engine officer prior to the start of the full program. NMC's Aviation program provides similar experiences for potential students, and the NMC Culinary program provides a one-week boot camp prior to the semester to ensure that students understand the demands of the culinary field. Similarly, programs, including business administration, engineering technology, nursing, law enforcement, dental assistant, engineering and teaching, offer an introductory course so students learn early on in their curriculum if their intended major and career choices are a good fit (**Accreditation Core Component 3D2**).

More broad-based career advising is offered through the Department of Learning Services— Advising Center, and may also be provided by counselors in the Student Life Office as part of their personal counseling session as well. Career advising is the practice of assisting individuals in the career

decision-making process and development of life-career goals. This typically is a multi-session process involving the assessment of personality characteristics, interests, values and strengths, and connecting this information to academic programs and career options. A variety of career assessment and online tools are used, including the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and the Strong Interest Inventory. NMC also offers a Career Exploration and Planning course (PYS 100). Career resources for students are captured in one place in MyPlan online. A careers database, learning styles assessments, and a database of college and majors help students chart a pathway (**Accreditation Core Component 3D2)**.

1P8   NMC employs multiple ways to assess students' preparation for college, both academically and psycho-socially. Academic preparation is evaluated by means of ACT test scores and the COMPASS placement test.   The English and math faculty set cut scores for determining placement into specific courses in order to facilitate the likelihood for student success. Students are strongly encouraged to take their developmental courses prior to enrolling in college-level coursework so that they will have greater potential for success. NMC's research through the AQIP action project Enhancing Student Preparation has shown that students who complete the final developmental math and English courses have a much higher success rate in a set of gatekeeper college-level courses. When students are underprepared for college-level coursework as evidenced by their COMPASS placement test scores, NMC offers two levels of developmental math courses and two levels of developmental English courses. NMC has linked an "Academic Study Methods" (ENG107) course to the lowest developmental English course. English and math faculty work with faculty from other program areas in order to create linkages and context for the foundational skills. Moreover, while students are strongly encouraged to take their developmental courses first, they are still permitted to take credit-bearing courses of interest to them, as long as they meet the pre-requisites for the course. In this way, NMC helps the students build academic skills while at the same time continuing to engage them in courses that are relevant to their desired programs of study and career areas of interest. We have found that in doing so, course persistence rates in the developmental courses have improved.

Students can be conditionally admitted (described in the NMC catalog, Student Services, p.26 as Limited Admission) to NMC when their high school grade point average is below a 2.0, or as adult learners, they are admitted to the BRIDGE program. The BRIDGE program is a cohort experience administered by the Student Success Center designed to build confidence in adult learners returning to education. In this case, students sign a contract that they will take the Academic Study Methods course and work to achieve a 2.0 or higher in their first college semester.

1P9 NMC detects and addresses differences in students' learning styles at multiple levels. At the individual level, NMC's Advising Center and Student Life office offers the Strong Interest Inventory and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. Each can assist in identifying learning style preference to the respondent. The test and the score interpretation are offered at no additional charge to the students. NMC uses the *Power Path* tool to screen students in developmental English for auditory, tactile, and visual learning disabilities. The screening is available to all students in the Student Success Center and faculty may refer any that may be challenged in their courses. Students are then equipped with learning strategies to use in the classroom that will help them overcome their challenges.

Faculty and staff professional development activities are often focused on responding to different student learning styles. Faculty members identify learning strategies in order to meet course objectives on the syllabus and course outcomes. Academic areas ensure that courses are offered in a variety of delivery modalities: online, face to face, and hybrid courses, to address learning style differences.

NMC's strategic approach to addressing differences in learning styles is to improve student engagement through active learning. The Learning Experiences AQIP action project team is focused on training faculty, through the Center for Instructional Excellence and the Student Success Center, on incorporating active learning activities and assignments into the curriculum. The *On Course* curriculum is used in the Academic Study Methods course to help students overcome confidence issues related to learning and to encourage them to take responsibility for their learning. Annual faculty professional development in the *On Course* curriculum, instructs faculty in the use of active learning strategies such as Pair and Share, Home Team Check In, and the Socratic Method of Questioning. Moreover, NMC assembled four active learning classrooms in spring 2013 (see 1P15).

1P10 NMC recognizes the need to identify our student subgroups that begins with the application process. NMC's online application is available in different versions that ask slightly different questions based on whether the student is new, returning, a military veteran, or an international student. Some programs such as the Great Lakes Maritime Academy have a separate series of questions that prospective students answer on the application. NMC tracks subgroup performance outcomes in order to identify gaps in achievement. More recently, NMC submitted a 2% grant request to the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians to help fund strategies for improving the success rates of our Native American students (**Accreditation Core Component 1C1 and 1C2**).

NMC addresses the special needs of student subgroups in a variety of ways. Students with disabilities have a dedicated staff person available to them, and we use the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) to determine protocol for our students. Our Disability Support Services staff provides each student who self-identifies with a guidelines packet of information that outlines services we can provide and expectations for the student. Books in alternative formats, ASL interpreters, adaptive equipment, and note-takers are some of the many services available for eligible students from our Disability Support Services Office. In addition, personal counseling is available through our Student Life Office and/or Student Health Services by licensed counselors, depending on the student's need.

The BRIDGE Learning Experience is designed specifically for nontraditional adult learners, providing classes in technology, career exploration and academic study methods. Working with more than 30 regional agencies to serve individuals residing in the six-county area, this program enrolls between 65 and 90 students each year.

For students who are struggling in class faculty members make referrals to the Student Success Center for *Power Path* screening (1P9). Trained staff members share strategies and tools to assist students in overcoming learning challenges. Faculty members are encouraged to allow learning aids in the classroom whether it's a colored overlay, different color of paper, visors or stress balls.

In NMC's Early College program, held in partnership with our local intermediate school district and area schools, students are eligible for the same services as our traditional students. Additional needs and/or barriers are addressed on an individual basis with the Learning Coordinator from Outreach Services working in conjunction with the staff of the partner school.

Within Outreach Services we support Veteran and Military students, Early College students, and International students. Veterans are served by an NMC point of contact who provides a checklist for successful transition from the military to college and hosts a veteran-specific orientation. All application fees are waived for military, spouses, and dependents; and we have an emergency loan in place if Veterans' Affairs (VA) funding has not been secured or is not coming before our payment due dates. We provide two veteran-specific scholarships. We provide a Student Veterans of America support group, and are building a Freedom Lounge for all students to use as a quiet space. NMC is proud to be in the top 15% of colleges in the United States designated as a military-friendly school and has been

nominated as Best for Vets. We are working on a tracking/intervention program for this population and also recognize this population on Veteran holidays. Trained counselors are experienced to work with posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), when needed. Moreover, NMC has piloted a cohort model with Coast Guard veterans on the local Coast Guard base.

As stated in NMC's values, we value all people. A focus on awareness of diverse and cultural perspectives is evidenced by a degree requirement for our students, in the Associate of Science and Arts (ASA) and the Associate of General Studies (AGS). The Outreach Services office also coordinates International Services, facilitating study abroad opportunities, tracking global partnerships, and hosting international events.

1P11 Expectations for student learning are defined by general education outcomes, degree requirements and specific program and course outcomes. These outcomes are documented in NMC policies and in the print and electronic publications, such as the NMC catalog. Instructors include outcomes on course syllabi and in the course outlines. Expectations for effective teaching are defined by the Educational Services Instructional Management Team (ESIMT) led by the Vice President for Educational Services and reference the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) Teaching Excellence criteria. These criteria and expectations are documented in the Employee Guide (Faculty section on p.25), and in course packets. Expectations are communicated to faculty members within their respective academic areas through area meetings and through adjunct faculty mentoring. Students provide feedback with respect to the effectiveness of instructors in most classes on the course evaluations.

NMC's Employee Guide documents our commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning. A specific statement about encouraging the "free pursuit of learning," and promoting "conditions of free inquiry and to further public understanding of academic freedom," is in the Faculty Code of Professional Ethics (NMC Employee Guide, p. 34) (**Accreditation Core Component 2D**).

NMC ensures that faculty, students and staff acquire and apply knowledge responsibly. For research, ORPE gathers and monitors research requests in order to ensure compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which is defined on the College website. Protocols for approval are being developed to provide oversight (**Accreditation Core Component 2E1**). Students are guided by faculty and by the library staff in the ethical use of information resources. In the Information Literacy courses taught by librarians to all students in the freshman composition sequence, the standards come from the American College and Research Libraries. Standard Five of the *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* is an outcome of the information literacy course: "The information literate student understands many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally" (**Accreditation Core Component 2E2**). Moreover, library sessions cover documenting sources appropriately and reference material for citations is located on the web in the Lib Guides. The composition textbook in use in all sections of freshman composition provides information about plagiarism and information is also available in library resources (**Accreditation Core Component 2E2**).

NMC's policies on academic honesty and integrity are documented in the Faculty Code of Professional Ethics, and in the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy in section #5 of the Academic Code of Conduct D-602.10 (**Accreditation Core Component 2E3**). Faculty members include a statement on the syllabus stating policies related to academic honesty. The requirement for the syllabus is located in the Employee Handbook (p.67), Course Syllabus Essential Criteria.

1P12 NMC builds its course delivery system in response to learner needs and behavior. Information on learner needs and perceptions is gathered by means of the Scheduling Preferences Survey, which is administered by ORPE on a rotating schedule to a proportionally representative sample of currently enrolled students. The Academic Area chairs use the results to guide scheduling decisions in future semesters. Student enrollment behavior is analyzed by tracking section fill rates. The section-efficiency system on NMC's digital dashboard gives real-time information regarding the ratio of seats filled to seats available. Academic Area and department heads use this information to make formative decisions about opening and closing sections during the registration process, and in investigating student preferences regarding delivery modality.

The Curriculum Committee ensures that courses and programs offered are current and require appropriate levels of student performance in its approval process for new courses and programs outlined in Figure 1.1, 1P1, and Figure 1.2, 1P3 (**Accreditation Core Component 3A1**). Learning goals appropriate to NMC's degree granting authority are annotated on syllabi, course outlines, and in general education policies. NMC compares the language of outcome performance of its general education outcomes with those articulated in the Degree Qualifications Profile (Lumina Foundation) to benchmark the appropriateness of the performance level required at the appropriate degree level (**Accreditation Core Component 3A2**).

Course outcomes and the general education outcomes are consistent across delivery modalities. When NMC assesses the general education outcomes, student work is requested similarly from face to face, on-line, and hybrid classes, as well as from multiple program areas at our multiple locations. Course evaluations are administered in courses regardless of delivery format in order to assess instructor and course effectiveness (**Accreditation Core Component 3A3**).
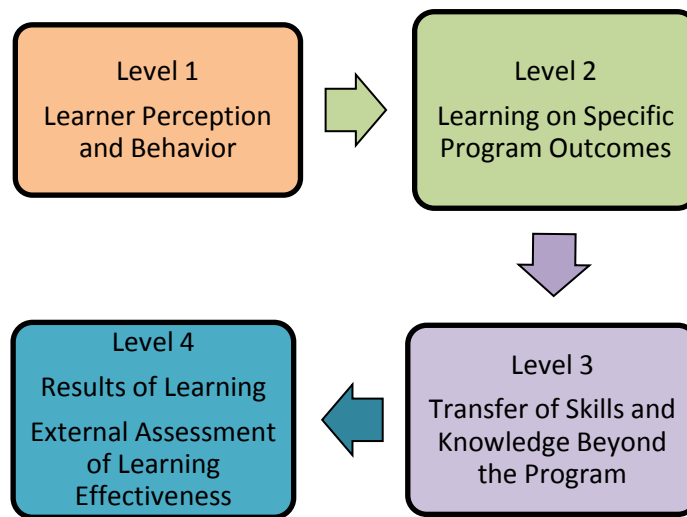
1P13 NMC's annual program review process is the way in which we ensure that our programs and courses are up to date and effective (**Accreditation Core Component 4A1**). The current process resulted from the work of an AQIP action project team to create a process that was useful, met all of our reporting requirements, and was non-duplicative with other college processes. Informed by Lean Manufacturing principles, the premise of the program review is an annual evaluation of quantitative metrics and qualitative reflection on the prior year's activities. From this, goals for the program are set and action plans identified for the coming year. The program review documents and institutional metrics are made available to the college community on the ORPE intranet site. The College's planning process (outlined further in 8P1), ensures that program and department goals align with strategic goals, and that service area goals appropriately support program goals.

The metrics tracked in program review are categorized in four phases of evaluation: Learner Perception and Behavior, Learning of Program Outcomes, Skill Transfer, and Results (Figure 1.3). Program areas create action plans to address deficiencies as part of the institutional annual planning and budgeting process. Table 1.2 in section 1R1 shows all the metrics for program review (**Accreditation Core Component 4A6**). Advisory Group Feedback is critical to ensuring our programs are up to date and effective. Advisory Group feedback is captured in the quantitative metrics in Level Four: Results of Learning, which provides an external assessment of learning effectiveness. Program areas meet with advisory groups twice a year to discuss the relevancy of the program curriculum and equipment. Advisory group meeting minutes are posted on the intranet.

Finally, program areas use specific accreditation requirements and evaluation to inform program relevance and effectiveness. NMC maintains several programmatic accreditations that are listed online and in the NMC catalog. We are currently pursuing national accreditation in nursing from the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) and are preparing to pursue national accreditation for Engineering Technology through ABET (**Accreditation Core Component 4A5**).

Figure 1.3. Outcome Framework for Academic Program Review

| Level 1
Learner Perception and Behavior | → | Level 2
Learning on Specific Program Outcomes |
| Level 4
Results of Learning
External Assessment of Learning Effectiveness | ← | Level 3
Transfer of Skills and Knowledge Beyond the Program |

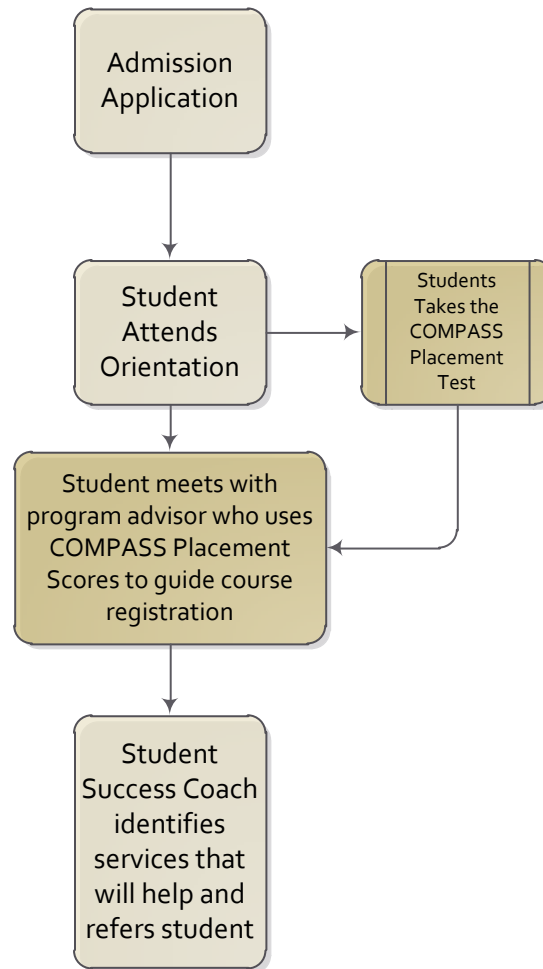(Source: Kirkpatrick, D.L. 1994. Evaluating Training Programs: The Four Levels. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.)

1P14 Through annual program review and monitoring of the Cost to Educate model (available to NMC employees), NMC evaluates required changes for programs and courses, including discontinuing programs and courses when necessary. The cost to educate model provides revenue and expense data by account for all NMC's academic programs, and graphics rank the programs by net contribution on an annual basis. Faculty and instructional leadership initiate curricular course changes based on advisory committee input, assessment results, accreditation agency recommendations, and through cross-discipline communication on the Curriculum Committee. Changes that substantially impact course content are presented to the Curriculum Committee for approval on the course proposal form.

The program review process (see 1P13) allows NMC to track program metrics annually, including enrollment, placement of graduates, graduate wages, student satisfaction, and advisory group feedback. Annually reviewing the Cost to Educate model informs program managers of the productivity of the program. Not only does that model inform changes to funding strategies for certain programs, it also identifies gaps with NMC's strategic priorities. In this formal aligned planning process, the evaluation of programs happens annually. NMC eliminates programs based on these metrics and criteria, 1) when enrollment and performance metrics slide below a certain threshold consistently; 2) the program is no longer producing sustainable support, or 3) when the program no long supports NMC's strategic directions and goals.

1P15 The process in which NMC determines and addresses the learning support needs of students begins with the information provided on the student's application. Students apply online or can request a paper copy. A student's high school GPA and ACT scores inform initially whether the student will be admitted on a conditional contract (referenced in 1P8). ACT scores inform admissions and registration processes as to whether the student will need additional placement testing with the COMPASS test. ACT scores above a certain cut off places students in college level math and English courses. The process for determining learning support needs is outlined in Figure 1.4.

Figure 1.4 Learning Support Needs

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        ┌─────────────────┐
        │   Admission     │
        │   Application   │
        └─────────────────┘
                 │
                 ▼
        ┌─────────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐
        │    Student      │      │  Students    │
        │    Attends      │─────▶│  Takes the   │
        │  Orientation    │      │  COMPASS     │
        └─────────────────┘      │  Placement   │
                 │               │  Test        │
                 ▼               └──────────────┘
        ┌─────────────────┐            │
        │ Student meets with│          │
        │ program advisor who uses     │
        │ COMPASS Placement │◀─────────┘
        │ Scores to guide course       │
        │ registration    │
        └─────────────────┘
                 │
                 ▼
        ┌─────────────────┐
        │    Student      │
        │ Success Coach   │
        │  identifies     │
        │ services that   │
        │ will help and   │
        │ refers student  │
        └─────────────────┘
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When the student meets with a Student Success Coach at orientation or when needed in the Student Success Center, there are many options for referral. Students needing additional help with math skills are directed to use PLATO, a self-directed math-tutoring program. A math boot camp is an option for those students who want to brush up on math skills in order to re-take the COMPASS placement test to place into a higher-level math class. Beginning in fall 2013, NMC is piloting a modularized math course that allows students to progress through math skills and concepts at their own pace and to work on only the skills they require. Students may select at this time to be screened through Power Path in the Student Success Center and are then provided strategies to overcome any challenges.

The Student Success Coaches also provide information to students who are academically prepared for college. Some students may place into the Honors Freshman Composition sequence. Honors projects are available for eligible students in courses at the 100 level and above. NMC provides Tutoring Services, a staffed Math Center, and a staffed Writing and Reading Center. Learning support services are identified in the NMC Catalog (**Accreditation Core Component 3D1**).

Through surveys at the institutional level, NMC determines broad level learning support needs related to technology, study spaces and facilities, and the library (i.e., Service Effectiveness Survey, Scheduling Preference Survey, and Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)).

Departments use the results in conjunction with qualitative data gathered at the departmental level to further specify learning support needs.

Individual faculty members may refer students to respective student support services such as tutoring and counseling. Professional development is available for faculty through the Center for Instructional Excellence, the Perkins Grant, and through ORPE for assessment method design.

In fall 2013, NMC converted four regular classrooms to *active learning* classrooms, which provide a unique teaching and learning environment designed to be flexible, interactive, and conducive to student-centered learning experiences. The design, without a designated front or focal point, encourages opportunities for group work and collaboration. NMC's active learning classrooms include:

- Multiple display systems for ease of viewing throughout the room
- Flexible, mobile furniture designed to promote group work
- Flexible, mobile teacher workstation
- Technology that allows students to easily present work
- Multiple, portable whiteboard surfaces for group collaboration and interaction

Programmatically, resources and infrastructure to support students and faculty in learning include dedicated laboratories for automotive, construction technology, dental assisting, maritime technology, welding, audio technology, music, and clinical sites for nursing. Advisory group feedback and special programmatic accreditation criteria are critical in helping us to assess the quality and appropriateness of our spaces and equipment for effective teaching and in meeting students' learning needs (**Accreditation Core Component 3D4**).

The Library staff teaches Information Literacy as an embedded and integrated part of the freshman composition sequence for an additional credit hour in English Composition I and II, each. Using the standards from the American College and Research Libraries, the library staff and faculty guide students in the effective use of research and information resource. The library guides on the website offer information to students when they are not in the classroom (**Accreditation Core Component 3D5**).

1P16 NMC has many structured co-curricular learning opportunities, including service learning certification, internships, a transcripted *Global Endorsement*, Student Government Association activities, Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa, the *White Pine Press*, *NMC Magazine*, Dennos Museum Center educational programming, and the International Affairs Forum. We systematically align co-curricular development goals programmatically and institutionally as guided by the strategic directions and strategic plan. Several programs include service learning or internships as part of the curriculum in order to students to experience what a career might be like in their chosen field of study. A new internship coordinator position will continue to build, map and manage NMC's co-curricular and experiential learning initiatives (**Accreditation Core Component 3E1**). NMC's strategic direction states "learners are prepared for success in a global society and economy." Outreach Services has a division providing International Services that creates, develops and facilitates programs, study abroad opportunities and intercultural exchanges and events (**Accreditation Core Component 3E2**).

1P17 Through program review and general education outcomes assessment, NMC employs both direct and indirect measures to determine whether students have met the learning and developmental expectations. Four levels of evaluation in program review are outlined in 1P13. Once learners complete a program or a series of courses that represent a package of skills, NMC determines whether the learning objectives and development expectations have been met by tracking transfer success and placement rates of those employed in their field of study, and through the results of third-party assessments, such as the Board of Nursing Licensure exam. Students' perceptions of learning and

preparation are collected in course evaluations, program surveys and institutional surveys, such as the Graduate Follow-Up and Transfer Student Surveys.

My Academic Plan (MAP) will track student progress based on the credits earned through NMC's degree programs. The Registrar certifies that the credits earned lead to a credential.

1P18   For NMC's shared learning outcomes, the College's goals and processes for assessing the general education outcomes are documented in the [Assessment Plan](#) located on ORPE's assessment intranet site and NMC's website (**Accreditation Core Component 4B1 and 4B2**). ORPE is responsible for designing assessment methodologies that are valid and reliable and that provide actionable data to those that make decisions regarding the improvement of student learning on the general education outcomes. ORPE collaborates with the Curriculum Committee and with academic area chairs to plan and implement methods for the assessment of the general education outcomes. The Assessment Coordinator is half time in ORPE and a half time faculty member in Communications. Both the Assessment Coordinator and the Executive Director for Institutional Effectiveness are ex-officio members of the Curriculum Committee.

When ORPE reports the results of assessment, Curriculum Committee determines whether the assessment method is working effectively – that is, does the current method provide meaningful results on which individual instructors, academic areas, or programs can act. If the current method does not provide sufficient and meaningful data, a focused project team is convened to develop a new assessment method. The faculty-led project team has a succinct charge, a short time-line, and a focused specific outcome of developing a more effective assessment method. The team's charge and membership is available on Curriculum Committee's shared Google Site. When the new assessment method is adopted and replaces a current method, the Assessment Coordinator manages the logistics of administrating the new method and makes updates to the Assessment Plan, as required. All of the results of general education assessment are available on the College's intranet (**Accreditation Core Component 4B4**).

At the program level, program managers articulate program objectives on the annual program review (detailed in 1P13). Specific program outcomes meet accreditation requirements, the Perkins Core Indicators, and specific industry standards. Liberal Arts program outcomes include transferability of courses to other colleges and universities and support of the general education outcomes. Program faculty members define outcomes and consult with ORPE on methods to assess and measure student achievement. Several programs, such as Nursing, map courses to programmatic outcomes. The process of curriculum mapping could be more pervasive and consistent throughout the curriculum.

Individual faculty members design learning activities and assessments for student learning at the course level in academic classes. The Assessment Coordinator provides assistance in revising learning activities and assessments to improve learning of general education capabilities by helping instructors align the activities or assessment with the general education rubrics. Through this formative feedback, instructors can make adjustments continuously to best address student learning in the course.

By using the annual program review, NMC can assure that learning outcomes from the general education outcomes, programmatic outcomes, and course level outcomes are aligned with institutional goals for student learning.

In 2012-2013, NMC adopted a strategic goal to revise the general education assessment system. In the last two years, we have been experimenting with a one-piece-flow type scoring process in place of a batch process for scoring student artifacts. In this process, instructors are the first to score their own student work as the first scorers, then the student work is sent to a second instructor in the discipline to serve as a second scorer. The results are iteratively recorded by the institutional research office, which

flags when a third scorer might be needed. The one-piece-flow process has its limitations; however, it gets us closer to a logistical approach that might be more broadly adopted in the future.

By sampling our near-graduates (48 or more credit hours) we report on the percent of near-graduates that are meeting our performance expectations. Several cycles of trending "percents" for a point in time for each outcome has left us unsatisfied in figuring out how to adjust the curriculum. Learning happens in the classroom, yet our assessment for the general education outcomes is at the institutional level. We have taken action at the institutional level in the form of: 1) a new degree requirement, 2) a common textbook, 3) a writing handbook, etc. In 2012-2013, we identified a strategic goal to revise the general education system so that there will be wider faculty participation scoring the work of all students in their classes that support a specific outcome. Faculty members are piloting a new process in fall 2013 that will provide individual level results for the general education outcomes for all students in their classes. The process will help provide actionable data at the course level (**Accreditation Core Component 4B3**).

1R1 Table 1.1 shows the metrics for our general education learning outcomes. Table 1.2 shows the programmatic metrics used in annual planning and in assessing program effectiveness with regard to student learning. Every program has 3-5 specific outcomes that are included with the institutional metrics. Metrics for our AQIP action projects are identified and revised as appropriate. For instance, the Enhancing Developmental Education action project team and the Learning Experiences action project team analyze course success rates or specific courses and sub-populations each semester.

Table 1.3 shows the completion metrics NMC uses to track whether our learners have achieved the learning objectives. We use direct and indirect measures through surveys to help focus improvement efforts, explained below and in category 3.

Table 1.1 Metrics for General Education Outcomes	
Outcome	**Metric**
Communications	Percent of near-graduates scoring sufficient or above
Critical Thinking	Percent scoring sufficient or above in Selecting the Relevant
	Percent scoring sufficient or above in Addressing the Important
	Percent scoring sufficient or above in Adding Insights
Quantitative Reasoning	Percent of near-graduates scoring sufficient or above
Percent Graduates indicating that NMC has made a moderate to major contribution to their learning with respect to Communication, Critical Thinking, and Quantitative Reasoning	

Table 1.2 Metrics for Program Review	
Level 1: Learner Perception & Behavior	Year End Program Enrollment
	Learner Assessment of Quality of Course Instruction
	Learner Assessment of Quality of Course
	Learner Program Satisfaction (Scale 1-4)
	Non-Traditional Participation (5P1)
Level 2: Learning	College Level Course Completion Rate
	Developmental Course Completion
	College Level Enrollee Success Rate
	Developmental Enrollee Success Rate
	College Level Completer Success Rate
	Developmental Completer Success Rate
	Graduate Rate (2P1)

	Student Retention or Transfer (3P1)
	Non-Traditional Completion (5P2)
Program	Each program has 3-5 outcomes
Level 3: Skill Transfer	Technical Skill Attainment (1P1)
	Student Placement (4P1)
	Transfer of general education skills in occupational programs
	Course Transferability: Group 1 Courses
Level 4: Results	Advisory Group Assessment of Student attitude, technical, and academic skills (Index Scale 1-5)
Course Efficiency	Seats Taken/Seats Available

Table 1.3 Completion Metrics	
1	IPEDS Full-time, First-time Graduation Rate (150%)
2	IPEDS Full-time, First-Time Transfer Rate (150%)
3	Successful completion/transfer within six years (first time students); Target is average of MI CCs
4	Graduates Satisfied with NMC Preparation (Graduate Follow Up Survey)
5	Transfer Students agreeing that "NMC prepared me well for continuing my education at my current school." (q33) Transfer Student Survey

1R2 The NMC General Education Assessment Plan describes a two-prong approach to measuring student learning outcomes. First, we use an artifact method of scoring student work from across the curriculum using common rubrics, one for each of the three general education outcomes. One outcome is assessed each semester, on a tri-semester cycle. This provides authentic and direct assessment of students' capabilities as defined in the rubrics. Second, the Graduate Follow-Up Survey gathers graduate perceptions of learning. Table 1.4, row 1, indicates that our results for the Communications outcome are stable. The results for our newly revised Critical Thinking outcome are improving (Table 1.4, rows 2-4). The results for Quantitative Reasoning went down over our baseline administration in 2011 (Table 1.4, row 5). Curriculum Committee is reviewing the results to determine a course of action.

	Table 1.4 Shared General Education Learning Outcomes	10-11	11-12	12-13	Min/ Target	Notes
1	Communications: Percent of near-graduates scoring sufficient or above	87%	84%	87% ↑	100%	Artifact scores from 2008, 2010, 2012
2	Critical Thinking: Percent of near-graduates scoring sufficient or above in Selecting the Relevant		53%	58% ↑	64%	Artifact scores from 2011, 2012. Targets reflect a 5% increase in the percent of near-graduates scoring the sufficient or above
3	Critical Thinking: Percent of near-graduates scoring sufficient or above in Addressing the Important		24%	38% ↑	42%	
4	Critical Thinking: Percent of near-graduates scoring sufficient or above in Adding Insights		5%	12% ↑	17%	
5	Quantitative Reasoning: Percent of near-graduates scoring sufficient or above		84%	79% ↓	100%	Artifact scores from 2011, 2013
Percent of graduates indicating NMC has made a moderate to major contribution to their skills						
6	Communications	80%	82%	80% ↓	90%	2011 (304); 2012 (198); 2013 (311)
7	Critical Thinking	83%	90%	88% ↓	90%	
8	Quantitative Reasoning		92%	93% ↑	90%	

Color Key	Meets or exceeds min/target	Does not meet target but trend in right direction	Does not meet target, trend steady or in wrong direction

1R3 For specific programmatic learning objectives, NMC regularly collects licensure and certification rates, Perkins Core Indicators, and other specific measures through the program review process (Table 1.3 and 1.5). NMC is exceeding all the state required baselines for the Perkins Core Indicators (Table 1.5). The Learner Assessments for quality of course instruction and quality of the course come from the course evaluations, and we still are working on meeting our targets.

1R4 Evidence that our students complete their programs and credentials with the required knowledge and skills is measured at two levels. In program review, the Perkins Core Indicators for licensure (1P1), graduation rate (2P1), transfer (3P1), and placement (4P1) indicate whether students achieve at the performance level required by our stakeholders. NMC has met and/or exceeded the state benchmark in all of these indicators (Table 1.5). The Advisory Committee Survey Feedback Index provides evidence that students acquire the skills required by stakeholders (Table 1.5, Level 4 Results).   Institutionally, NMC tracks completion measures for all academic students: graduation rate, transfer rate, and perceptions of learning from graduates and transfer students (Table 1.6)

1R5 The Service Effectiveness Survey assesses performance results for learning-support processes. The survey was administered annually to a random sample of currently enrolled academic students (Table 1.7). For the areas that fall below our target, NMC has created action plans for improvement. In 2012-2013, NMC administered the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) in order to acquire benchmark data for performance on our learning support processes. These data will help us identify further areas for improvement.

1R6 In order to compare our results with other higher educational organizations, NMC benchmarks performance results with at least three data sources: the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCCBP), the State of Michigan Community College Network, and federal Integrated Post-Secondary Data System (IPEDS) reporting. We use the benchmark data from the NCCCBP to set targets for course completion and success rates (see Table 1.5, 1R2). NMC has set the target for course completion and course success rates at the 75th percentile of its peers. The Perkins Core Indicators in academic program review are benchmarked with all the 28 community colleges in Michigan (see Table 1.5, 1R2). NMC is above the expected state levels for each core indicator. For completion data, NMC benchmarks its results with the IPEDS graduation rate of Michigan community colleges and with the Governor's Education Dashboard for the six-year graduation/transfer rate. NMC is above the state average with the sixth highest (out of 28) graduation rate for first-time full-time degree-seeking students in 2012-2013 reporting year.

Table 1.5 Program Review Outcomes		10-11 Results	11-12 Results	12-13 Results	State Baseline/ NMC Target	
Level 1: Learner Perception & Behavior	Year End Program Enrollment	2727	3065	3721		Undup Occp. Programs
	Learner Assessment of Quality of Course Instruction	83%	79%	79% ↔	87%	
	Learner Assessment of Quality of Course	81%	83%	81% ↓	85%	
	Learner Program Satisfaction (Scale 1-4)	3.4	3.3	3.4 ↑	3.5	09-10 (402); 10-11 (322); 11-12 (298)
	Non-Traditional Participation (5P1)	30%	28%	29% ↑	24%	Perkins Core
Level 2: Learning	College Level Course Completion Rate	92%	92%	93% ↑	92%	Target NCCCBP 75th percentile
	Developmental Course Completion	89%	86%	91% ↑	91%	
	College Level Enrollee Success Rate	78%	78%	79% ↑	78%	
	Developmental Enrollee Success Rate	62%	60%	68% ↑	63%	
	College Level Completer Success Rate	85%	84%	86% ↑	87%	
	Developmental Completer Success Rate	70%	70%	74% ↑	74%	
	Graduate Rate (2P1)	32%	33%	33% ↑	28%	Perkins Core
	Student Retention or Transfer (3P1)	79%	80%	74% ↓	70%	Perkins Core
	Non-Traditional Completion (5P2)	27%	25%	22% ↓	21%	Perkins Core
Program	Every program has 3-5 specific outcomes					
Level 3: Skill Transfer	Technical Skill Attainment (1P1)	98%	97%	95% ↓	92%	Perkins Core
	Student Placement (4P1)	85%	89%	89% ↔	71%	Perkins Core
	Course Transferability: Group 1	100%	100%	100%	100%	
Level 4: Results	Advisory Group Assessment of Student attitude, technical, and academic skills (Index Scale 1-5)	4.03	4.17	4.13 ↓	4.0	10-11 (n=54); 11-12 (n=28); 12-13 (n=40)
Course Efficiency	Seats Taken/Seats Available	88%	84%	83% ↓	90%	

Table 1.6 Completion Metrics	10-11 Results	11-12 Results	12-13 Results	Min/ Target	Notes
1	IPEDS Full-time, First-time Graduation Rate (150%); Target is interim	14%	17%	17% ↔	20%	Cohorts 2007, 2008, 2009
2	Successful completion/transfer within six years (first time students); Target is average of MI CCs	47%	46%	51% ↑	52%	Cohorts 2004, 2005, 2006
3	Graduates Satisfied with NMC Preparation (Graduate Follow Up Survey)	90%	89%	88% ↓	90%	2011 (304); 2012 (198); 2013 (311)
4	Transfer Students agreeing that "NMC prepared me well for continuing my education at my current school." (q33) Transfer Student Survey	89%	91%	91% ↔	90%	2010 (180); 2011 (167); 2012 (162)

Table 1.7 Service Expectations: Satisfaction	2008 (N=364)	2009 (N=360)	2010 (N=358)	2011 (N=353)	Target
1	Services provided by library staff	8.85	9.11	9.19	9.08	8.0
2	Safety of the campus environment	9.09	8.79	8.95	8.88	8.0
3	Library academic resources	8.64	8.72	8.81	8.86	8.0
4	On campus computer labs	8.58	8.81	8.73	8.85	8.0
5	Access to cultural opportunities	7.63	8.64	8.71	8.80	8.0
6	NMC website	8.19	8.49	8.64	8.73	8.0
7	On-campus student health services	8.39	8.74	9.18	8.71	8.0
8	Technology helpdesk support	8.22	8.53	8.75	8.64	8.0
9	On-campus study areas	8.09	8.65	8.43	8.64	8.0
10	Online schedule of courses	8.69	8.65	8.68	8.61	8.0
11	Printed schedule of courses	8.69	8.62	8.52	8.51	8.0
12	Registration process	8.19	8.25	8.39	8.50	8.0
13	Wireless Internet access	8.32	8.13	8.60	8.45	8.0
14	Online Catalog	8.40	8.53	8.53	8.45	8.0
15	Student activities	7.14	7.96	8.27	8.43	8.0
16	Career and employment counseling	7.98	8.57	8.69	8.42	8.0
17	Financial aid package	8.04	8.26	8.19	8.31	8.0
18	Academic advising	8.17	8.22	8.18	8.31	8.0
19	Service provided by the financial aid office	7.92	7.98	8.10	8.20	8.0
20	On-campus bookstore	8.12	7.84	8.01	8.17	8.0
21	Printed catalog	8.42	8.51	8.33	8.15	8.0
22	Recreational facilities	7.18	7.97	7.45	8.07	8.0
23	Online course offerings	7.58	8.27	8.10	7.99	8.0
24	Tutoring services	7.87	7.95	8.37	7.91	8.0
25	Finding courses to fit your schedule	8.14	7.86	7.98	7.82	8.0
26	Orientation for new students	7.56	7.58	7.88	7.62	8.0
27	Avenues for expressing opinions	N/A	7.66	7.86	7.55	8.0
28	Parking	5.84	5.34	5.57	5.67	8.0

Category One, Helping Students Learn

1I1   With respect to 1P1, 1P18, and 1R2, NMC charged a General Education System Revisioning team to act on one of our strategic goals. The team proposed changes in our assessment processes in order to collect data from the artifact process from more students in more courses, as opposed to a sample of near-graduates. That plan was accepted by the Curriculum Committee in summer 2013 and is part of the current Assessment Plan. The redesigned process means that instructors will assess all the students in their class against the general education rubric and in so doing we will have results to analyze longitudinally to see how student learning has improved over time. At the moment we have results for "a point in time for near graduates." Instructors will be able to adjust learning activities to better support student learning. This process is being piloted in fall 2013 with the Communications general education outcome.

Since 2009, NMC has worked on [four AQIP action projects](#) related to Helping Students Learn. First, the Enhancing Student Preparation action project team identified that students who take their developmental courses first tend to have higher success rates than those who do not. As such, the team put in place an advising procedure that strongly encourages students who are underprepared for college-level work to take their math and English courses first. The team also implemented an academic study methods (ENG107) course required for those students placing at the developmental-level in both math and English. Second, Pathways to Completion action project led to expanded resources for the Writing and Reading Center, Math Center, and Tutoring Centers in terms of personnel, hours of operation, and physical space. The Student Success Center purchased PLATO software to support student success in mathematics and other academic subject areas.

Additionally, faculty and staff from the local high schools and NMC are collaborating to improve students' college readiness. COMPASS and ACT placement scores have been revised in an effort to improve student placement into English and reading courses. The staff and faculty in developmental English are working together to integrate *OnCourse* materials. The Math and English departments have joined with local high school administrators and faculty to improve college readiness and curricular alignment between the two bodies. This collaborative effort remains an on-going strategic goal.

NMC charged two new AQIP action projects in fall 2012 to improve student completion by shifting the focus to learning delivery. The Learning Experiences action project team is 1) encouraging and increasing active learning in the classroom through faculty professional development, and driving the creation of four active classrooms (see 1P15), 2) training faculty to provide feedback to students early and often during the course, and 3) and devising collaborative systems for following up on student absences. An absence follow-up referral/early alert system is being piloted in fall 2013. Faculty can fill out an online referral form for students who display behaviors not conducive to academic successes (e.g., missing assignments, poor attendance, lack of focus or participation, etc.). Coaches in the Student Success Center, tutoring, advising, and the Writing and Reading Center will follow up with those student referrals to discuss their challenges and help them get back on track.

ORPE implemented a Withdrawal Survey in spring 2013 to gather in a more formative way, the reasons students drop a class. Each week the students that withdraw from a class are invited to respond. Results are provided to the Learning Experience action project team, and academic leaders.

Enhancing Developmental Education AQIP action project is monitoring course completion and success rates in developmental math and English, and success in subsequent college-level courses by those that started in developmental math and English. Several initiatives have been implemented or are being piloted as a result of the work of the project, including: Power Path screening in developmental English, math boot camp for students to brush-up on their math skills and then re-take the Compass placement test, and a modularized math course for students to receive instruction in just the concepts they need.

1I2 The most substantial improvement in our infrastructure has come as NMC implemented its aligned planning process (described throughout the portfolio and more specifically in 8P1). The plan, do, check, adjust process has infiltrated our culture so that it is present in all of our processes. Understanding where we are by way of tracking metrics and developing a vision and goals for the future on an annual basis helps academic programs set targets. The collaborative approach used in Curriculum Committee with all the stakeholders participating in degree review and general education outcome review has helped us to select specific processes to improve. Curriculum Committee's role in the decision-making process for new courses and new programs has been revised so that more stakeholders have an opportunity to provide feedback early in the process. Curriculum Committee implemented a new course outline that annotates significant learning outcomes for each course; at the course level this document ties the significant learning outcomes to course objectives, general education outcomes, and levels of competency from the Degree Qualifications Profile. Our culture of continuous improvement has resulted from success with our AQIP action projects, revising internal processes, and tracking our performance metrics longitudinally and with external benchmarking.

Community Enrichment and Workforce Training: Category Two, Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives Introduction

Northwestern Michigan College's (NMC) mission is to provide lifelong learning opportunities to its communities. We think of all those that we serve as learners, including our own faculty and staff. NMC developed a nomenclature for identifying cross-functional work in terms of the type of learners we are serving. Rather simply, our academic learners, those whose goal it is to earn credit, are referred to as Learner Group One. Learners who are engaging NMC for personal enrichment purposes or to individually learn skills for a job through professional development, are referred to as Learner Group Two. Finally, learners who engage NMC through other institutions for workforce training are referred to as Learner Group Three. Processes related to Learner Group One are documented in Category One, Helping Students Learn. In this chapter, we define our Other Distinctive Objectives, as those program and service offerings related to Learner Group Two, Community Enrichment, and Learner Group Three, Workforce Training

Lifelong learning for community enrichment includes business and workforce development for individuals related to small business development, computer, and energy and construction. Community education includes the creative arts, culinary, fitness, College for Kids, and Life Academy.

Workforce training for organizations includes offerings in leadership and team skills, facilitation, Lean business practices, and continuous quality improvement in Advanced Manufacturing.

Lifelong and Professional Learning serves as an umbrella for Extended Education Services (EES), Training Services, the Technical academic area, Aviation, and the Water Studies Institute.

NMC's processes related to Community Enrichment and Workforce Training are at varying points on the process maturity scale. NMC's processes for designing and operating key processes (2P1) are *integrated*. They are more mature in that processes are stable, and regularly monitored. The Training Services area was the first at the College to use the Lean principles and tools that are foundational for our aligned planning process, so that not only do others come to NMC to learn how to use and implement Lean tools, we use them ourselves across the institution.

Processes for determining objectives (2P2) and communicating expectations regarding the objectives (2P3) are *aligned*. These processes relative to community enrichment and workforce training are not different from those in which instructional and instructional support areas engage.

Through the aligned planning process, NMC assesses and reviews the appropriateness and value of its objectives (2P4). It is at the *aligned* point on the process maturity scale.

Determining faculty and staff needs (2P5) and incorporating that information in evaluating our objectives (2P6) are *aligned and moving to integrated*. Our aligned planning process (further defined in category 8) is in its third cycle, and while we work to continuously improve the process, it is relatively stable and consciously managed by a Coordinator for Planning, executive staff and the department directors.

Community Enrichment and Workforce Training: Category Two, Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives Introduction

2P1 NMC designs and operates key processes related to community enrichment and workforce training similar to its instructional and instructional support programs. Through scanning of industry standards, literature from professional associations, local and national trends, NMC department directors in community enrichment (Learner Group 2) and workforce training (Learner Group 3) develop new program ideas in collaboration with advisory committees. Staff members consider emerging demand, new technological advancements and community and workforce learning needs when making a new program proposal. The process for initiating and considering new program proposals is documented in staff policy D-502.02. A map of the four-stage decision-making process is diagrammed in Category 1, Figure 1.2.

NMC's community enrichment through Extended Education Services (EES) is designed with the Learning Resources Network (LERN), which provides training and national standards with which to benchmark lifelong learning programs. NMC's workforce training division is the regional office of the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC-NL). The center is part of the nation-wide Manufacturing Extension Partnership program under the National Institute for Science and Technology (NIST). As such, NMC Training Services operates under the basic principles of internationally recognized quality systems such as the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and Lean Manufacturing Systems.

Processes to design and operate these programs are formal and systematic as they align with NMC's decision-making process and the aligned planning process (see 8P1 for more information) making efforts in these program areas efficient and transparent.

2P2 NMC determines objectives related to community enrichment and workforce training through the strategic and operational planning processes (8P1). NMC has one aligned planning process incorporating strategic, operational, and individual level planning that occurs in annual cycles. All levels of the aligned planning process incorporate a Plan-Do-Check-Adjust continuous improvement approach. Department directors use inputs in "grasping the situation" to define objectives. Inputs include the formally stated planning assumptions, environmental scanning through the quarterly NMC Scans (further explained in 3P5), community conversations, and results on metrics, which include feedback from external stakeholders such as advisory groups.

Internally, NMC involves the Board of Trustees, the shared governance councils of Planning and Budget Council, and President's Council, along with employee group leaders, and department directors and academic chairs to review inputs and develop objectives related to the strategic plan. These different stakeholders come together as the Leadership Group three times a year to review inputs and develop objectives. Industry-specific advisory groups provide feedback at least twice a year on the effectiveness of our programs and processes and minutes are shared on the intranet for the College community. The strategic plan and the strategic directions help us prioritize partnerships and determine next steps in specific areas. More specifically, one strategic direction states that NMC will "Establish national and international competencies and provide leadership in select educational areas connected to these regional economy asset areas: Advanced Manufacturing, Arts and Culture, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Fresh Water, Health Care, Renewable Energy and Sustainability, and Value-Added Agriculture." Focus groups with local manufacturers identified institutional and individual training needs. Manufacturers and NMC committed to developing regional career-path marketing, and to hosting state-approved apprenticeships. Part of workforce training objectives evolved from these focus groups. The Lifelong and Professional Learning area also offers professional and workplace credentials as an approved certification test center for Prometric, Person VUE, Certiport and other clients.

2P3 NMC documents its expectations for the objectives for community enrichment and workforce training in the strategic plan. Several strategic goals are tracked by the Board of Trustees and thus are communicated to both internal and external stakeholders through the Board materials and minutes. The catalog of offerings provided by Extended Education Services and Training Services are annotated on their specific websites. Monthly Presidential Updates to the Board of Trustees and the College community, including external stakeholders provides progress on objectives in these areas. The updates are available on the NMC Communique blog site. Finally, on an annual basis the President's annual review and evaluation provides a check on the College's progress and accomplishments in achieving our objectives related to community enrichment and workforce training, and is available on the website under the Board of Trustees materials. Community conversations happen about quarterly and provide a direct link to external stakeholders and facilitate a dialogue on our objectives.

2P4 The assessment and review of objectives related to community enrichment and workforce training happens throughout the annual planning cycle. As documented in our aligned planning process, the Vice President for Lifelong and Professional Learning holds periodic check meetings to assess progress on objectives on the annual planning document, the A3. The A3 is a one-page planning tool adopted from Lean principles that summarize metrics and action plans for the next year. If questions about the appropriateness or value of the objectives arise, department directors will adjust. The periodic checks are informed by direct client company feedback, progress and trending on metrics, and by third party assessments annually. For instance, through the MMTC, companies provide systematic feedback to Training Services.   NMC gathers general community attitudes and awareness of its offerings and performance on the Community Survey, administered bi-annually. We assess the community's attitudes regarding the importance of certain offerings which helps us understand how the community values NMC (results in 2R2).

2P5 Faculty and staff member resource needs relative to NMC's objectives for community enrichment and workforce training are identified through the aligned planning process. After the strategic goals are determined, departments build their operational plans and identify any resource and budgetary implications for accomplishing those objectives. Since planning precedes budgeting, the A3 action plan identifies budget impact considerations with a specific goal or activity (see category 8, Figure 8.1). These budget impacts are then carried over to the departmental budget request. In the event of limited resources, the A3 provides additional detail regarding the importance of the budget request. Requests for resources are evaluated throughout the budget development cycle by Planning and Budget Council and President's Council, and prioritized based on NMC's strategic priorities and funds available. Requests for resources, such as faculty and staff position requests, provide criteria for decision-making and encourage collaboration both internally and externally with partners in order to accomplish our objectives.

   Training needs of NMC's faculty and staff relative to community enrichment and workforce training are identified through NMC's performance planning and assessment process (MyPDCA) for individuals on an annual basis.

2P6 At times, NMC will readjust objectives relative to community enrichment and workforce training based on information on faculty and staff needs. For instance, if requested resources for the future fiscal year action plan are not available, the A3 planning document reflects the impact (8P6, Figure 8.1). Important opportunities can arise outside the regular budgeting cycle, and NMC has at least three innovative ways to provide additional resources in order to achieve important and highly valued outcomes. The Board-designated Fund for Transformation and the Strategic Fund were established in

order to act in an agile manner in responding to opportunities requiring resources. Moreover, our Foundation has established a process of awarding mini-grants for Innovation on a proposal basis.

When faculty and staff capacities for accomplishing these other distinctive objectives are deficient, NMC employees can participate in professional development. Goals for individual level professional development are aligned with the goals on the A3 planning document, and tracked in MyPDCA. An additional course of action is that if internal capacity is not available for accomplishing objectives, NMC will look to partner externally.

2R1 In order to measure our performance on our objectives related to lifelong and professional learning. NMC assesses client impact. For instance, effectiveness of community enrichment courses is measured on the EES course evaluations (2R2, Table 2.1). Effectiveness in workforce training is measured primarily by reported company impact (2R2, Table 2.2). Training Services tracks specific metrics on its A3 planning documents that include: utilization (total billable hours), cost (margin contribution, and quality (customer satisfaction). EES also tracks enrollment and gross income. More generally, we query the community in a bi-annual attitudes and awareness survey in order to measure the value of what we are providing to our community.

2R2 From the EES course evaluations, the results indicate that NMC is exceeding targets (Table 2.1). When evaluating our results, NMC uses "stoplight" color coding to easily see where we are meeting target (green), not meeting target but trending in the right direction (yellow), and not meeting target and trending in the wrong direction (red).

There has been a decline in the percent of learners taking non-credit courses in order to enhance current or future job skills over time, with a corresponding increase in the percent of those taking courses for personal interest. An overwhelming majority of respondents agreed that they have met their learning objectives, that the quality of the course was excellent, and that they would recommend the course to a friend.

	Table 2.1 Learner perceptions in community enrichment courses	2008-2009 N=3504	2009-2010 N=3432	2010-2011 N=3210	2011-2012 N=3067	2012-2013 N=3400	Target
1	Primary learning goal for taking the course: **To enhance current or future job skills**	25.1%	21.7%	20.1%	18.6%	16.0% ↓	
2	Primary learning goal for taking the course: **To pursue a personal interest**	74.9%	78.3%	79.9%	81.4%	84.0% ↑	
3	Percent agreeing with the statement: "I met my learning goals in taking this course."	94.1%	95.6%	96.9%	92.8%	93.5% ↑	90.0%
4	Percent agreeing that the overall quality of the course was excellent.	97.0%	93.6%	92.3%	97.2%	96.9% ↓	90.0%
5	Percent saying they would recommend the course to a friend			95.2%	95.7%	94.9% ↓	90.0%

| Color Key	Meets or exceeds min/target	Does not meet target but trend in right direction	Does not meet target, trend steady or in wrong direction

In the Training Services area, direct measures of positive impact from specific training projects are captured though an impact survey completed by clients 6 to 12 months after conclusion of the project (Table 2.2). Each year companies from the MMTC rate their satisfaction with training and quantify the impact of the training. While the dollar figure impacts may vary widely, our target is that 100% of the companies report that the training made an impact and that they are able to quantify that impact.

	Table 2.2 NMC Training Impact	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
1	Customer Satisfaction (*Scale changed to 0-10)	4.5	7.07*	8.14	9.6	9.38 ↓
2	Sales increased and retained	$3,410	$13,4	$8,620	$7,500	$2,689 ↓
3	Cost Saving	$1,055	$1,753	$638	$449	$671 ↑
4	Investments in plant, Equipment, technology	$3,089	$1,124	$1,344	$543	$3,699 ↑
5	Percent of companies quantifying impact	100%	100%	100%	91%	100% ↑
6	Source: National Institute for Science and Technology, Manufacturing Extension Partnership, MAIM Scores. (Dollar figures are in thousands)					

In order to gauge how our community values the enrichment and workforce training offerings, NMC administers a bi-annual Community Survey. The survey is administered to a stratified random sample proportionally drawn from NMC's six-county service area. Results indicate that the community perception of importance of organizational and workplace training has remained stable (Figure 2.1). Nearly three quarters of our community respondents rate the offering as Important or Extremely Important.

Figure 2.1 Importance: provides organizational and workplace training
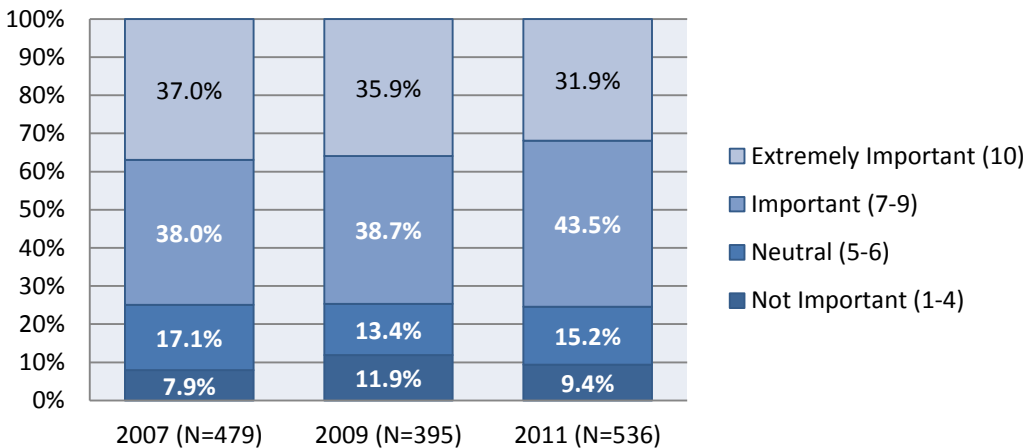
While over 80% of those completing course evaluations indicate their primary purpose for taking a class is for personal enrichment/interest (Table 2.1), 63% of respondents to the Community Survey rate the offering of non-credit personal enrichment courses as Important or Extremely Important (Figure 2.2). This is a decline of 8% from nearly 71% importance rating in 2007. We are doing further research to understand this decline and overhauling many of our offerings in our Extended Education Services.

Figure 2.2 Importance: offers non-credit personal enrichment courses
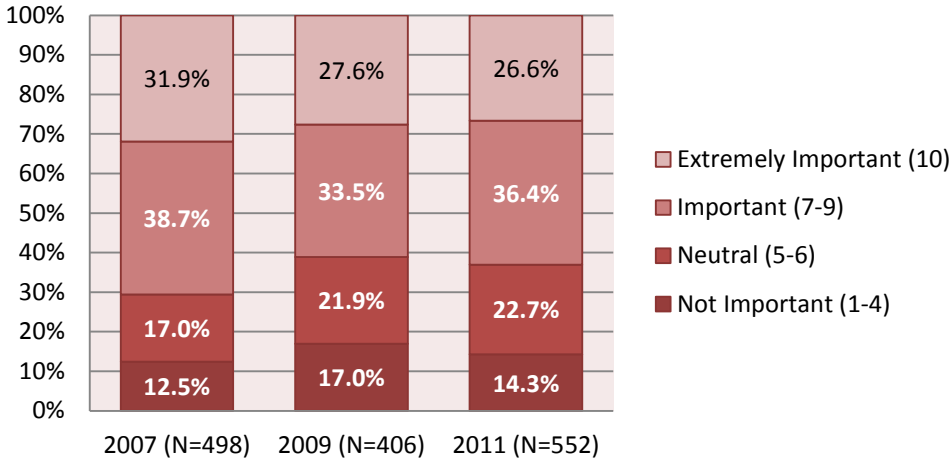
Linked to NMC's offerings for personal enrichment courses, NMC hosts a multitude of cultural events and is the home of the Dennos Museum Center. The Community Survey results indicate that nearly three quarters of the respondents rate these offerings as Important or Extremely Important (Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3 Importance: provides cultural events and educational programming for the community
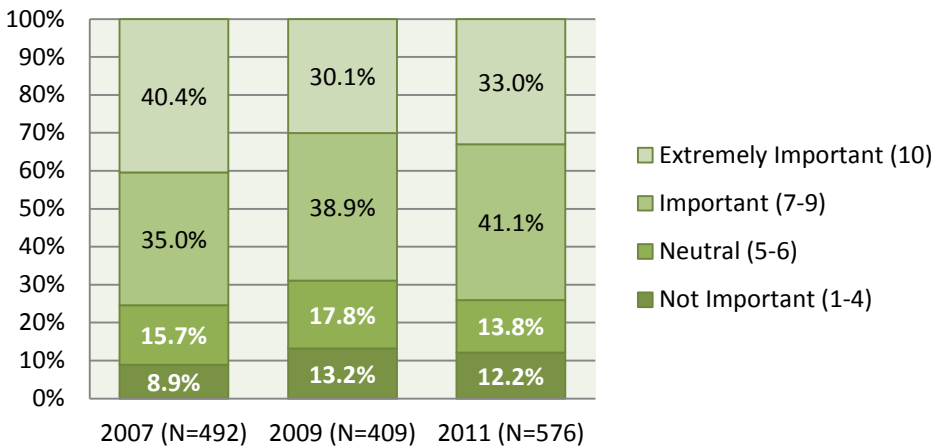
Community Survey respondents also rated how well NMC was doing in providing workforce training, community enrichment and cultural education for the community (Figure 2.4). Over 75% of respondents rated NMC as "Good or Outstanding" (7 to 10 on a 10-pt scale) on these offerings (with don't know responses removed).

Figure 2.4 Community Rating of How well NMC does in providing offerings (percent rating the offering Good or Outstanding (7-10 on 10-pt scale)
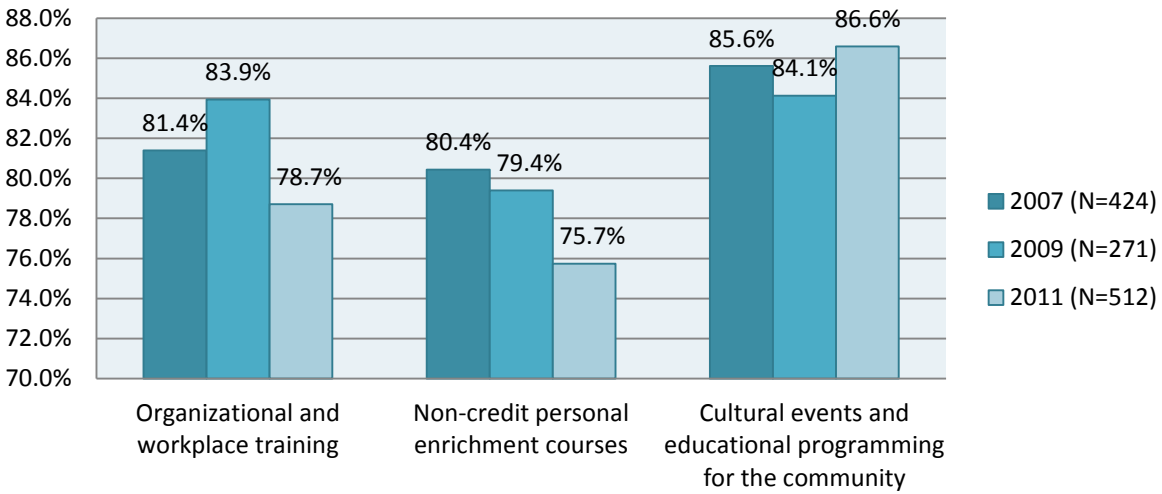
2R3   For workforce training, through NMC's affiliation with MMTC, goals for benchmarking are established at the national level for each state and then at the state level for each region within the state. It is necessary to meet specified levels of impact on projects with manufacturers in order to maintain funding. Processes and services are benchmarked throughout the state at quarterly director meetings and national comparisons happen annually at a national conference. Both the statewide center and NMC's regional center are in good standing for meeting our region's impact goals. In addition NMC has attracted additional funding because of our high level of success in this area.

2R4   NMC's performance results in community enrichment and workforce training help us determine our effectiveness in serving different constituencies based on their educational goals. The Lifelong and Professional Learning area of the College embodies the mission making NMC a comprehensive community college supporting "cradle to grave learning," and the stated purposes (Board Policy C-103.00). To meet our mission, we are fully engaged in each of the following purposes, with the result that our learners meet their goal(s) of being college-ready, transfer-ready, career-ready and ready for lifelong-learning:

- Associate degree, certificate and transfer education in liberal arts and sciences, and occupational studies
- Career/occupational education and workforce development
- Bachelor degrees in select programs
- Cultural and personal enrichment
- Baccalaureate and graduate program facilitation
- Regional economic development

Extended Education Services, Training Services, the Dennos Museum Center, Rogers Observatory, and WNMC act as front doors to NMC in helping us to create a desire and need for lifelong learning from school age children to retirees. NMC's commitment to regional economic development in its purposes helps the Colleges' programs and services be more relevant to and aligned with community needs and the region's assets, and strengthens the College as a result.

2I1   Several improvements were made in this category since our last Systems Portfolio. In 2010, the Michigan legislature approved a workforce and economic development program known as the Michigan New Jobs Training Program (NJTP). The program is managed in collaboration with the Department of Treasury, through which the community colleges of the state use a payroll-withholding mechanism to fund employee training in new jobs.   The process, from employer interviews through Board approval of training agreements, has been developed jointly through the Michigan Department of Treasury and the Michigan Community College Association. NMC has been a program participant from its inception. Service level evaluations are ongoing with employers and employees; formal evaluation of the program through the state-wide network is in development and anticipated during 2014-2015.

In 2011, NMC participated as a member of regional economic development consortium receiving funds from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to improve employer access to centralized information related to business development tools (for Stage 1 and Stage 2 business). The consortium developed the Northwest Michigan Business Atlas (www.BusinessAtlas.org) to provide a common portal for services and programs. The Business Atlas is managed by NMC, which serves as the host for the Regional Entrepreneurial Collaborative (REC). The REC representatives meet on a monthly basis and have an annual coordination and planning seminar through which they review performance and establish outreach goals for the following year.

2I2   NMC's structure supports common processes for instructional and instructional support areas as well as community enrichment and workforce training. At the executive staff level, the counterpart to our Vice President for Educational Services is the Vice President for Lifelong and Professional Learning (LPL) (Organizational Chart). The LPL area has credit and non-credit program areas. While we define our learners based on their educational goals (Learner Group One, Learner Group Two, and Learner Group Three), we do not segregate between credit and non-credit programs in terms of process (i.e., planning, program review, strategic prioritization, and use of advisory groups). In this way, and through the Plan-Do-Check-Adjust continuous improvement cycle embedded in our processes, we are able to select specific processes for improvement and set targets. The two Vice Presidents share some direct reports that allow for a cross-fertilization and integration of information in support of and achievement of cross-discipline outcomes.

Champion: Category Three, Understanding Student and Stakeholder Needs Introduction

NMC's open access policy and comprehensiveness means that we are serving multiple markets, and thus have several student bases. NMC serves our community primarily in a six-county area, however, the College draws students from all over Michigan, the country, and the world. NMC's students have diverse educational goals, and swirling enrollment patterns. NMC's digital dashboard provides the college with data about the populations served and tracks several metrics for enrollment management.

Chart 3.1

Incidence of Developmental Placement Rate (Percent)

Fall cohort of students new to NMC.
State average not available for 2012 as of writing.
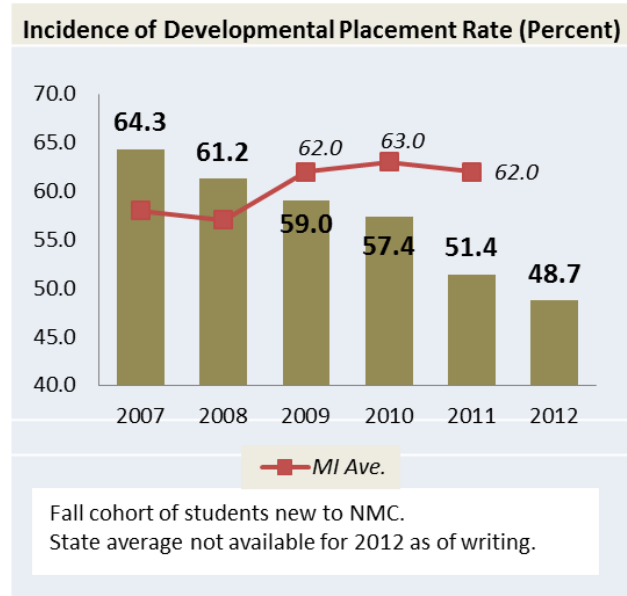
With new secondary education curriculum requirements, NMC has witnessed a drop in the percent of incoming students needing remedial education (Chart 3.1). Yet, the persistence and success rates of this population are still below our targets. A current AQIP Action Project Team, Enhancing Developmental Education, is working on curriculum re-design and interventions such as Math Boot Camps (further described in 1I1) to help this population.

Our processes in Understanding Student and Stakeholder Needs span three maturity levels. Processes related to identifying, analyzing, and taking action to improve meeting the changing needs of students and stakeholders (3P1, 3P3, and 3P5) are mostly *aligned* with the way work supports our strategic and operational planning processes. Key measures in this area are also the measures we use to track progress on our strategic plan. NMC could work on improving these processes through greater collaboration among units.   NMC's process for collecting and acting on complaint information (3P6) is fully *integrated* within the Enrollment Management and Student Services area and also crosses over into several academic processes. The systematic process of tracking complaints has been in place for a number of years and we are able to evaluate the process for improvements.

NMC's processes for building and maintaining relationships (3P2 and 3P4), are moving from *reacting to systematic*, with the establishment of the AQIP Action Project team on Building Lifelong Relationships and the implementation of a contact management system. Outcomes of this project are to:

- More completely understand NMC's relationship with an individual or organization
- Increase enrollment by improving the efficiency in converting inquiries to applicants to registrants
- Improve learner persistence and completion by providing better tools for advisors for degree audits and academic planning
- Impact resource development processes by improving tools for working with donors, volunteers, alumni and the community
- Improve recruitment strategies for customized organizational training
- Improve sharing of data across software systems

Champion: Category Three, Understanding Student and Stakeholder Needs

3P1 NMC systematically identifies the changing needs of its student groups with five processes. The first process unfolds at the programmatic and service department levels. The programmatic process entails advisory group engagement and feedback, and the tracking of persistence and completion in the program. The relationship between NMC programs and advisory groups and how we use the information to inform curriculum design is described in Helping Students Learn (1P13) and in Building Collaborative Relationships (9P2). Every program has defined goals for persistence and completion as documented in its annual program review and on the strategic plan metrics, available to the campus community on the intranet (**Accreditation Core Component 4C2**). The metrics for persistence and completion in the program are defined by the Carl D. Perkins Act for the core indicators and the baselines are set by the State of Michigan (**Accreditation Core Component 4C4**). At the beginning of the annual planning process (8P1) in the fall, program areas use advisory group feedback and metrics tracking to set annual goals for the following fiscal year on their A3 planning documents.

    The Office of Research, Planning and Effectiveness (ORPE) works with the Enrollment Management team to identify inputs for predictive enrollment modeling. The modeling provides results for the likelihood of enrolling based on individual characteristics in four categories: demographic background, academic preparation, financial factors, and programmatic and educational aspirations. Results inform recruitment strategies.

    At the institutional level, NMC tracks persistence and completion in order to inform institutional effectiveness and our action planning (**Accreditation Core Component 4C1**). NMC uses numerous methods to track persistence and completion depending on the student populations we wish to impact (i.e., IPEDS, Michigan's Governor's Educational Dashboard metrics, and through our benchmarking projects) (**Accreditation Core Component 4C4**). These metrics are available to the entire campus community. The metrics and the results of institutional surveys (i.e., Service Effectiveness Survey, the Scheduling Preferences Survey, and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement) feed into a cross analysis which is reviewed at the strategic planning retreat every August (**Accreditation Core Component 4C3**). These data are part of "grasping the situation" in the Strategy Retreat Workbook and inform our plan, do, check, and adjust continuous improvement cycle (further outlined in 8P1).

    Also, as the more formative survey results become available throughout the year, they are presented at department meetings, where affected units discuss and prioritize courses of action. For instance a Withdrawal Survey is administered each week to those students who have dropped a class. The results are distributed to Academic Chairs and service directors and discussed in weekly staff meetings to determine whether action is required. Meeting minutes for the action project teams are available on the shared drive for the campus community. Finally, on a global scale, the NMC Scan (3P5) helps NMC identify changing student needs and feeds into the "grasping the situation" component of our aligned planning process.

3P2 NMC builds and maintains student relationships through multiple touch-points in a student's educational journey. In the first stage, by systematically employing the enrollment funnel framework, NMC uses written, face to face, verbal and e-communication strategies in order to move students from inquiry to application and admittance, through new student orientation, advising, and registration. New student orientation is a required component of the admissions and registration process and is designed to cultivate relationships among students and between new students, advisers, and student services staff.

At that point in the process, new students are required to meet with an academic advisor prior to registration to build on that one on one contact. Students choose a program of study and are then assigned a faculty advisor from that program. Faculty advisors provide customized advising with model schedules in the program. In this way, students begin to form a connection with the faculty they will be working with in their classes. In addition, there are four full-time academic advisors located in the Advising Center. A current strategic goal is to implement a culture of advising that connects every degree-seeking student with an advisor every semester.

Because faculty members are the primary connection with NMC for students, members maintain relationships by holding offices hours, serve as academic advisors, and student group advisors. Some academic areas hold "enhanced" office hours. For instance, Social Science area provides "Friday Workshops" in which a faculty member hosts groups of students looking for some extra help. The AQIP Action Project Redesigning the Learning Experience is focused on developing an emphasis on frequent and early feedback in courses.

In order to create additional touch-points for students outside the classroom, NMC offers 50-plus student organizations and advertises monthly student involvement opportunities. Residence Hall students have group and individual meetings each week with Resident Advisors and the Associate Supervisor of Residence Life based on programming and specific individual needs (i.e. low academic performance, behavioral issues, etc.). Additionally, NMC's Communiqué updated weekly, provides newsletter information to students, faculty, and staff.

3P3 NMC systematically analyzes the changing needs of our key stakeholder groups institutionally through our aligned planning process. The "grasping the situation" portion of the strategic planning process defines three stakeholder categories: 1) Listening to Learners (3P1, 3P2, 3P6), 2) Listening to Employees (further defined in 4P12, 4P13, 4R1), and 3) Listening to the Community. Considering "Listening to the Community," NMC gathers feedback from the community on the Community Attitudes and Awareness Survey, through community listening sessions, and community participation on advisory groups showing NMC's commitment to serving the public good, results are available on the intranet for the campus community (**Accreditation Core Components 1D1, 1D3**). Survey results help us discover which of NMC's offerings community members most value and probes community interest in programs and services for which we are testing the feasibility. The survey is administered to a representative stratified sample randomly drawn from population from the six-county area. Results are integrated in the strategic planning process.

NMC conducts community listening sessions periodically to gauge the efficacy of our strategic directions with external constituencies such as community business leaders and other communities of interest. Through close relationships with our feeder institutions and receiving institutions (9P1 and 9P2), NMC regularly gathers information on their needs and incorporates feedback into action project plans and annual action plans as appropriate. A strategic goal in fiscal year 2014 is to "expand community awareness efforts both externally and internally." As such, we will host three community listening sessions this year with various constituency groups (**Accreditation Core Component 1D3**).

Moreover, external stakeholder advisory groups provide feedback on changing industry requirements, and employee skills needed in occupational areas twice a year. Their feedback informs programmatic simulation and licensure requirements and other needed changes in curriculum, which shows our commitment to our educational responsibilities. The meeting minutes from the advisory group meeting are posted on the intranet (**Accreditation Core Component 1D2**).

3P4 NMC's specific processes for building and maintaining relationships with our feeder institutions (9P1), our receiving institutions (9P2), and other educational agencies and the general community (9P5) are further outlined in category nine. More broadly, NMC has charged an Action Project Building Lifelong Relationships to design and implement a contact relationship management system (further explained in 3I2) in order to increase repeat business for the College, expand the ways we communicate with our stakeholders, and increase conversion rates for donors and learners by meeting their learning needs.

3P5 NMC is engaged in identifying the changing needs of prospective students and stakeholder groups through three processes that show our commitment to our educational responsibilities (**Accreditation Core Component 1D2**). Two processes are about gathering data and feedback and the third is about decision-making.

The first is a process of collaboration with the local school districts, the Chamber of Commerce, and regional employers. NMC's math and English academic areas discuss curriculum with high school math and English teachers to address students' college preparation levels. Additionally, NMC's executive staff members regularly convene with local school districts' executive teams to explore strategic collaboration opportunities. As a result, NMC is implementing early college and concurrent enrollment options to create additional pathways for high school students to access educational opportunities and complete certificate and degree programs prior to or shortly after high school graduation. NMC faculty and staff are engaged with state and national organizations for the advancement of higher education in order to stay abreast of trends and opportunities.

Secondly, a formal quarterly process for environmental scanning led by the Office of Research, Planning & Effectiveness (ORPE) tracks broad level changes in key environmental categories, such as demographics, education, technology, and workforce development. The NMC Scan Team, which includes the Coordinator for Planning and Market Understanding, the Director of the Library, the President, Vice President for Lifelong and Professional Learning, the Executive Director for Learning Resources and Technologies, and the Vice President for Enrollment Management & Student Services, determines the scan focus, contributes content, and provides feedback on implications for NMC.

Our approach to environmental scanning starts with initial broad-based scanning or sensing, looking for significance based on impressions, good judgment and substance (Figure 3.1). Once we determine the most important topics, a focused scan of essential observations leads to our "Thoughts" or a summary of the implications for NMC. Producing the NMC Scan is a quarterly process (Figure 3.2). It is integrated with our aligned planning process in two ways. First, we use the NMC Scan to track the relevance and accuracy of our planning assumptions (further explained in 8P2), while using the planning assumptions to guide scan topics. The output feeds the "grasping the situation" portion of the plan, do, check, and adjust continuous improvement cycle that kicks off our strategic planning process (explained in 8P1).

Data gathered in the processes described above, inform NMC's Decision-Making (1P3, Figure 1.3) process to determine whether we should target new student and stakeholder groups with programmatic offerings. Specifically, NMC analyzes the external market and the internal capacity (refer to 1P3, Figure 1.3 – Stage 2). The market summary is presented to the President's Council and other stakeholders, such as the Board to Trustees, who decide whether to pursue building potential business models for programmatic offerings. The decided upon courses of action are documented and integrated into the annual program review process.

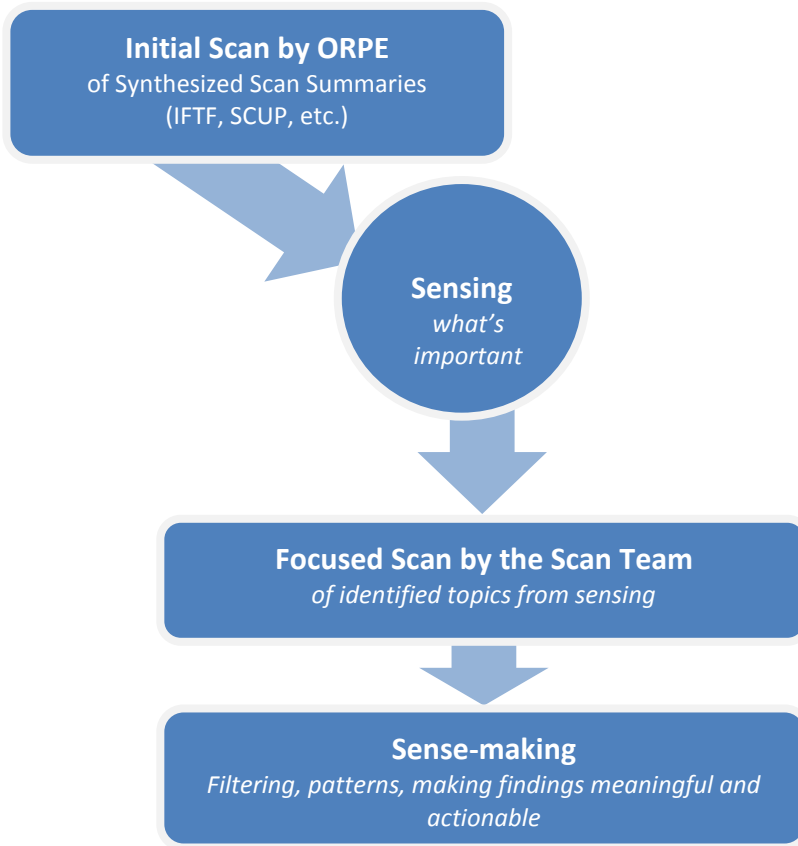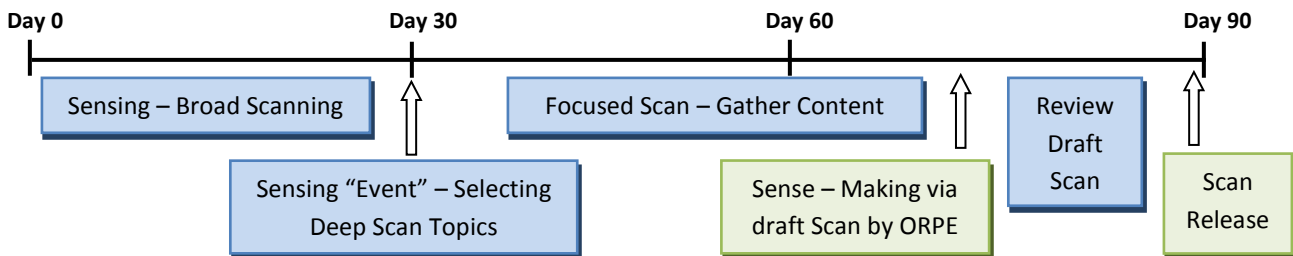Figure 3.1 NMC Scan Conceptual Framework


Figure 3.2 The NMC Scan process

3P6   The formal process for collecting and acting on complaint information from students and other stakeholders is guided by our Staff Policy D-602.01 Student Rights and Responsibilities. These instructions are available for students on the website, in the college catalog and in the Student Handbook, Student Rights & Responsibilities.

The primary responsibility for resolving student complaints resides with the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Services (VPEMSS). NMC students with complaints are directed to the VPEMSS office from various college departments including faculty, the President's office and the Board of Trustees. VPEMSS staff enters complaints into the complaint tracking system. The number and degree of severity of the complaints is analyzed by the VPEMSS staff on an annual basis. Depending upon the nature of the complaint, the VPEMSS staff may initially refer the student to the director of the affected service area or an academic area chairperson (refer to Figure 3.3). College judicial processes are scrutinized for ensuring that students have some way to appeal initial decisions, as diagrammed.

Figure 3.3 Process for Collecting, Analyzing, and Acting on Complaint Information
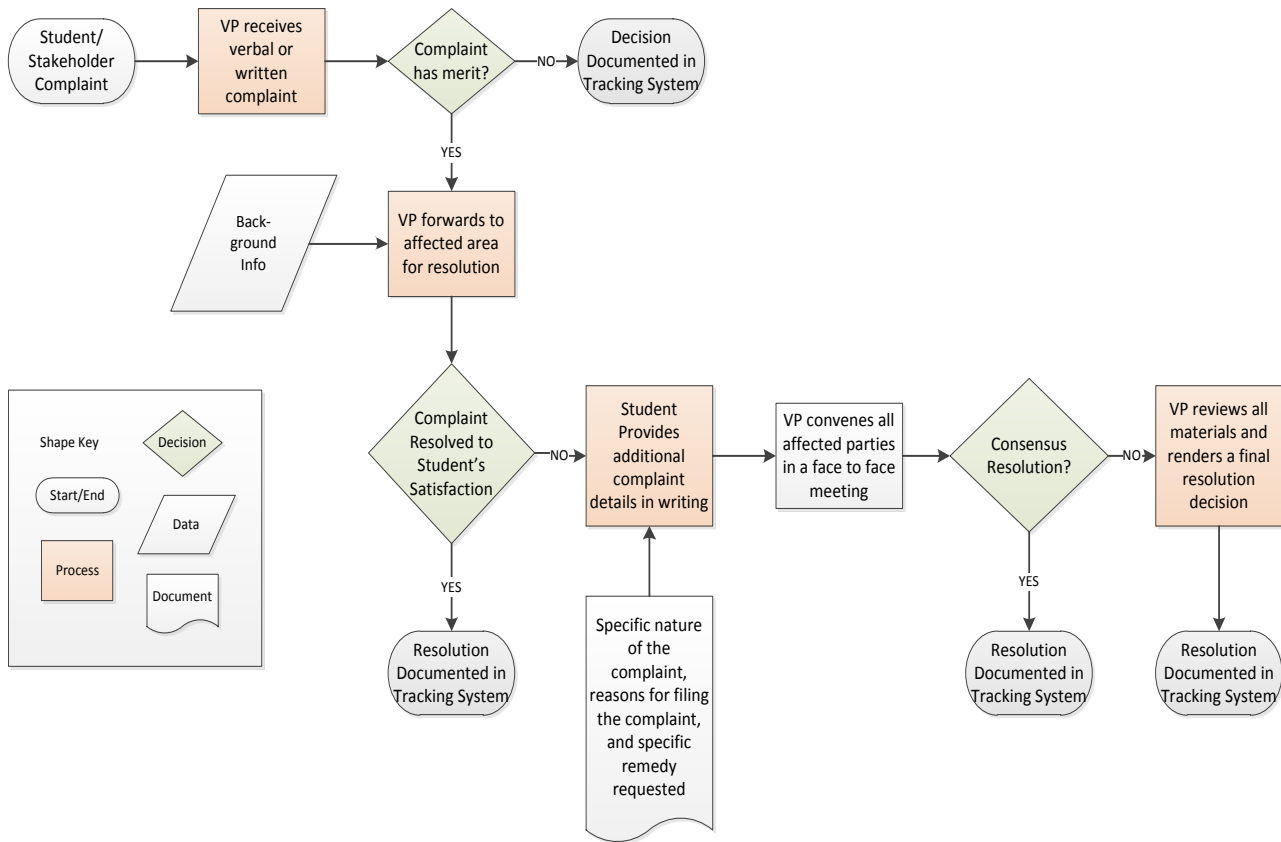
The formal complaint procedure is one part of our Red Flag System (see 6P3, Figure 6.1). The Enrollment Management and Student Services Team operates a Red Flag System that encompasses the Behavioral Incidence Report Team (BIRT), Judicial Affairs, and Complaints. Specific program areas sometimes need variation in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Code as required by program

requirements and licensure (i.e., Maritime, Aviation, Nursing, and Law Enforcement etc.). The Red Flag System map details involvement in the process.

NMC conducts ongoing evaluation of our services through surveying, and focus groups in advising, residence life, food services, records and registration, orientation, counseling, and facilities etc. NMC's effectiveness in dealing with student complaints is measured annually on the Service Effectiveness Survey (3R1, 3R2), and on course evaluations. After the analysis of complaints, if the affected area determines there is a gap that needs to be addressed, an action plan is created, documented and tracked on an area's annual planning documents.

NMC's Check-Up Visit reviewers said, "The College's tracking of student complaints has been systematic. A demonstration of improvements made to the tracking and use of student data since the last Appraisal was provided showing that complaints now aggregate and cross-reference for academic, behavioral and general student concerns. The data is being used in many ways to improve student well-being, persistence and safety. This is documented in the Student Rights & Responsibility on the College website. The institution's approach to the issue, documentation, and performance were acceptable and comply with Commission and AQIP expectations" (Quality Check-Up Report, Northwestern Michigan College, January 25-27, 2012, p. 6).

3R1 NMC measures student satisfaction by tracking direct measures of student persistence and completion and through indirect measures on surveys. Student persistence and completion is measured at the program level as defined by the Perkins Core Indicators for which targets are set by the State of Michigan. At the institutional level persistence and completion are defined by IPEDS, Michigan's Governor's Educational Dashboard, and by locally developed metrics and targets as tracked in our strategic plan. Completion metrics are presented in category 1, Tables 1.5 and 1.6.

ORPE designs survey research to collect satisfaction data from students and other key stakeholders (e.g., the Service Effectiveness Survey, Course Evaluations, Graduate Follow-Up Survey, and Transfer Student Survey).   Specific measures include the Student Engagement Index and the Service Standards Index. On specific service areas or for overarching effectiveness questions, NMC gauges both the importance of and satisfaction with specific service areas and a gap analysis directs actions for improvement. External stakeholder satisfaction is determined through the bi-annual Community Survey, department level feedback forms, and through interactions with the publically elected Board of Trustees.

3R2 Persistence metrics are tracked at the course level, the program level, and the institutional level (Table 3.1). NMC's completion metrics are referred to in 1R1 and 1R2. Course level and program level persistence show upward trends, while institutional persistence is stable. Two AQIP Action Project teams (Learning Experiences and Enhancing Developmental Education) are using this information to inform continuous improvement efforts (further explained in 1I1 and 1I2). The program areas use Perkins Core Indicators for persistence in their program review to set action plans for the next fiscal year. Institutional persistence rates are measuring NMC's effectiveness on Board of Trustees Strategic Goals.

NMC uses the "traffic light" color coding system for performance in relation to our targets. Green indicates on track, target met. Yellow indicates target not met, however the trend is in the desired direction. Finally, red indicates target not met, and the trend is in the wrong direction.

Table 3.1 Persistence Rates by Course, Program, and Institution		Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Targets
1	College-level Course Persistence (all grades-Ws)/(all grades)	90.2%	90.9%	90.7%	92.3% ↑	92.0%[1]
2	Developmental English Course Persistence	97.7%	88.5%	91.5%	92.4% ↑	94.7%[1]
3	Developmental Math Course Persistence	88.1%	89.0%	83.6%	90.2% ↑	89.9%[1]
4	Programmatic Persistence in post-secondary education (Core Indicator 3P1)	73%	74%	80% ↑	TBA	66%[2]
5	Fall to spring persistence (all currently enrolled less dual enrolled, grads)	78.1%	76.3%	75.9%	75.8% ↔	77.0%[3]
6	IPEDS Full-time, fall to fall persistence	61%	58%	57%	57% ↔	60.0%[4]
7	IPEDS Part-time, Fall to fall persistence	44%	42%	44%	40% ↓	45.0%[4]

[1]Targets reflect the three year average of peers at the 75th percentile in the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP)
[2]Target is the State of Michigan negotiated baseline on this Perkins Core Indicator
[3]Target is three year average of peers at the 90th percentile in the NCCBP
[4]Target is the rate at the 75th percentile of all 28 Michigan community colleges

NMC measures the satisfaction of current students at the course level, the program level, and the institutional level (Table 3.2). Results from course evaluations have led NMC to charge the AQIP Action Project Redesigning the Learning Experience team to improve student feedback systems in the classroom and to connect with students regarding class absences.

Table 3.2 Satisfaction Rates by Course, and Program Levels		Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Targets
1	Satisfaction with quality of instruction in the course	85%	83%	78%*	78%* ↔	85%
2	Satisfaction with overall quality of the course	83%	81%	82%	81% ↓	85%
3	Satisfaction with Learning Experience in Program		95%	92%	93% ↑	90%

*New more comprehensive method of measurement: Index with three questions

Color Key	Meets or exceeds min/target	Does not meet target but trend in right direction	Does not meet target, trend steady or in wrong direction

More specifically, the Service Effectiveness Survey gauges the perceived importance of and satisfaction with several key NMC services (Table 3.3 and Table 3.4). The importance results led NMC to discontinue its printed schedule and catalog, and to pursue wireless internet access in all common areas and most classrooms (Table 3.3). The satisfaction results prompted NMC to revise its new student orientation (Table 3.4).

The gap between importance and satisfaction is plotted to give the Performance Priority Matrix and serves to start the discussion about where NMC's service retention priorities and marketing opportunities reside (Figure 3.4). It suggests areas that are meeting expectations and others that are exceeding expectations but also fall below the importance mean. Directors use these results as they plan for improvement projects on their annual A3 planning documents and budget requests.

Table 3.3 Service Expectations in Order of Importance (Service Effectiveness Survey; scale 1-10)				
	2008 (N=364)	2009 (N=360)	2010 (N=358)	2011 (N=353)
Finding courses that fit your schedule	N/A	9.36	9.50	9.42
Safety of the campus environment	9.15	8.86	8.81	8.93
Parking	8.85	8.98	8.94	8.90
Wireless internet access	8.12	8.50	8.77	8.76
Access to NMC information on the website	6.47	8.81	8.97	8.68
Access to financial aid	8.48	8.39	8.65	8.54
Access to academic resources through the library	8.26	8.27	8.17	8.28
On-campus bookstore	8.44	8.42	8.66	8.16
Academic advising	8.25	8.21	8.16	8.04
Assistance in accessing library resources	8.03	7.92	7.94	7.91
On-campus computer labs	8.07	8.20	8.34	7.84
Career and employment counseling	7.85	7.96	8.07	7.79
On-campus study areas	7.54	7.67	7.75	7.69
Different ways to pay your bill	7.96	7.92	7.87	7.65
Avenues for expressing opinions	7.70	7.65	7.70	7.58
Technology help desk support	7.39	7.16	7.38	7.06
Tutoring services	7.14	7.07	7.31	7.02
Access to cultural opportunities	6.78	6.81	6.84	6.92
On-campus student health services	6.98	7.24	7.04	6.84
Online course offerings	7.27	6.86	6.79	6.83
Access to recreational facilities	N/A	6.52	6.50	6.43
Printed version of NMC's schedule of courses	8.15	7.24	6.84	6.32
Orientation for new students	6.83	6.03	6.33	6.29
Printed version of NMC's catalog	7.18	6.43	5.89	5.39
Student activities	5.58	5.62	5.34	5.27

Table 3.4 Service Expectations in Order of Satisfaction (Service Effectiveness Survey; scale 1-10)	2008 (N=364)	2009 (N=360)	2010 (N=358)	2011 (N=353)
Services provided by library staff	8.85	9.11	9.19	9.08
Safety of the campus environment	9.09	8.79	8.95	8.88
Library academic resources	8.64	8.72	8.81	8.86
On campus computer labs	8.58	8.81	8.73	8.85
Access to cultural opportunities	7.63	8.64	8.71	8.80
NMC website	8.19	8.49	8.64	8.73
On-campus student health services	8.39	8.74	9.18	8.71
Technology helpdesk support	8.22	8.53	8.75	8.64
On-campus study areas	8.09	8.65	8.43	8.64
Online schedule of courses	8.69	8.65	8.68	8.61
Printed schedule of courses	8.69	8.62	8.52	8.51
Registration process	8.19	8.25	8.39	8.50
Wireless Internet access	8.32	8.13	8.60	8.45
Online Catalog	8.40	8.53	8.53	8.45
Student activities	7.14	7.96	8.27	8.43
Career and employment counseling	7.98	8.57	8.69	8.42
Financial aid package	8.04	8.26	8.19	8.31
Academic advising	8.17	8.22	8.18	8.31
Service provided by the financial aid office	7.92	7.98	8.10	8.20
On-campus bookstore	8.12	7.84	8.01	8.17
Printed catalog	8.42	8.51	8.33	8.15
Recreational facilities	7.18	7.97	7.45	8.07
Online course offerings	7.58	8.27	8.10	7.99
Tutoring services	7.87	7.95	8.37	7.91
Finding courses to fit your schedule	8.14	7.86	7.98	7.82
Orientation for new students	7.56	7.58	7.88	7.62
Avenues for expressing opinions	N/A	7.66	7.86	7.55
Parking	5.84	5.34	5.57	5.67

Category Three, Understanding Student and Stakeholder Needs

Figure 3.4 NMC Performance Priority Matrix
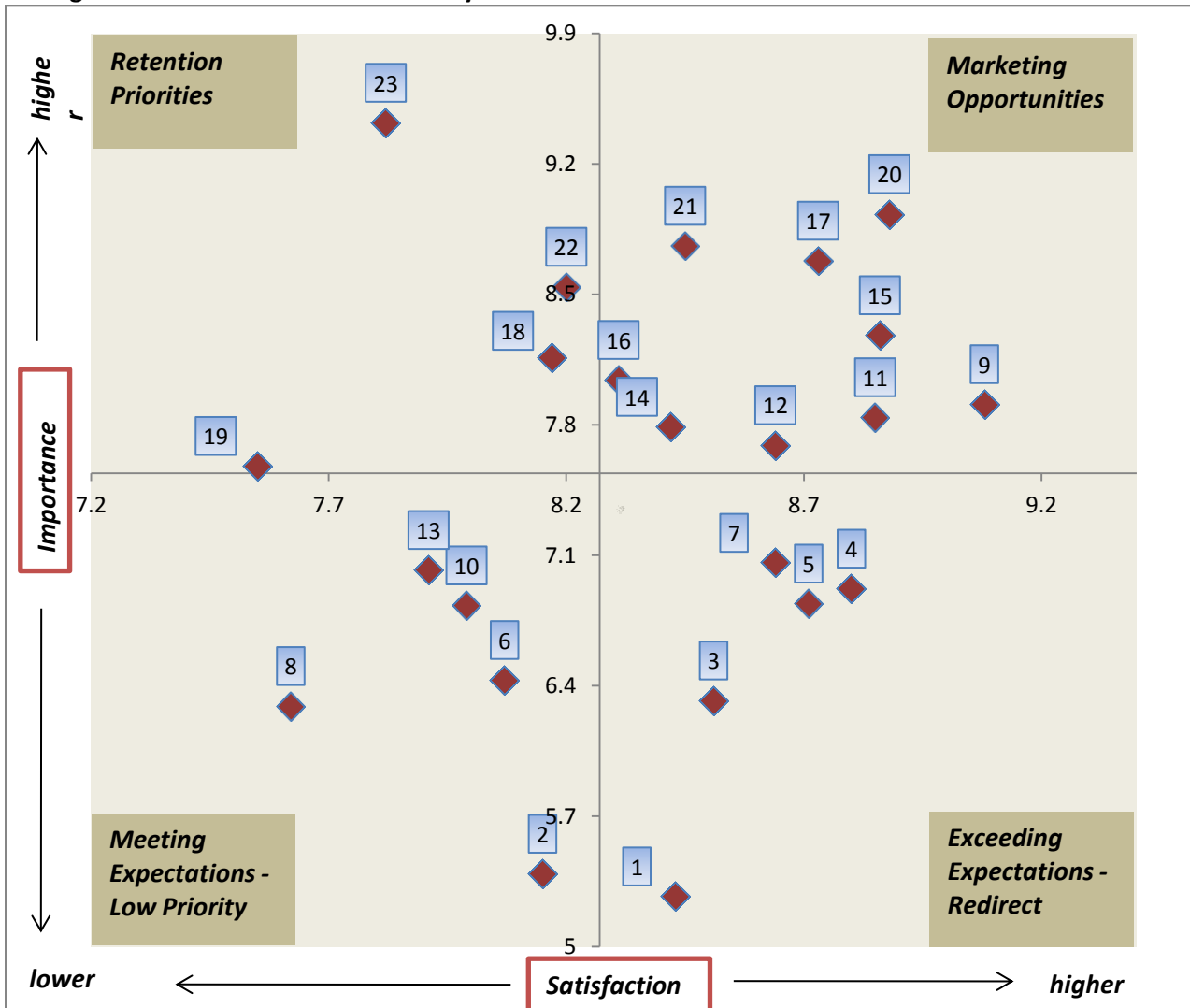
Label	Service Expectation	Label	Service Expectation
1	Student activities	13	Tutoring services
2	Printed version of NMC's catalog	14	Career and employment counseling
3	Printed schedule of courses	15	Access to academic resources through library
4	Access to cultural opportunities	16	Academic advising
5	On-campus student health services	17	Access to NMC information on the website
6	Access to recreational facilities	18	On-campus bookstore
7	Technology helpdesk support	19	Avenues for expressing opinions
8	Orientation for new students	20	Safety of the campus environment
9	Assistance in accessing library resources	21	Wireless Internet access
10	Online course offerings	22	Access to financial aid
11	On-campus computer labs	23	Finding courses to fit your schedule
12	On-campus study areas	24	Parking (Not on grid)

Category Three, Understanding Student and Stakeholder Needs

3R3 On the Service Effectiveness Survey, specific questions gauge the effectiveness of building relationships with our students. The Student Engagement Index is comprised of a student rating from 1 to 10 (with 10 being the highest or most positive) on the following statements about NMC:

1. Trustworthiness
2. Ability to deliver on promises
3. Treats people fairly
4. Ability to resolve problems satisfactorily
5. Pride of attending
6. Treats people with respect
7. A place for people like me to achieve one's educational goals

The metrics from our Service Effectiveness Survey show that broadly speaking students are very satisfied with NMC; our targets have repeatedly been exceeded (Table 3.5, rows 1-8). The results have prompted us to ask different questions expecting the answers to guide us to areas where we can improve. Student satisfaction with avenues for expressing opinions (Table 3.5, row 9) is below target and has prompted us to more clearly define our processes for students and to make those procedures more accessible (i.e., located in the Student Handbook, the Catalog, and on the web). In spring 2013, NMC administered the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) as a baseline for metrics regarding active learning, student-faculty interaction, and support for learners, and to benchmark student engagement with other community college peers.

Table 3.5 Satisfaction Rates on Building Relationships at the Institutional Level					
		Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Targets
1	Student Engagement Index[1]	8.9	8.9	8.9 ↔	8.0
2	NMC listens well to concerns and asks for clarification when needed[1]	8.4	8.3	8.4 ↑	8.0
3	NMC provides choices to our students[1]	8.8	8.9	8.9 ↔	8.0
4	NMC responds promptly to requests[1]	8.5	8.3	8.4 ↑	8.0
5	First choice for future educational needs[1]	8.3	8.3	8.2 ↓	8.0
6	Likelihood to recommend to a friend or associate[1]	9.0	9.0	8.9 ↓	8.0
7	Value for the money[1]	8.9	8.9	8.8 ↓	8.0
8	Worthwhile tuition investment[1]	8.9	9.0	8.8 ↓	8.0
9	Satisfaction with avenues for expressing opinions[1]	7.7	7.9	7.6 ↓	8.0
[1]Service Effectiveness Survey; scale 1-10)					

3R4 The two primary sources for measuring external stakeholder satisfaction is through the Community Attitude and Awareness Survey, and the President's evaluation by the Board of Trustees (further explained in 5R1 and 5R2). Respondents on the Community Survey are asked to rate certain aspects about NMC on a scale from 1 to 10 with 10 being the most positive. A rating of seven or above was considered positive (Table 3.6). NMC consistently enjoys a high level of community awareness and satisfaction.

Table 3.6 Community Attitudes about NMC's Overall Effectiveness					
	2004	**2008**	**2009**	**2011**	**Target**
1 NMC overall campus appearance	97%	95%	95%	98% ↑	95%
2 Overall academic reputation	89%	93%	97%	98% ↑	95%
3 Overall rating of NMC	91%	96%	98%	98% ↔	95%
4 Availability of scholarships and financial aid	78%	81%	92%	97% ↑	95%
5 Overall reputation of NMC in the community	99%	96%	95%	96 %↑	95%
6 Value of an NMC education	--	95%	93%	94 %↑	95%
7 Job NMC does responding to learning needs of community	97%	88%	93%	93% ↔	95%
8 Job NMC does communicating with the community	--	77%	98%	91%↓	95%
9 Job NMC does managing finances	92%	75%	86%	90 %↑	95%
(% "Positive" Ratings on scale 1-10, "Don't know" respondents excluded)					

3R5 As mentioned in 3P4, NMC charged an AQIP action project team, Building Lifelong Relationships, to design and implement a relationship contact management system which will allow NMC multiple strategies for tracking, communicating with and engaging with our key stakeholders. Outcome measures for the project include:

- Increase conversion rates for donors moving from annual gifts, to major gifts, to planned gifts
- Increase repeat donors at each level
- Increase the number of new donors, including from alumni
- Increase conversion rates for learners from inquiry, to applicant, through admit, and enrollment, as well as repeat enrollments (as measured by persistence rates)
- Increase persistence rates across both our learning and giving systems (further defined in 3I2).

NMC has regularly tracked the conversion rates of the enrollment funnel for credit students (data are publicly available on NMC's Digital Dashboard).

3R6   NMC benchmarks persistence and completion metrics with other higher education institutions. At the course level, the persistence metrics are benchmarked with the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP). The identified targets for college level course persistence, developmental English course and developmental math course persistence represent the three year average of our peers at the 75th percentile (Table 3.1, rows 1-3). The fall to spring persistence is benchmarked with the NCCBP and with Michigan's Governor's Educational Dashboard which includes Michigan's 28 community colleges. NMC ranks above the state average for fall to spring persistence, which is 73%. Our target is set at the three year average of peers at the 90th percentile in NCCBP (Table 3.1, row 4). IPEDS persistence rates measure fall to fall retention for first-time, full-time students. Benchmarked with Michigan's other 27 Michigan community colleges, NMC's retention rates are above the state median, thus the target represents the rate at the 75th percentile (Table 3.1, row 6-7).

Overall positive results in student satisfaction on our Service Effectiveness Survey (Table 3.5) has led NMC to want to dig deeper and ask students more probing questions about their level of engagement.

Category Three, Understanding Student and Stakeholder Needs

3I1   Recent improvements in responding to student and stakeholder learning needs include revisions to the mandatory new student orientation, instituting on-line registration at orientation sessions; and deploying temporary information desks at peak times during the semester. NMC instituted several computer kiosk stations for students to do their own registration and bill payment and increased the number of other services available on-line (i.e., ordering transcripts online, sign up for a payment plan, and viewing financial aid award status). Providing more ways for students to take care of administrative tasks in a self-service format was in response to feedback on our surveys. Moreover, students have increased access and are notified in a timelier manner through self-service regarding changes in financial aid, program of study, registration, and completion of program, etc.

NMC enhanced security in the Residence Halls by instituting a key-card entry system, updated and clarified the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy and process, and created a Refund Exception Request Committee to better serve the student support needs of academic learners. In addition, a new registration schedule was instituted that gives priority to students with a higher number of credits, and eliminated late registration close to the semester start date. NMC has recently implemented My Academic Plan (MAP), which will help students know how all their credits fit their program plan and their progress towards completion. This is the *Degree Works* module of our Banner ERP system.

The Enrollment Management Team used the results from the predictive enrollment modeling to focus more aggressive recruitment strategies on dual enrollees from 9th through 12th grade. Moreover, NMC is instituting an orientation that is focused on the specific needs of student populations such as dual enrolled students and students from the United State Coast Guard, which has a local base. Program specific orientations have been implemented for the Great Lakes Maritime Academy and for the Great Lakes Culinary Institute students. Predictive enrollment modeling has also suggested that students who receive any kind of financial aid are more likely to enroll. NMC is currently working on strategies to provide more unrestricted scholarship opportunities as a result. In order to increase completion rates and build the value of the degree, NMC has instituted automatic awarding of degrees and certificates when students become eligible.

NMC is participant to state-wide initiatives among community colleges and universities in developing reverse transfer and block transfer agreements (Michigan Transfer Agreement) in order to improve completion rates throughout the educational system. NMC has signed reserve transfer agreements with eleven Michigan universities.

The AQIP Action Project Redesigning the Learning Experience is focused on developing with faculty an emphasis on frequent and early feedback in the course. Benchmarking student persistence and completion, and satisfaction and engagement has become more systematic and comprehensive with the administration of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the American Association of Community College's Voluntary Framework for Accountability (VFA). Results will be available in fall 2013.

3I2 In the Enrollment Management and Student Services area, the organizational structure and focus on student success allows department leaders to make continuous improvements. In the last two years, the Dean of Student Services position was elevated to Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Services. An organizational restructure in the area has led to more collaboration across departments and has reduced internal focus. The three primary areas, Enrollment Services, Learning Services, and Student Life, use collaborative teams to increase service levels and efficiency. For instance we have recently automated messaging through the Self-Service system from the Admissions Office, the

Financial Aid Office and the Records & Registration Office to notify students when action was taken either by the student or NMC staff to update their records.

The Records & Registration Office now automatically applies the MACRAO (Michigan Association of Collegiate Registrars & Admissions Officers) stamp which confirms the student has completed all general education courses required for transfer to a 4-yr college or university within Michigan. In addition, Records & Registration Office has added regularly scheduled times each semester to contact students who are close to completing a degree in order to encourage the student's continued engagement with NMC. There are processes in place to automatically award degrees to those that are eligible. Further, the Records & Registration Office is participating in the Win-Win grant in which the College mines NMC data for students from the past 10 years who have either completed a degree and have not applied for it or are within 9 credits of completing a degree. The office staff contacts the students to inquire if they have completed courses elsewhere they would like to transfer to NMC or if they would like to return to NMC to complete their remaining credits in order to complete their degrees.

A new office called Outreach Services was recently created and fully staffed in order to more specifically serve the needs of NMC's veteran student population, create international learning opportunities, and serve the administration needs of our early college programs.

 Once the new contact management system is in place NMC will be better positioned to track persistence rates across all learning and giving systems. For instance, we expect to see an increase in the various paths that a stakeholder connects with NMC. An extended education learner might take a for-credit class and volunteer time at the Dennos Museum Center. For example, a learner, having experienced a customized organizational training, will be tracked and encouraged to finish a degree and become an alumnus, and become part of a speakers' bureau for other classes. These will contribute to NMC's capacity to build and maintain relationships with our key stakeholders.

Culture: Category Four, Valuing People Introduction

NMC has focused significant attention in the area of Valuing People over the past four years. The Talent AQIP action project started in 2009 is currently in its third phase as NMC has focused on attracting, developing, and retaining talent. Nearly, every process in this category has been improved upon since the previous Systems Portfolio.

NMC's processes for identifying credentials and the skills required for employees (**4P1**) and our processes for attracting and hiring candidates with the required credentials, skills, and values (**4P2**) are ***systematic and moving to aligned*** as we roll out the competency model (see 4P1, Figure 4.1) as part of talent acquisition. The entire talent management process for recruiting, hiring, and retaining employees (**4P3**) is ***systematic*** with repeatable processes that are assessed for improvement opportunities.

Orientating employees to NMC's mission, vision, and values is ***aligned*** (**4P4**). The processes are managed by Human Resources staff and carried out by all college leaders with coordination among departments. The point of continuing to orient employees is so they can easily see how their role fits with the mission and strategic directions of the college.

The way NMC plans for changes in personnel (**4P5**) is ***systematic, though moving to aligned*** as we build processes to more proactively study our talent pool, individual competencies, and the required skills we will need in the future to achieve our strategic goals.

Because the fundamental way in which NMC designs its work processes (**4P6**) is through individual input into departmental goals through the aligned planning process (see category 8), these processes are ***aligned***.

NMC has woven the concept of ethical behavior into many different processes beginning with identifying value statements (**4P7**). We ensure the ethical practices of employees through the stated values; being ethical is one of the foundational competencies in the performance planning and assessment process; policies, work procedures, and trustee, faculty, staff, and student codes of conduct ensure ethical behavior. We measure perceptions of ethical behavior and we assess ethical behavior directly. As such, these processes are ***integrated*** by design.

NMC's processes for determining training needs (**4P8**) and then for training and developing our faculty, staff, and administrators (**4P9**) are ***aligned and moving to integrated*** with the establishment of the Professional Development Institute.

The processes for evaluating personnel (**4P10**) are ***reactive, though moving to systematic***. The Talent AQIP action project team and the Faculty Evaluation Review Committee are redesigning the performance planning and assessment processes after feedback from the Employee Engagement Survey indicated this area as an opportunity for improvement.

NMC has undertaken a comprehensive review of total compensation across all employee groups in response to a current strategic goal. Currently processes for employee recognition, reward, compensation, and benefit systems (**4P11**) are ***systematic though we expect them to be more aligned*** once the effort of the workgroup is realized.

Processes for determining key issues related to motivation of employees (**4P12**) are ***systematic*** with an annually administered Employee Engagement Survey managed by the Office of Research, Planning, and Effectiveness (ORPE). Using the results to select courses of action is also systematic as we use the results to anticipate future problem areas.

Finally, NMC's processes for providing for the satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being of employees are ***systematic*** (**4P13**). Several different departments are responsible for multiple aspects of health, safety and well-being and work together to collaborate on courses of action.

Culture: Category Four, Valuing People

4P1 NMC's Competency Model helps us identify the specific credentials, skills, and values required for faculty staff, and administrators (Figure 4.1). The model is a product of the second phase of the Talent AQIP action project. An advisory team drafted the initial thinking and designed a feedback process, which included focus groups with various areas within the college. The team refined the model based on the feedback received. The competency model identifies the skills, knowledge, and attributes necessary for effective performance in the organization and aligns them with the College's values. The competency model lays the foundation for most other components of Talent Management and is informed by and aligned with the College's strategic plan. The Human Resources department, along with supervisors, and the Classification Committee are in the process of documenting the competencies on each job description.

Figure 4.1 NMC's Competency Model
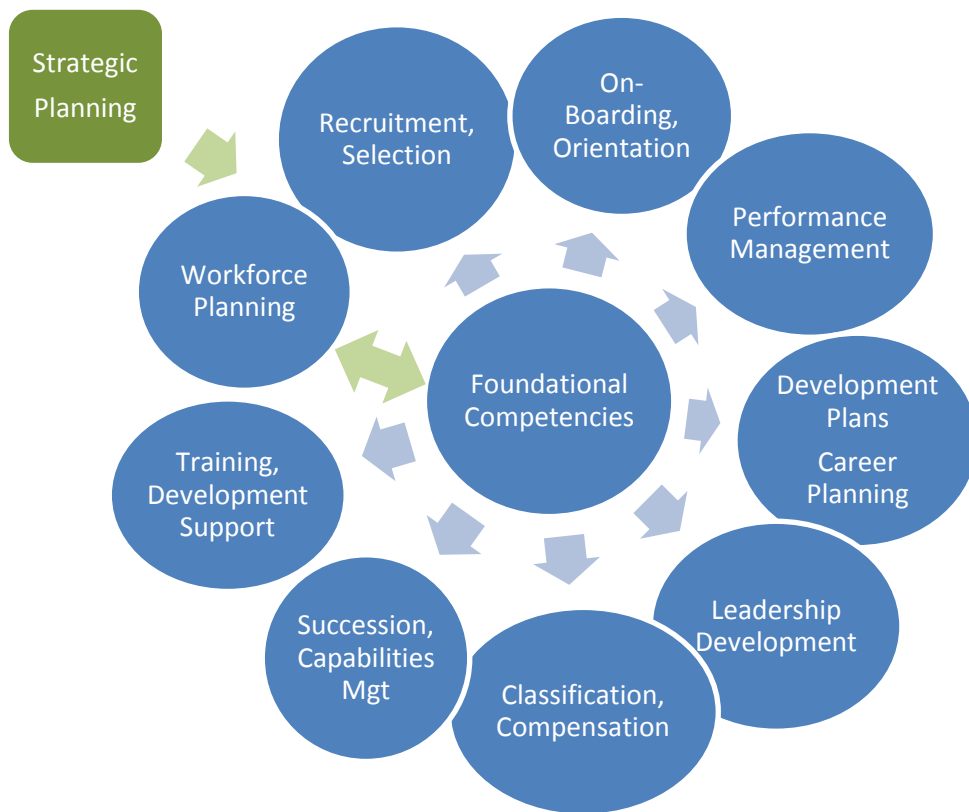
Additionally for faculty, the College used a set of constructs from the 1997 NISOD International Conference and the criteria cited in Roberta Vandermast's "Hiring Faculty for the Next Century," in Innovation Abstracts, 20(19), to define the effective characteristics of an instructor. The Educational Services Instructional Management Team (ESIMT), in consultation with Faculty Council, synthesized these works to identify the characteristics of an outstanding faculty member at NMC, descriptions are documented in the Employee Guide, and in the Faculty Evaluation Plan (p.39). Additionally, the College

follows the Higher Learning Commission guidelines for minimum credentials for occupational and liberal arts faculty. All faculty and staff are listed with their credentials in the NMC Catalog on NMC's website.

NMC's Foundational Competencies - Essential for everyone

TECHNICAL COMPETENCE/ EXPERTISE RELATIVE TO SPECIFIC ROLE
- Refer to job description

ETHICAL BEHAVIOR, INTEGRITY
- Honest, Trustworthy, Ethical
- Has credibility and integrity
- Is respected
- Is straightforward with others; no hidden agendas
- Builds trust through reliability and authenticity
- Models NMC values; leads by example/walks the talk

COMMITMENT TO LIFELONG LEARNING
- Actively pursues learning and development
- Stays current in content area, acquiring and refining technical and professional skills

COMMITMENT TO QUALITY SERVICE, RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP, CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
- Displays a commitment to excellence
- Is committed to providing quality service to learners, co-workers, or others they serve
- Consistently looks for ways to improve and promote quality
- Seeks feedback/open to feedback.

AGILITY/ ADAPTABILITY/ TOLERANCE FOR AMBIGUITY
- Handles multiple demands and rapid change; shifts priorities
- Adapts responses and tactics to fit fluid circumstances
- Open to/embraces change
- Able to work within uncertainty

STRATEGIC UNDERSTANDING
- Can explain how their role supports NMC's mission and vision

VALUES ALL PEOPLE
- Genuinely interested in others
- Empathetic
- Shows concern for others
- Treats learners, co-workers, direct reports respectfully, fairly, equitably

TEAMWORK
- Actively and enthusiastically works with others to achieve a shared common goal
- Gives credit and recognition to those who have contributed
- Shares information and own expertise with others to enable them to accomplish group goals
- Demonstrates interest in helping others solve problems, accomplish work objectives
- Creates a sense of belonging in the team, a culture of inclusion.

ACTIVE LISTENING
- Give others their full attention
- Hear people out without interrupting
- Empathetic
- Listens for meaning
- Listens both to new ideas and to assessments from colleagues

ACCOUNTABILITY/PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY
- Meets commitments and keeps promises; gets things done
- Admits and learns from mistakes
- Holds self and others accountable
- Takes responsibility for achieving goals

4P2 NMC ensures that our recruitment and hiring processes lead to employing people with the credentials, skills, and values needed through a systematic and analytical process. The hiring process provides an opportunity to evaluate current structure, define required needs and evaluates candidates' qualifications based on those needs. The hiring of staff is guided by [Staff HR Policy D-759.00](). When a vacancy exists or in proposing new positions, the department manager/supervisor evaluates the departmental structure for skills and values needed to accomplish departmental goals and to contribute to NMC's strategic directions and goals. The supervisor and human resources staff members update job descriptions with key responsibilities and the required skills and credentials. Supervisors present justification for replacements and new hires to the Planning and Budget Council (PBC) so that requests are aligned with the strategic plan. PBC documents are available on the intranet for the campus community.

Once the position is approved, human resources staff members create an evaluation matrix for the search committee to use in applying the skills and values criteria to each candidate. Candidates are assessed using the required criteria for the job, the phone interviews are conducted with a sub set of the applicants. The phone interview questions drive at assessing skill competence. A final sub set of applicants is brought to campus for in-person interviews. The in-person interviews address skill competence through portfolio review, work exercises such as mock teaching, and content knowledge. In-person interviews also assess institutional and departmental cultural fit as search committee members for the most part come from the departments in which the position resides.   All faculty and regular staff are required to provide official transcripts to verify their academic credentials, including those teaching in early college programs **(Accreditation Core Component 3C2)**. NMC ensures that student services staff providing tutoring, financial aid, advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified and trained through the validation of transcripts, official licensures and certifications (**Accreditation Core Component 3C6**). The required credentials for positions are annotated on job descriptions and postings during the hiring process.

NMC ensures that it has sufficient numbers of faculty members needed to serve students both in the classroom and in non-classroom roles by tracking student-teacher ratios, course loads, and classroom efficiency. Faculty members that serve the college on AQIP action projects and in departmental leadership and training roles are often provided release time to carry out their duties. The Curriculum Committee, a subcommittee of Faculty Council, has oversight for the curriculum and sets expectations for student performance on the general education outcomes (see 1P1). Faculty are involved in the assessment of student learning as part of their regular workload. Academic leaders establish the credentials required for instructional staff in the job description and broad level requirements common to all faculty members are documented in the [Employee Handbook]() (**Accreditation Core Component 3C1**).

4P3 NMC's Resource Guidelines, authorized by the Board of Trustees, state "Northwestern Michigan College is committed to attracting and retaining a quality workforce. Equity in salary and benefits is part of the NMC culture and should be expressed within a total compensation package." The College's recruitment process starts with needs identified in the strategic plan or when the hiring manager

identifies a vacancy or position need. The manager conducts a departmental analysis to assess required resources. The hiring manager and a Human Resources representative review and revise the job description, identifying the required competencies, education and experience required for a successful incumbent.

The recruitment process involves two key phases: attracting applicants and evaluating applicant credentials. To attract applicants, NMC places advertisements in general, industry specific and professionally targeted publications and/or websites. For specific hard to fill positions, Human Resources uses social media and résumé boards to source candidates. Additionally, the College's applicant tracking system, *Open Hire*, helps Human Resources identify previous applicants that have the credentials, experience and competencies that may match current postings. The *Red Carpet* system notifies the applicant when there is a new opening that matches his or her credentials. The process for selecting and hiring candidates is a structured process designed to assess the applicant's credentials, experience and competencies to ensure a quality hire.   This process applies to the majority of the hiring we do:

1. Search team reviews the applications and assesses them against a predefined matrix aligned with the required and preferred criteria
2. Search team phone screens candidates
3. A final group of candidates are brought on campus for face-to-face interviews which often consist of campus tours by Human Resources, the search team interview, presentations or teaching demonstrations; and occasionally a second interview with the hiring manager and area executive
4. Search team identifies and recommends a finalist and acceptable alternatives for hire to the responsible executive
5. Human Resources conducts background checks, and requests official transcripts, while the hiring manager conducts employment references
6. The executive identifies and recommends a finalist for hire to the President

One of NMC's strategic goals is to deliver learning through a networked workforce. Often we pursue a networked approach to hiring people. For instance, different internal departments will share employees. Moreover, we find ways to collaborate and share across organizations, such as a shared position with Michigan State University in our Applied Plant Science program, and we are sharing information technology staff with the Traverse City Area Public Schools.

As for retaining employees and addressing the Resource Guidelines the College is currently reviewing total compensation across all employee groups. Using a mutual gains process, a workgroup comprised of employee group representatives (representatives are from faculty, adjunct faculty, executive, administrative/professional, technical/paraprofessional, support staff, maintenance and custodial employee groups) with the goal of reviewing the current system and making adjustments as necessary. The workgroup is evaluating compensation through five components of compensation defined as pay, benefits, performance and recognition, work life, career growth and professional development. The team is expected to present recommendations at the end of fall 2013.

4P4 NMC orients all employees to its history, mission, and values in different ways and at different times in the employees work experience with NMC. The first phase of the Talent AQIP action project was to revamp the orientation process for new employees, both faculty and staff. Regardless of the employee category (i.e., regular faculty, adjunct faculty, and staff), all new employees experience the same orientation and on-boarding process from the time they are hired to their first day on the job. The purpose is to give all employees a shared experience regarding NMC's history, mission, and values.

Prior to the face-to-face orientation, each new employee receives their own customized online orientation event which includes access to information, completing specific tasks and training related to history, mission, vision, values, and employee compliance, etc. Human Resources briefs all new employees on Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations, other compliance regulations, and benefit and payroll selections. The entire on-boarding process is available and tracked through the Red Carpet software.

The "New Faculty and Staff Institute," the face-to-face portion of orientation, is a collaborative effort between Human Resources and the Center for Instructional Excellence. The first day of the institute includes presentations by executive staff, an NMC history video and activities to connect participants with the mission, vision, values and strategic directions of the College, and an introduction to the Plan, Do, Check, Adjust cycle for continuous improvement embedded in NMC's processes. The afternoon includes a guided tour with presentations from various department heads; the tour covers all four of NMC's campuses and the observatory. The tour highlights college history and new program and service innovations.

The second day of the Institute is primarily for new faculty members and is led by the Center for Instructional Excellence. One component of that orientation is an introduction to NMC's common learning outcomes and a description of the faculty role in the assessment of student learning. Feedback loops are built into this process on day one, at two weeks, and at six months on the job. The new employee provides feedback on the orientation process.

On an on-going basis, all employees are oriented to NMC's mission, strategic directions, and values through the aligned planning process. Moreover, at the semi-annual Opening Conference, presentations by the President and others provide an overview of the current educational environment, and updates on the College's strategic directions and goals. The Opening Conference materials are captured and published on the internet. Historical opening conference materials are published on the intranet for the campus community. Adjunct faculty members are compensated for their time to attend professional development activities through the year. The President's Update links events to NMC's strategic directions and the institutional effectiveness criteria. Historical facts from NMC's history are highlighted in weekly communications to employees through the *NMC Communiqué* for *Student News*, the employee *Intercom*, and the *President's Update*.

4P5 NMC plans for changes in personnel by conducting systematic analyses of employees using specific demographics, age and years of service, to assess the likelihood of retirement. Further, Human Resources staff puts out a call to all employees for anticipated retirements two months before the due date for budget requests to inform strategic and departmental planning.

The classification project to improve NMC's system of position classification is ensuring the foundational employee competencies are included in all position descriptions, which provides a strategic view of the talent base in terms of competencies needed to achieve the strategic directions and goals.

4P6 NMC's aligned planning process and program review makes use of Lean principles by using the A3 planning document (see 8P1) and in tracking metrics so that we may analyze our progress in terms of the gap we are trying to close in achieving our goals. The aligned planning process helps NMC design work processes that contribute to employee satisfaction. Collaboration with departments and across departments in developing operational goals ensures alignment. The iterative nature of the planning process ensures that individual employees are providing input into the goals they will be responsible to achieve. Department leaders are encouraged to engage their employees and employees are expected to provide input. This level of engagement is measured on the Employee Engagement Survey. This is

how employees are involved in planning their work and for what they will be responsible. Organizational productivity is measured by progress on achieving the strategic goals, among others.

More operationally, NMC designs work processes through the application of Lean principles and the use of Lean tools. Departments evaluate processes in order to make them more effective and to reduce waste. The plan, do, check, adjust cycle of continuous improvement is embedded into the processes. In particular, we use Lean principles in all our AQIP action projects. Teams use project plan A3's to document goals, metrics, root cause analysis, and activities and timelines to manage the work of the team and to take action. The A3 project plan is a Lean concept that refers to a one-page summary of a plan. Process maps help communicate across departments in a simple way.

4P7 Ensuring ethical practices of all employees begins with NMC's values. One value statement in particular states: "Our actions are governed by the highest degree of ethics, integrity and personal responsibility, exhibited through transparency, openness and trust." All new employees are oriented to NMC's values at the New Faculty and Staff Institute and also through the *Red Carpet* online orientation. Transparency and openness is exhibited through public access to meeting minutes, townhall meetings with the President, Board of Trustee meetings open to the public, and community conversations.

We ensure ethical practices by intentionally designing work processes so that duties involving payroll processing and purchasing are handled by different people and require levels of review and approval. Procurement card guidelines define specific use and the steps taken to monitor such use. The purchasing policy (D-504.02) states the allowable limits on purchases by employee classification. The shared governance system (D-502.01) contributes to a check system for many college processes. External audits review the College's practices in light of ethical guidelines, such as the annual financial audit (**Accreditation Core Component 2A**).

Two formal policies state NMC's position regarding conflict of interest (Conflict of Interest, Board of Trustees Process (A-102-01) and Conflict of Interest staff policy (D-506.01)). Executive staff and Board of Trustees are required annually to affirm that they follow the College's conflict of interest policies. Employee handbooks with NMC policies and procedures outlined are available on the internet. Faculty members are held to the Faculty Code of Professional Ethics published in the Employee Guide and documented in Staff Policy D749.00 (**Accreditation Core Component 2E3**). Staff members are expected to exhibit foundational competencies, and through the performance planning and assessment process (MyPDCA), supervisor can integrate these into reviews. The foundational competency related to ethics is **ETHICAL BEHAVIOR, INTEGRITY** (further defined in 4P1).

NMC ensures that faculty, students and staff acquire and apply knowledge responsibly. For research, protocols for approval are being developed by ORPE to ensure integrity of research and protection of subjects. Student information is guarded under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Students are guided by documented Registrar policies on the website   (**Accreditation Core Component 2E1**). The Student Code of Ethics is outlined in the Students' Rights and Responsibilities (Staff Policy D-602.01). Information literacy coursework in composition classes guides students in the ethical use of information resources. The Lib-Guides provided by the Library describes plagiarism and appropriate use of citations (also described in 1P11) (**Accreditation Core Component 2E2**).

4P8 Employee training needs are determined at the organizational, departmental and individual levels. NMC's strategic plan and results from the Employee Engagement Survey inform long-term organizational training priorities. Additionally, the competency model, which is aligned with NMC's values, provides a framework for training priorities. The College's Professional Development Advisory team has representatives from each employee group to provide feedback and recommendations to Human Resources. College-wide professional development plans are vetted through President's Council

and incorporated in the Professional Development Institute, which is available on the intranet for all employees.

For departmental professional development, directors identify the needs for the individual department and employees as part of the aligned planning process. The department level initiatives are focused on addressing both short- and long term departmental and individual needs. As part of the individual level performance planning and assessment process (MyPDCA), goal plans are aligned with departmental plans and include strategic, operational and professional development goals.

The Center for Instructional Excellence (CIE) works in conjunction with the CIE advisory board to determine and plan faculty-wide professional development initiatives, and allocates funding for faculty professional development requests. The effort to align training or professional development opportunities with departmental or organizational needs ensures that the College will have the competencies necessary to execute short- and long- range organizational plans.

4P9 NMC invests in the training and development of all faculty, staff, and administrators, by consistently allocating 2.25% of general fund salaries and wages for professional development in accordance with NMC's Resource Guidelines (Board Materials Packet, Oct 28, 2013). The allocation to individuals and departments of the professional development funds varies. Individual departments budget according to the development required to achieve the operational goals of the unit. Employees are encouraged to engage in professional development and training to meet the requirements of their positions. This includes workshops, conferences, and membership and participation in professional associations.   Professional Development policies (D753.00) and procedures (D753.01) guide faculty and staff in their development.

As a result of the work from the Talent III AQIP action project, the College established the Professional Development Institute, in order to consolidate professional development opportunities that are already offered internally from various departments (Table 4.1). The Professional Development Institute is aligned with the NMC leadership competency model.

Table 4.1 NMC Departments Providing Training	
Department	**Types of Training Provided**
Center for Instructional Excellence	Provides faculty training and coaching
Training Services	Meeting facilitation and Lean systems
Learning Resources and Technologies	Desktop software and enterprise applications
Extended Education	Many work-related and personal enrichment opportunities
Human Resources	Employees can receive up to $1500 a year to pursue post-associate degrees
Human Resources	Compliance & regulatory training
Business Office	Budget Training
Office of Research, Planning & Effectiveness	Outcomes Identification and Measurement

The Educational Media Technology department has designed resources geared to provide NMC instructors with current strategies for teaching with 21st century teaching skills. *TeachingSolutions* is NMC's professional development program for 21st Century teaching and learning with technology. Competency-based *teachingSOLUTIONS* addresses key components of successful use of technology for teaching and learning. Core activities are centered on existing NMC instructor

requirements such as teaching and assessing the General Education Outcomes, and on student persistence and retention (**teachingSOLUTIONS Competencies Overview).**

The Scoop is a bi-weekly emailed-newsletter that highlights various topics of interest and activities around the NMC community related to 21st Century teaching skills. A typical *Scoop* contains a new technology tool, a Moodle implementation tip, teaching strategies, and other best practices from NMC instructors.

A faculty resource page, called *Teaching@NMC* is the result of the Learning Experiences AQIP action project. It describes an interactive collection designed for providing anytime, anywhere access to common resources needed by instructors. This includes tutorials, forms, a professional development calendar, technology and teaching resources, instructional design helps, and a blog.

Strategic-level professional development in innovation, leadership and continuous quality improvement is budgeted separately and, in part, results from NMC's membership in the Continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN). Each year, a team of about ten attends the CQIN Summer Institute to learn from our peers in higher education and also to interact with a learning partner outside of higher education, such as "Partners in Leadership," Toyota, Poudre Valley Health Care System, Disney Leadership Institute, Ritz-Carlton, etc. Additionally, NMC's academic leadership engages in team-based strategic professional development by attending the Chair Academy, the annual conference of the American Association of Community Colleges, and the League for Innovation annual meeting.

4P10   In the past year a cross -functional team redesigned the performance planning and assessment system (MyPDCA) for staff and administrators, which focuses on aligning individual goals with operational and strategic plans, and supporting career conversations between the supervisor and employee. The redesign involved converting from a paper based process to an online system. The MyPDCA process entails supervisor and employee discussions about and assessment of goal completion and the foundational competencies. Individual goal-setting with supervisors helps to identify required professional development activities (see 4P9) (**Accreditation Core Component 3C6**). These goals are the foundation for performance for the following year and are aligned with expectations for the role and the goals of the department and college.

The philosophy underlying the faculty evaluation plan is "excellence through a thoughtful process." The Faculty Evaluation Plan is detailed in the Employee Guide (p.39-58). The specific outcomes for faculty are to:

- Promote teaching effectiveness in every classroom by increasing individual faculty member's personal strengths and areas for growth through a variety of assessment methods
- Identify and facilitate direction for faculty professional development
- Direct and document contribution of faculty professional expertise in support of college and community initiatives beyond the scope of the individual classroom

Course evaluations are regularly conducted for all instructors; feedback is reviewed initially by the academic department head and then shared with the instructor. The annual faculty plan includes a process of self-reflection, peer review and planning for the following year. All annual plans and reflections are submitted to the Academic Chair and forwarded to Human Resources (**Accreditation Core Component 3C3**). In fall 2013, the Faculty Evaluation Plan Committee will assess the effectiveness of and compliance with the newly revised process.

As part of orientation new faculty members attend the New Faculty and Staff Institute and receive training from Educational Media Technologies, among others. NMC conducts several professional development activities that target faculty growth including Friday Forums and Professional Development Days hosted by the Center for Instructional Excellence. NMC's *TeachingSolutions* professional development program focuses on 21st Century teaching knowledge and

skills, based on TPaCK [Technology, Pedagogy, and Content Knowledge] Philosophy and requires specific participant deliverables (see 4P9). The Faculty Evaluation Plan assesses instructors' skill relevance and ensures qualifications are current and appropriate (**Accreditation Core Component 3C4**).

Instructors are accessible for student inquiry. All instructors are expected to hold office hours and are available through email, which are annotated on syllabi. The Employee Handbook provides a reference to faculty members for the *Course Syllabus Essential Criteria* (p.67). Responsiveness of instructors is measured on the course evaluations. Some instructors hold workshop study groups for students outside the classroom (**Accreditation Core Component 3C5**).

4P11 NMC is undertaking a comprehensive review of total compensation across faculty, staff and administrative groups, as part of a strategic goal. This comprehensive evaluation will result in recommendations, plans and implementations that will align NMC's total compensation framework. The workgroup is evaluating total compensation as defined by five components: pay; benefits; performance and recognition; career growth and professional development; and work life. Updates from the group are available on the intranet and have been presented to the Board of Trustees as part of our annual review of the strategic plan.

4P12   NMC determines key issues related to the motivation of faculty, staff, and administrators primarily through the Employee Engagement Survey. Administered annually, the survey measures the level of employee awareness and connectedness to the strategic directions and institutional effectiveness criteria. It gauges employee engagement in the planning processes and participation in operational goal setting. The survey measures satisfaction with institutional processes regarding valuing people, such as shared governance, the performance evaluation system, and the employee recognition system. NMC has used the results of the survey at multiple levels. Organizationally, the executive team uses it to inform next areas of focus for action projects and to measure progress on our strategic goals. The Talent AQIP action project team has used the data to help guide the improvement actions for orientation, the performance planning and review process, and in developing supervisory training. Finally, supervisors use department level results from the survey to engage in conversations with employees about what is working or not working.

4P13 NMC uses cross-functional committees to focus on the health, safety, well-being and satisfaction of employees. The Emergency Management Team leads on issues related to general campus safety and security, emergency and disaster management. This team holds table-top exercises with local, state and national agencies to work through scenarios and identify areas for improvement. Staff, faculty and student training on campus safety and security in the form of videos is conducted annually. Staff and faculty complete an on-line training and participate in live exercises for fire drills and lock-down drills. Safety videos are shown in classrooms during the first week of classes (additional information is presented in 6P3).

The Wellness Committee, chaired by the Employee Wellness Coordinator is focused on providing broad reaching programs to inform, support, reward and recognize teams and individuals related to all aspects of wellness. This year marks the launch of a comprehensive year-long wellness program, [Wellness @ Work](), which is open to regular faculty and staff, adjunct faculty, student and supplemental employees. Each month the program has a highlight topic with mini challenges, learning sessions and activities. The wellness coordinator tracks event participation and participant feedback.

4R1 NMC regularly collects measures related to valuing people (Table 4.2). The Employee Engagement Survey is the primary mechanism for gathering perceptions on planning processes, supervisor effectiveness, and in gauging employee engagement.

Table 4.2 Measures for Valuing People		
• Employee Engagement Index	• Student/Faculty Ratio	• Departure rates
• Benchmarks on professional development funding	• Grievances and Harassment Actions	• Retirement rates and benchmarks
• Instructor Effectiveness	• Supervisor Index	• Planning Index

4R2 From the Employee Engagement Survey, NMC measures an overall engagement index, supervisor index and planning index (Table 4.3). To calculate the index metrics we total the possible score for the total number of questions and then look at the average score. The metric is a ratio of average score to maximum possible score – a percent of the maximum score. The target for each index is 90%. The indices are broad metrics to help us know how we are doing overall. Our results indicated that the supervisor index was the highest priority for taking action. The Talent III AQIP Action Project has initiated many improvement projects associated with leadership training and performance feedback (see 4I1).

Table 4.3 Engagement Survey – Indices (percent of maximum agreement score)		2011 (N=402)	2012 (N=399)	2013 (N=405)	Target
1	Engagement Index (11 questions)	85%	85%	84% ↓	90%
2	Supervisor Index (5 questions)	76%	78%	77% ↓	90%
3	Planning Index (8 questions)	80%	82%	83% ↑	90%

Color Key	Meets or exceeds min/target	Does not meet target but trend in right direction	Does not meet target, trend steady or in wrong direction

All of the specific statements from the Employee Engagement Survey are presented in Table 4.4. Color coding and analyzing the trends helps NMC prioritize improvement actions and to decide on the areas that need further research. For metrics from the Employee Engagement Survey, NMC selects courses of action based on the percent of employees agreeing with the process and outcome statements. Currently, NMC's target is 90% agreement. However, we are reassessing the reasonableness of this target when factoring in all employee types: regular faculty and staff, adjuncts, and supplemental staff. We are considering setting multiple targets based on the employee type.

We tend to look at those statements that are below the top quartile for improvement actions. Our supervisor training, revision of performance planning and assessment system, and the review of the classification and compensation system were informed by the results. (See 4I1 for improvement actions).

With the relative color coding in Table 4.4, NMC can also assess quickly the areas in which we have made gains. For instance, a higher percentage of employees over time agreed that they have the necessary skills in order to help NMC achieve its strategic directions (Table 4.4, row 3), and that a larger percentage is more comfortable taking thoughtful risks in their work (Table 4.4, row 13).

	Table 4.4 Employee Engagement Survey	2011 (N=402)	2012 (N=399)	2013 (N=405)
1	Q3_9.I am committed to continuous improvement in my work.	95.8%	97.5%	96.8%
2	Q1_4.I have the necessary skills to contribute to NMC's continuous improvement efforts.	93.3%	91.7%	92.6%
3	Q1_3.I have the necessary skills in order to help NMC achieve its strategic directions.	88.8%	89.2%	91.6%
4	Q3_13.I feel safe when I am working on campus.	91.0%	93.5%	90.4%
5	Q1_1.I understand how my job contributes to achieving NMC's strategic directions.	87.6%	88.5%	87.4%
6	Q3_16.I collaborate with others in performing my role at the college.	87.3%	87.7%	86.9%
7	Q3_1.My work responsibilities are clear to me.	94.5%	92.7%	86.7%
8	Q3_14.I know where to access College information I need to do my job.	89.8%	86.0%	86.7%
9	Q3_4.At work, I have the opportunity to use my strengths every day.	86.6%	87.2%	85.9%
10	Q2_16.NMC employees hold themselves to high ethical standards.	86.6%	88.0%	85.7%
11	Q3_7.My supervisor, or someone at work, cares about me as a person.	83.6%	85.2%	85.4%
12	Q3_2.My job makes good use of my skills and abilities.	88.1%	88.2%	84.2%
13	Q3_15.I am comfortable taking thoughtful risks in my work.	78.4%	83.0%	84.0%
14	Q1_2.I understand how my job contributes to institutional effectiveness improvements.	84.6%	88.0%	83.2%
15	Q2_17.I believe NMC employees are committed to continuous improvement.	86.8%	87.0%	83.2%
16	Q2_13.My supervisor holds me accountable for performance.	85.1%	86.0%	82.7%
17	Q1_8.I have made changes in my work during the last year in order to improve persistence and completion.	79.1%	84.2%	81.7%
18	Q3_3.I have the support I need to do my job.	83.8%	79.2%	81.7%
19	Q2_18.My department is continuously improving.			81.5%
20	Q3_17.Based on my experiences at NMC, I would recommend NMC as an employer.	87.6%	89.0%	81.5%
21	Q3_18.I am satisfied with my experience working at NMC.	86.8%	86.5%	81.2%
22	Q3_6.I would recommend NMC to my friends as a good place to work.			81.2%
23	Q3_11.This last year, I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow.	82.3%	85.2%	80.5%
24	Q1_5.NMC has a clear vision for the future.	79.1%	81.5%	80.2%
25	Q3_12.The mission of the college makes me feel my job is important.	77.6%	81.5%	79.5%
26	Q1_7.My supervisor works to align the goals of our department with the goals of the College.	78.6%	81.7%	79.0%

27	Q1_6.NMC's President is effective at communicating this vision.	81.3%	83.2%	77.8%
28	Q3_8.I am encouraged to continuously develop my skills.	78.1%	78.2%	77.0%
29	Q3_10.I provide input to my departmental goals.	78.4%	78.2%	76.0%
30	Q2_3.College information is communicated in a timely fashion.	80.1%	79.9%	75.1%
31	Q3_5.My work is valued at NMC.	77.1%	78.2%	73.3%
32	Q2_2.NMC's culture encourages me to do things in new ways.	68.7%	72.9%	70.6%
33	Q2_9.My supervisor positively motivates my performance at work.	70.9%	74.9%	70.6%
34	Q2_5.My supervisor asks for my input in developing departmental goals.	71.6%	72.7%	70.1%
35	Q2_7.I am involved in the decisions that impact my work.	73.6%	70.9%	69.6%
36	Q2_12.My supervisor effectively confronts issues before they become major problems.	68.2%	71.4%	69.6%
37	Q2_1.NMC is agile in responding to learner needs.	62.7%	69.2%	68.6%
38	Q2_6.I review the measures and targets for our goals in order to make improvements.	69.9%	70.7%	67.9%
39	Q2_10.My supervisor provides useful performance feedback.	66.7%	71.7%	67.2%
40	Q2_4.I understand my role in planning at NMC.		62.9%	62.2%
41	Q2_15.Communication from NMC's shared governance councils and committees is useful.	61.9%	61.4%	60.7%
42	Q2_14.The shared governance structure (President's Council, Policy Council and Planning & Budget Council) is an effective way to lead the organization.	53.0%	56.1%	51.4%
43	Q2_11.I have career discussions with my supervisor.	50.7%	54.9%	50.6%
44	Q2_8.NMC's performance evaluation process helps me improve my job performance.	41.0%	52.4%	47.4%

NMC is committed to providing professional development opportunities to its employees, and ranks in the 94th percentile among its peers in the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP) for professional development expenditures per full-time-equated employee (Table 4.5). The departure rate of employees from NMC is very low (Table 4.6). NMC is below the peer median for departures, grievances, and harassment actions in 2010-2011 (Table 4.8). When available, the benchmark data is included in the tables.

Table 4.5 Development/Training Expenditures per FTE Employee		2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
1	NMC	$937	$947	$872	$1190	$1130
2	Percent of peers below NMC	91%	94%	92%	94%	
3	Peer Median Value	$336	$270	$287	$300	
4	Number of peers	128	170	178	173	
5	Source: National Community College Benchmark Project					

Table 4.6 Retirements and Departures	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
1	**NMC Retirement Rate**	1.4%	1.1%	4.7%	3.5%	5.3%
2	Peer Median Value	1.6%	1.7%	2.1%	2.4%	
3	**NMC Departure Rate**	2.5%	2.9%	2.9%	2.9%	1.9%
4	Peer Median Value	5.0%	4.8%	4.9%	5.4%	
5	Number of Peers	187	230	231	198	
6	Source: National Community College Benchmark Project					

Table 4.7 Grievances and Harassment Actions	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
1	**NMC Grievance Rate**	1.4%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
2	Peer Median Value	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.8%	
3	**NMC Harassment Rate**	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
4	Peer Median Value	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	
5	Number of Peers	156	199	190	168	
6	Source: National Community College Benchmark Project					

4R3 NMC measures productivity and effectiveness of faculty, staff, and administrators in three ways. First, progress on strategic goals is tracked and is an indicator of faculty and staff productivity. Each year the President's Evaluation packet summarizes the accomplishments of all the departmental areas. Individual level goals are tracked for performance evaluations in *WingSpan* Human Resources database and measured by supervisors. In this way, individual goals are aligned with departmental goals which are aligned with the strategic goals.

NMC measures instructor effectiveness in the classroom through course evaluations. A rating of the quality of the course and the quality of the instructor is used in program review (Table 4.8). The overall rating by fiscal year is disaggregated so that program areas can compare their results to the institutional averages. First, quality of the course is rated on an agreement scale (1=strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). Second, quality of instruction is an index of three questions from the course evaluation:

1. My instructor inspired me to care about learning.
2. My instructor's feedback helped me make improvements in my work.
3. I understood the learning objectives for the course.

The targets for these measures may incrementally change based on trending.

Table 4.8 Course Evaluation	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	Target
1	Quality of the Course	81%	83%	81% ↓	85%
2	Quality of the Instruction	83%	79%	79% ↔	87%
3	N	16140	15264	15214	

Finally, NMC benchmarks productivity and effectiveness metrics through the National Community College Benchmark Project with for-credit courses student/faculty ratio (Table 4.9). When available the benchmark data is annotated.

Category Four, Valuing People

Table 4.9 Credit Course Student/Faculty Ratio		Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012
1	NMC	22.3	21.2	19.3	19.6	18.7	18.5
2	Percent of peers below NMC	82%	76%	59%	63%		
3	Peer Median Value	18.4	18.4	18.3	18.3		
4	Number of peers	208	262	269	256		
5	Source: National Community College Benchmark Project						

4R4   Where available, benchmark data from the National Community College Benchmark Project are included in 4R2 and 4R3.

4I1   NMC's improvements in this area result primarily from the multiple phases of the Talent AQIP action project. The on-boarding and orientation process was completely revised in Talent phase I with the implementation of the New Faculty and Staff Institute and the *Red Carpet* on-line tool. Through the work of Talent phase III, NMC launched a new performance planning and assessment system for staff (MyPDCA), that builds on the aligned planning process by aligning individual goals to departmental operational and strategic goals. The system uses the Foundational Competency model (see 4P1) to guide decision-making on professional development investments. The system (*Wingspan*) uses a new tracking software to make measuring and tracking progress on individual goals more efficient.

NMC's Professional Development Institute was also a product of the AQIP action project. The Institute is an "internal university" for employees. An advisory team of employees across roles and departments provides input on content and process. The team reviewed content already developed through Extended Education, Training Services, academic courses, the Center for Instructional Excellence, and individual departments and selected those courses and online resources that support growth in the skills outlined in our Competency Model. Some of the content has been customized and, in select areas, new content is being developed: 1) for all employees, workshops aligned with NMC's Foundational Competencies, 2) for current and emerging leaders, training addressing priorities identified through the Employee Engagement Survey and strategic plan, and a new 6-month Foundations of Leadership cohort, and 3) for instructors, training and resources offered through the Center for Instructional Excellence and the Teaching@NMC resource page.

Work toward evaluating NMC's total compensation process began in response to a strategic goal. A cross-functional work group is reviewing our compensation processes and has developed a model of total compensation including pay, benefits, performance and recognition, development and career opportunities, and work life. The project is on track for December 2013 completion. NMC started a position classification review in January 2013, for completion in fall 2013. Project goals are to create consistent language throughout a classification schema, connect to the Compensation and Competency models, and provide transparency.

4I2   NMC has instituted the Employee Engagement Survey and has administered it annually over the past four years. This information provides actionable feedback for department heads and the Talent AQIP action project.

The Human Resources department was moved within the organizational chart and reports to the Vice President for Lifelong and Professional Learning. This position operationalizes the College's philosophy about recognizing our faculty and staff as lifelong learners, and provides an integrated approach for investment in professional development. Internally, the Human Resources department is undergoing a phased restructure. Following our process for planning for personnel change, the

department is analyzing the future competencies required and the existing competencies of the staff to identify gaps. The next step is to add new Human Resources staff with competencies necessary to support the ongoing efforts in this category, specifically in areas of professional development, performance and total rewards.

As processes from the Talent III action project move from pilot to acceleration, Human Resources has integrated them into the daily operations while implementing software to increase efficiency and effectiveness of all processes. Collaborating with Educational Media Technologies, Human Resources leveraged online tools and software to advance the processes described in this category (i.e., *RedCarpet* for on-boarding processes, and *WingSpan* for MyPDCA). These infrastructure improvements help select specific processes to improve for achieving NMC's performance outcomes in Valuing People.

Operations: Category Five, Leading and Communicating Introduction

The primary mechanism for aligning leadership, decision-making, and communication processes with NMC's mission, values, and policies is our dynamic aligned planning process. The process was designed to be participatory from the level of the Board of Trustees to each individual within a department, with consideration of results from performance metrics, listening to our stakeholders and scanning our operational environment.

Specifically NMC's processes in Leading and Communicating are at different points on the process maturity scale. NMC's processes for defining our guiding principles (mission, vision, values, etc.) (**5P1**), setting directions that align with those guiding principles (**5P2**), while taking into consideration the needs of our stakeholders in so doing (**5P3 and 5P4**) are moving from *systematic to aligned* with each implementation cycle of our strategic planning process. The processes are continuously monitored for improvement opportunities and we are working to improve processes for communicating and sharing learning across units and levels in the College (**5P7**).

NMC's processes for decision-making (**5P5**) and using data and performance results in decision-making (**5P6**) are *aligned.* Coordination among the councils and committees is of chief importance. These processes do address NMC's key goals and strategic directions.

Nearly 80% of NMC's employees agree that NMC has a clear vision and that NMC's leadership is effective in communicating that vision. Processes to share NMC's vision are deepening the principles of high performing institutions and are *aligned* (**5P8**).

Processes for encouraging and developing leadership skills and abilities (**5P9**) have been more *reactive*, as they were limited to departments or employee groups, however with the implementation of the Professional Development Institute, we expect our process to mature and *become more systematic*.

Accordingly, our process for leadership succession (**5P10**) is moving from *reactive to systematic* through the proactive analysis of our talent base by Human Resources, and continued development of work instructions for standard work within departments.

Operations: Category Five, Leading and Communicating

5P1   NMC's mission, vision, values, purposes and institutional effectiveness criteria are approved by our Board of Trustees pursuant to Board Policy A-106.00 (**Accreditation Core Component 1A1**). The mission, vision, values, strategic directions, and institutional effectiveness criteria are accessible to all internal and external stakeholders on our website. The Leadership Group reviews the mission, vision, values and institutional effectiveness criteria as part of our strategic planning process (8P1). Participation in defining mission, vision, and values is broad-based in that Leadership Group represents the governance councils (i.e., President's Council, Planning and Budget Council, chair of Policy Council, Academic chairs, other service department directors, and employee council leadership).

NMC gathers feedback on potential changes to the mission, vision, values, and strategic directions as it gathers other information to inform strategic planning, through listening to employees on surveys, listening to students, and listening to the community in community conversations and surveys, and through environmental scanning. Feedback is reviewed at least annually through the Strategy Retreat Workbook, a synthesis of resource material for the annual strategic retreat.

NMC's strategic plan includes the mission, vision, and values along with key goals. This helps keep this high level direction front of mind in planning operational goals. Another way this happens is through the use of the college's mission and values as one aspect of vetting decisions that are made through NMC's decision-making process (described in 1P3, Figure 1.2). This assures that NMC's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission (**Accreditation Core Component 1A3**).

NMC's mission statement is to provide lifelong learning opportunities to our communities. As such our portfolio of offerings ranges from College for Kids, through extended education non-credit courses, to academic and occupational training for credit, to organizational and customized training for business and industry, and finally to Life Academy. NMC's programs, services, and enrollment profile are consistent with our mission (**Accreditation Core Component 1A2**).

5P2   NMC leaders set direction that aligns with the mission, vision and values of the organization through the strategic planning process. The strategic plan is anchored by the mission, vision, and values. The Strategic Directions and Institutional Effectiveness Criteria set direction for the college to guide activity over 5-7 years and delineate the priorities of the college (Chart 5.1).

The Board of Trustees provides input to the draft strategic plan, and identifies the most important things for the Board to monitor in the current plan year as part of a fall study session. The Board reviews at periodic meetings progress on the Board-level goals twice a year for a mid-year, and end of year check. This ensures that the Board is spending its time on the most important priorities to preserve and enhance the College (**Accreditation Core Component 2C1**).

Strategic Directions are developed with broad input through campus-wide brainstorm sessions at our opening conferences, small group meetings facilitated by the President, at Leadership Group meetings, during formal community conversations, and during public Board of Trustees meetings. More specifically, at every regular Board of Trustees meeting there is a place for Public Comment. Any interested person, internal or external stakeholder, is welcome to talk directly with the Board members. The Board hears directly from student groups who periodically present at Board meetings. Individual Board members engage the community in service organizations and as members of the NMC Foundation to receive input from our community constituents throughout the year. These activities ensure that the Board considers multiple constituency interests in its decision-making (**Accreditation Core Component 2C2 and Accreditation Core Component 5C3**).

Chart 1. Guiding
Principles Map

```
              ┌──────────────┐
              │    NMC's      │
              │   Mission,    │
              │  Vision, and  │
              │    Values     │
              └──────┬───────┘
                     │
              ┌──────▼───────┐
              │    NMC's      │
              │   Purposes    │
              └──┬────────┬──┘
                 │        │
      ┌──────────▼──┐  ┌──▼───────────┐
      │  Strategic  │  │ Institutional│
      │  Directions │  │ Effectiveness│
      │             │  │   Criteria    │
      └─────────┬───┘  └───┬──────────┘
                │          │
              ┌─▼──────────▼─┐
              │ Strategic Plan│
              │     Goals     │
              └──────┬───────┘
                     │
              ┌──────▼───────┐
              │  Operational  │
              │  Plan Goals   │
              └──────────────┘
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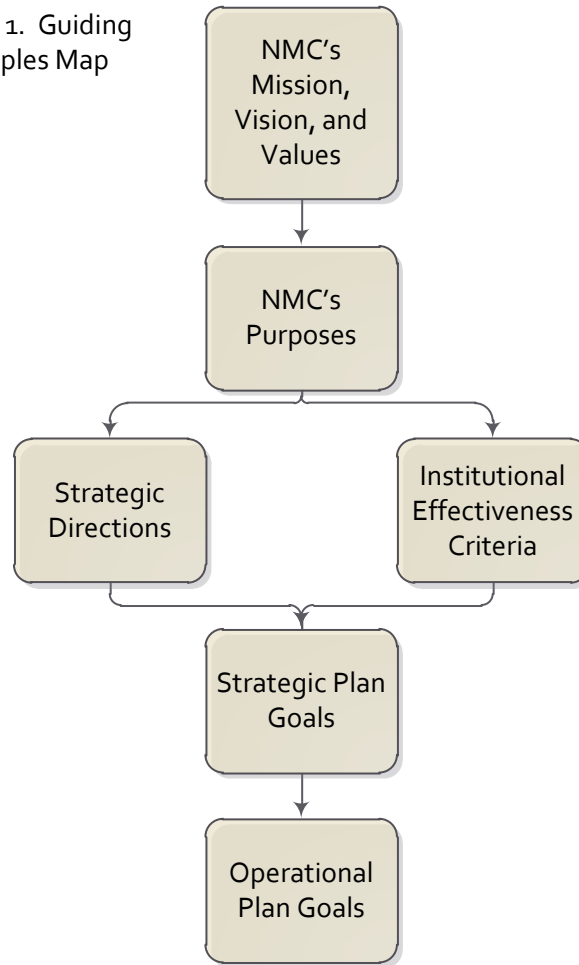
NMC's values align with AQIP's principles of high performance institutions. Because NMC's mission is broadly stated, NMC depends on our strategic directions and institutional effectiveness criteria to inform goal setting.   The Institutional Effectiveness Criteria (Board Policy C-104) are based on the AQIP process categories. The items in Chart 1 are reviewed by the Leadership Group periodically, approved by our Board of Trustees (Board Policy 106.00) and documented for campus use.

Stemming from those guiding principles, strategic goals and operational goals are developed by means of our aligned planning process (8P1).   NMC ensures internal vertical and horizontal alignment through cross-functional planning meetings of the Leadership Group during operational planning (**Accreditation Core Components 5C1-5**). Once the strategic goals are identified, the College develops its budget to ensure that the allocation of resources is in alignment with the mission and College priorities (**Accreditation Core Component 5C1**). The way in which NMC engages in planning ensures that the processes for assessment and the evaluation of operations are linked to planning and budgeting which is documented in our annual planning documents, the program and service department specific A3s (**Accreditation Core Component 5C2**). The A3 is a Lean tool that provides common language to share information across the college. The planning document summarizes metrics and planning action plans. Leaders identify budget and resource implications of the action plans, which inform budget requests.

The first step in the cycle for planning at NMC is the "grasping the situation" summaries published with the Strategy Retreat Workbook annually. The summaries synthesize our inputs and feedback from learners, employees, and the community. "Grasping the situation" also takes into consideration the results from the NMC Scan (3P5, Figures 3.1 and 3.2). NMC considers emerging issues related to technology, demographics, globalization, and trends in higher education, through the NMC Scan (**Accreditation Core Component 5C5**). While NMC's plan is based on the sustainability and stability of current capacity, the college's directions and goals evolve over time in order to take advantage of growth opportunities. Evidence for this strategy is documented in the Strategy Retreat Workbook, and in presentations by executive staff to external constituencies (A-B Portfolio Strategy). This strategy allows NMC to anticipate and respond to the possible impact of fluctuations in standard sources of revenue (**Accreditation Core Component 5C4).**

In the shared governance model, the Board of Trustees delegates day to day management of the College to the President (Board Policy B-100.00) (**Accreditation Core Component 2C4**). The Board preserves its independence from undue influence from special interests or other external parties when that influence is not in the best interest of the College by following the guidelines of the Open Meetings Act and laid out the Board's Bylaws (Board Policy A-100.00). The Board is subject to a conflict of interest policy. In the event that a board member has a conflict of interest with a topic under discussion, he or she will recuse herself from a vote (Board Policy A-102.00) (**Accreditation Core Component 2C3**).

5P3   NMC publicly articulates its mission, vision, values, purposes, strategic directions and institutional effectiveness criteria on its website (**Accreditation Core Component 1B1**). NMC's mission documents are reviewed in the planning process and reflect the extent of NMC's comprehensive nature. The strategic directions are guides for strategic and operational goal setting and convey NMC's focus areas as informed by feedback from internal and external stakeholders and through quarterly environmental scanning (**Accreditation Core Component 1B2**). NMC gathers feedback in the planning process, through "grasping the situation," which helps us to understand the needs of students and other key stakeholders (further described in 3P3, 7P4, 8P1).

In spring 2013, NMC's purposes were revised by the Board of Trustees to include providing Bachelor's degrees in select areas. This change was a direct result of feedback from students, industry, and a change in the State of Michigan's law. In order to meet our mission, NMC engages in these purposes:

- Associate degree, certificate, and transfer educational in liberal arts and sciences, and occupational studies
- Career/occupational education and workforce development
- Bachelor's degrees in select programs
- Cultural and personal enrichment
- Baccalaureate and graduate program facilitation
- Regional economic development

The purpose statements (Board Policy C-103.00) operationalize NMC's mission in identifying the nature, scope, and intended constituents of NMC's portfolio of offerings (**Accreditation Core Component 1B3**).

5P4 *Keeping Learning at the Center* is the theme at every College opening conference. The materials for opening conference are available on the intranet under the President's Office. The most current opening conference video is publically available. We seek future opportunities in multiple ways, such as through community and industry alliances and memberships (9P5), feedback from program advisory committees (described throughout category 1), through professional development, at conferences and

through common book readings. We encourage new ideas which respond to learner and community needs via our Innovation Grant process which provides resources to develop a new idea.

NMC's decision making process (Staff Policy D-502.02) (see 1P3, Figure 1.3) includes an evaluation of whether an opportunity is worth pursuing. All members of the campus community are encouraged to identify new opportunities and to bring them forward in the form of an Idea Summary which captures the essence of the idea. The executive leader for the area in which the idea originated then assists that individual/team in moving through the decision-making process. Proposals for new programs are evaluated on their learning outcomes, among other metrics by the academic area chairs, the Curriculum Committee, and the Planning and Budget Council. The process has been most frequently used in bringing forward new occupational programs. The final step is a recommendation for implementation to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees reviews new program proposals and ultimately decides whether to approve the program plan.

5P5 NMC's Board of Trustees is the authority for strategic decision-making. The Board is governed by a set of Board policies:
- o A Policies for Board of Trustees are process policies
- o B Policies are Board-President relationship policies
- o C Policies are the Board's Ends policies for the College
- o D Policies are policies for conducting College business

The Board of Trustees meets monthly for regular board meetings, and other times throughout the year for study sessions. The agendas and minutes from Board meetings are posted on the internet. The Board of Trustees is the approving authority for NMC's financial and academic policies in order to meet its legal and fiduciary responsibilities. Board policy A-106.00 identifies specific approval items **(Accreditation Core Component 5B2).**

Along with the Board of Trustees, several internal Councils serve NMC's shared governance model (Staff Policy D-502.01). The three main councils comprising shared governance include: President's Council, Policy Council and Planning & Budget Council. President's Council meets weekly to discuss strategy, to plan for goal setting, to review progress on annual goals, and to provide feedback to executive colleagues on operational issues. The President's Council is comprised of most of the executive staff of the College. Each agenda item at the weekly meeting is marked as plan, do, check, or adjust for the purpose the Council wants to accomplish.

The Planning and Budget Council is comprised of members representing NMC's employee groups, the Vice Presidents, and includes a student government association representative. The Planning and Budget Council meets weekly and makes recommendations to the President regarding the development of the general fund budget. The Policy Council meets monthly to review institutional staff policy for recommendation to the President. The Council is comprised of members from NMC's employee groups and a student government association representative. Through the policy development process Policy Council ensures wide dissemination and input of proposed policy changes via public hearings. All staff policies are reviewed at least every five years. NMC employs policies and staff procedures to engage the Board of Trustees, and College faculty and staff in governance. The approach for decision-making among the shared governance councils is to gather input from broad perspectives, formulate a recommendation based on discussion and consensus, and communicate the result of these discussions in the form of committee minutes and memos which are readily available on NMC's intranet site and via email (**Accreditation Core Component 5B1).** Additionally, multiple college-wide committees operate with specific charges and share their work on the intranet.

Strategic planning and goal setting is an iterative process that is dynamic through the course of the year. The Leadership Group, comprised of President's Council, Planning and Budget Council,

academic area chairs, employee group leaders, and other service department leaders, suggests strategic goals at the strategy retreat and refines them for submission to the Board of Trustees (further outlined in 8P1). Using the Leadership Group of the College in this way, ensures horizontal and vertical communication throughout the organization and assists the College in aligning work.

To determine whether NMC will offer a new program or service, the College uses a formal decision-making process (1P3, Figure 1.3) guided by staff policy D-502.02. The process engages multiple groups at NMC including the Curriculum Committee, a sub-team of Faculty Council, President's Council, Planning and Budget Council, and the Board of Trustees.

Day to day operational decisions are made at the departmental management level. Department leaders use the unit operational goals on the annual planning document to guide decision-making ensuring alignment with NMC's goals and directions.

NMC's Governance Councils, committee structures, and organizational structure enables the Board, faculty and staff, and students to be involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes (**Accreditation Core Component 5B3**).

5P6   NMC's Strategic Plan includes performance metrics for the college which are tracked on the institutional metrics dashboard on the intranet site of the Office of Planning, Research, and Effectiveness (ORPE). NMC incorporates national benchmarks in determining targets. The Board monitors the performance of the college against a selection of strategic goals each of which has a defined metric and target. The annual planning document (A3) is designed so that the college and individual units are reviewing performance on metrics prior to adopting action plans for the following year (**Accreditation Core Components 5C3-5**).   The aligned planning process starts with a thorough review of data on learners, employees, and the community, as well as an environmental scan of external drivers. Additionally, in our quality system we track performance metrics for every AQIP category which also inform strategy and operational planning across the college (**Accreditation Core Component 5C3-5**).

In order to decide whether to create a new academic program or service, the college uses its four-stage decision making process that requires the proposer to provide data at each stage to move the request forward. Innovative new service ideas also go through a truncated version of the decision-making process. Various governance councils, programmatic advisory groups, and the Curriculum Committee consider minimum sets of information before moving the proposal to the next stage in the process (i.e., Idea Summary, to Market Research, to Business Models, to Implementation Plan) (further defined in 1P3) (**Accreditation Core Component 5C3**). The templates for the deliverable reports in each stage are accessible to all employees electronically on the shared network drive and the website. The most extensive data requirements occur in Stage 2, Market Research (detailed in 3P5). NMC considers shifts in technology and funding, and develops a business model based on anticipated enrollment for the program. The Cost to Educate model available internally on NMC's digital dashboard helps provide an understanding of NMC's current capacity, and to anticipate economic fluctuations. Each Board of Trustees meeting includes a Financial Report where the Board reviews budget to actual financial results monthly (**Accreditation Core Component 5C4-5**).

Each major NMC project team uses the continuous improvement model of plan-do-check-adjust. Project teams check their work and performance results with project sponsors and steering teams and make adjustments accordingly. The teams use data for measuring project outcomes which are tracked on the Metrics Dashboard on the intranet.

The use of data and performance information is aligned and integrated within the annual planning process. Environmental scanning informs the strategic plan and goal setting, which leads to proposals for new programs and services. The market research and business modeling for new programs and services informs the metrics and the action plans. Continuous improvement initiatives operationalized by action project teams stem from strategic plan goals so that the College is always

working on its top priorities. Budget allocation decisions reflect these priorities (**Accreditation Core Component 5C1-2**).

5P7 NMC has several formal mechanisms for intra-organizational communication. After a Board of Trustees meeting, the Executive Director of Public Relations and Marketing sends all employees a next-day informal recap by e-mail. The President sends a written update of activities and issues to the Board of Trustees and to all employees. Student news, employee news in the Intercom and the President's Update are hosted on the *NMC Communique'*, an online home for campus news.

A weekly employee newsletter *Intercom* is emailed to all employees. The news items for that publication are also integrated daily into the *Communique*' and headlines from those stories appear on the MyNMC intranet home page. Based on work of an AQIP action project team "Enhancing Employee Communication and Collaboration," NMC re-designed its intranet to better serve the information needs of employees.   All employees may submit news and events for the *Intercom.* At least once per semester, the President holds an Opening Conference and Town Hall meeting open to all employees and available on the web. The President presents the top issues of the college and answers questions in this open format. College committees have established representation from various employee groups, campuses, etc., in order to facilitate communication. There is a student electronic newsletter released twice monthly and a *Communique'* companion, called the *Student News Update*, which is updated as news is available.

College Councils and committees share their meeting minutes on the intranet. Through the email system NMC has established groups, based on departments, employee classification, or membership on a specific task force to facilitate direct and efficient communication among members. Several groups have established a "class" within the Moodle course management system, and we are increasingly utilizing applications such as Google documents and sites to enhance collaboration and communication.

5P8 NMC has a publicly articulated mission statement, vision and values (**Accreditation Core Component 1B1**). NMC leaders further reinforce the direction of the college through the purposes, strategic directions, and institutional effectiveness criteria, which identify what NMC does for whom (also see Chart 1) (**Accreditation Core Component 1B2-3**). NMC's value statements are consistent with the AQIP principles of high performance organizations. The values are reinforced throughout the processes to attract, develop, and retain NMC's talent. New employees are oriented to NMC's mission and values as part of the On-Boarding process (4P4). The performance assessment and planning system (MyPDCA) for staff includes discussions with supervisors on the College's foundational competencies that mirror NMC's value statements.

NMC's mission and values are embedded in our decision-making process for new programs and services.   Ideas for new programs and services are encouraged from multiple sources and vetted through the four-phased process that integrates the College's mission (see 1P3, Figure 1.2). In the Idea Summary, proposers are asked to describe the new program or service's fit with the organizational mission and strategic directions. The planning and budgeting processes also reinforce NMC's mission and values. Departments requesting additional resources during the budgeting cycle must justify the request with an analysis of performance metrics, a description of how the resources will support the operational and strategic plan goals, and a consideration for potential collaborative partnerships.

NMC's strategic directions and the elevation of the institutional effectiveness criteria to Board Ends policy (Board Policy C-104.00) ensures that NMC's values are embedded into planning and decision-making processes.

5P9   There is a combination of institutionally provided and funded activities for developing leadership at NMC. Starting with the Board of Trustees, Board members are encouraged to attend the professional developmental sessions provided by the Association of Community College Trustees at its annual meeting. At each regular monthly Board of Trustees meeting, the agenda typically calls for: a Program Focus report, enrollment report, financial report, Foundation report, Legislative Issues report, Board Chair and presidential update. This ensures that the Board of Trustees is knowledgeable about NMC in order to provide oversight for financial and academic policies (**Accreditation Core Component 5B2**).

A newly designed Professional Development Institute (further explained in category 4) for all employees recently launched and will be a key component in the processes for developing faculty and staff. The Center for Instructional Excellence (CIE) supports the development of instructional skills and provides a forum for sharing best practices among faculty. CIE hosts monthly Friday Forums and two Professional Development days throughout the academic year.

NMC encourages leadership development and the sharing of leadership knowledge in its participatory governance councils (defined in 5P5) (**Accreditation Core Component 5B1**). Academic department chairs choose a national conference to attend as a team each year (i.e., The Chair Academy, American Association of Community Colleges annual meeting, etc.). Executive staff members as a team choose professional development opportunities that align with accomplishing the strategic goals (i.e., resource development, organizational accountability, etc.). Other employee groups provide professional development for their members annually. The Administrative/Professional group hosts an Impact Series book reading to encourage staff growth in innovation and leadership. Minutes from employee group meetings are posted on the shared drive for the employees in those groups.

Members of the governance councils, academic leadership, and service department leadership form the Leadership Group which is scheduled to meet three times a year for knowledge sharing, and collaborating on planning goals, and checking progress (**Accreditation Core Component 5B3**). The Foundations in Leadership program was recently implemented in summer 2013 with a cohort of eight up and coming college leaders. The Foundations in Leadership program is a part of the Professional Development Institute.

5P10 NMC's process for ensuring the transfer and safeguarding of organizational knowledge is operationalized in documenting key processes with work instructions for standard work (as evidenced by operational goals on departmental annual planning documents). For leadership succession, when the President is unavailable to perform his duties, an acting-president is designated from among the Vice Presidents or other executive staff to carry on college activities. Human Resources is developing a process for viewing the entire talent pool of the college through several variable lenses built around core competencies (also explained in 4P5). These goals are documented on the strategic plan. In this way, the college will be able to better plan for changes in the talent pool and to continue to have the appropriate range of skills and competencies needed to achieve the strategic goals. Moreover, through leadership development and supervisor workshops, we are working on a systematic approach to training managers on how to evaluate and grow competencies to meet the changing work needs.

5R1 NMC measures its performance in Leading and Communicating in several ways. The Board of Trustees evaluates the College's work annually as part of the President's performance evaluation. Relevant to Leading and Communicating in the Board's evaluation are these key responsibilities:
- effective community relations
- effective strategic planning processes
- fiscal health
- development of appropriate employee base
- adequacy of physical assets

- effective board-president relations
- excellence in educational offerings

Employees evaluate components of Leading and Communicating directly through the Employee Engagement Survey. We also measure whether we are living our values through the Engagement Survey.

When evaluating our results, NMC uses "stoplight" color coding to easily see where we are meeting target (green), not meeting target but trending in the right direction (yellow), and not meeting target and trending in the wrong direction (red).

5R2 The Board of Trustees evaluates the key responsibilities for College performance annually (Table 5.1). While, NMC met the target in all areas, we focused on improving the two areas with the lowest means in the 2012 strategic planning cycle: develop an employee base to meet the needs of the college, and to ensure the physical assets of the college will meet the needs of the college (Table 5.1, rows 4-5). These results have informed our strategic goals and have guided improvement efforts.

First, the Talent AQIP Action Project, now in phase 3, was designed to develop the employee base NMC needs in order to meet the needs of the College and to achieve the strategic plan. The Professional Development Institute will play a key role in developing the skills and competencies of NMC's employees. Second, as a result of the evaluation regarding NMC's physical assets, NMC completed a Campus Master Planning process aligned with the strategic plan, and prioritized construction and renovation projects. The plan was approved by the Board of Trustees in spring 2013. For the next strategic planning cycle we will evaluate these results and decide the priority actions for the college.

Table 5.1 Board of Trustees Evaluation of Key Responsibilities (scale = unsatisfactory (1), acceptable (2), commendable (3), and outstanding-expectations exceeded (4)) (N=7)					
	2010	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**Target**
1 Maintain community relations	3.86	3.70	3.83	3.57 ↓	3.0
2 Maintain effective strategic planning processes	3.57	3.70	3.75	3.57 ↓	3.0
3 Ensure fiscal health of the college	3.79	3.80	3.75	3.79 ↑	3.0
4 Develop employee base to meet the needs of the college	3.43	3.20	3.41	3.5 ↑	3.0
5 Ensure the physical assets of the college will meet the needs of the college	3.86	3.80	3.58	3.57 ↓	3.0
6 Build and maintain effective Board-President relations	3.57	3.70	3.75	3.57 ↓	3.0
7 Develop and maintain excellence in educational offerings	3.71	3.50	3.66	3.79 ↑	3.0

Color Key	Meets or exceeds min/target	Does not meet target but trend in right direction	Does not meet target, trend steady or in wrong direction

With the Employee Engagement Survey, we focus on evaluating three areas: Strategic Alignment, Culture, and Engagement. There are seven statements for which we ask employees to agree or disagree that measure our processes in Leading and Communicating (Table 5.2). The level of agreement in all the statements, except the last one which remained stable, declined in the last year.

Color coding and analyzing the trends helps NMC prioritize improvement actions and to decide on the areas that need further research. For metrics from the Employee Engagement Survey, NMC

selects courses of action based on the percent of employees agreeing with the process and outcome statements. Currently, NMC's target is 90% agreement. However, we are reassessing the reasonableness of this target when factoring in all employee types: regular, adjuncts, and supplementals. We are considering setting multiple targets based on the employee type. We tend to look at those statements that are below the top quartile for improvement actions.

	Table 5.2 Leading and Communicating: Level of Agreement from the Employee Engagement Survey (scale = Don't Know (0), Strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5))	2011 (n=402)	2012 (n=399)	2013 (n=405)	Target
1	Q1_1. I understand how my job contributes to achieving NMC's strategic directions. (5P2)	88%	89%	87% ↓	90%
2	Q1_2. I understand how my job contributes to institutional effectiveness improvements. (5P2)	85%	88%	83% ↓	90%
3	Q1_5. NMC has a clear vision for the future. (5P1)	79%	82%	80% ↓	90%
4	Q1_6. NMC's President is effective at communicating this vision. (5P8)	81%	83%	78% ↓	90%
5	Q1_7. My supervisor works to align the goals of our department with the goals of the College. (5P2)	79%	82%	79% ↓	90%
6	Q2_3. College information is communicated in a timely fashion. (5P7)	80%	80%	75% ↓	90%
7	Q2_14. The shared governance structure is an effective way to lead the organization. (5P5)	53%	56%	51% ↓	90%
8	Q2_15. Communication from NMC's shared governance councils and committees is useful. (5P7)	62%	61%	61% ↔	90%

For four of the six value statements measured in this category (Table 5.3), over 80% of employees agree that either the college or the individual is living the values (Table 5.3, rows 3-6). We continue to put our values into action by embedding them in our processes and strategic directions.

	Table 5.3 Measuring NMC's Values (5P1, 5P8): Level of Agreement from the Employee Engagement Survey (scale = Don't Know (0), Strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5))	2011 (n=402)	2012 (n=399)	2013 (n=405)	Target
1	Q2_1. NMC is agile in responding to learner needs.	63%	69%	69% ↔	90%
2	Q2_2. NMC's culture encourages me to do things in new ways.	69%	73%	71% ↓	90%
3	Q2_16. NMC employees hold themselves to high ethical standards.	87%	88%	86% ↓	90%
4	Q3_9. I am committed to continuous improvement in my work.	96%	98%	97% ↓	90%
5	Q3_15. I am comfortable taking thoughtful risks in my work.	78%	83%	84% ↑	90%
6	Q3_16. I collaborate with others in performing my role at the college.	87%	88%	87% ↓	90%

5R3   The Office of Research, Planning and Effectiveness has been collaborating with other community colleges in Michigan in order to benchmark results for employee engagement. Moreover, NMC's involvement in the Continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN) has been beneficial in sharing best practices among community colleges and institutional outside higher education on Leading and Communicating. In 2011, NMC's participation through CQIN at the Disney Leadership Institute informed work on our Talent Action Project. In 2012, the CQIN summer workshop focused on Organizational Accountability, and provided professional development for the executive staff with Partners in Leadership, Inc. Our results seem to be comparable to our fellow institutions in CQIN.

5I1   The most comprehensive improvement NMC has made in Leading and Communicating is the development and implementation of a systematic, aligned, and integrated planning process that ties together strategic planning, operational planning, and budgeting (further explained in 8P1). An AQIP Action project team designed the process and NMC is in the third cycle of the process. In this cycle, we have added a mid-year review check on the strategic goals, and a formal end of year check. The process allows NMC to be more intentional in connecting goals to the mission, vision, and values. It is useful to leaders in setting directions that reinforce principles of high performing institutions. The Board of Trustees in its evaluation of the strategic planning process had this to say:
- "Most targets on track. Continued support necessary. Excellent coordination."
- "[The President is] constantly monitoring, checking and modifying and divesting."
- "Appropriate initiatives are properly defined as strategic so progress may be measured."
- "[NMC] continues to demonstrate best practices in evaluating and acting on strategic directions…"
- "Some improvement could be made in the strategic planning process with regard to presentation of reasoning which supports some conclusions."
- "While the strategic planning process continues to evolve, the monitoring and follow-up is excellent."

   Another AQIP Action Project, Enhancing Employee Communication and Collaboration, initiated several projects that improved processes related to Leading and Communicating. The project team: 1) created an information architecture for our intranet based on user input, 2) designed mechanisms for maintaining accurate and up-to-date Google Groups for employee collaboration, 3) enhanced single sign-on service for employees.

   The Talent III AQIP Action project team has been working continuously for four years to improve our processes related to attracting, developing, and retaining talent. With the advent of the Professional Development Institute NMC will be better able to develop key institutional leadership qualities and ensure the safeguarding and transfer of institutional knowledge.

5I2   NMC leaders have worked to develop a culture of continuous improvement such that the plan, do, check, adjust cycle is embedded into all processes. Previously, we did not have measures for Leading and Communicating. With the development and implementation of the Employee Engagement Survey, we now have a rich source of data from which to glean opportunities for improvement from a broad constituency. Data from the Engagement Survey measure processes in other categories as well.

   Structurally, the composition of the President's Council has transformed since the last Systems Portfolio. Along with the President, the four Vice Presidents on President's Council now represent a large majority of the talent and resources of NMC:
- Vice President for Educational Services
- Vice President for Lifelong and Professional Learning

- Vice President for Finance and Administration
- Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Services

Augmenting the President and Vice Presidents, are Executive Directors from Resource Development, Public Relations, Research, Planning, and Effectiveness, and Technology, and the Executive Assistant, who provide expertise in given areas. Additionally, NMC created a Coordinator for Planning and Market Understanding to administer the aligned planning process.

Among NMC's values which both shape and reflect our culture, are the following qualities that encourage setting and achieving targets for improved performance:

- We will continuously improve the learning experience and its global relevance to those we serve through **innovation, agility and thoughtful risk-taking**.
- Each of us will strive to **exceed expectations** for quality and service in all that we do.
- We will **exhibit foresight** by monitoring the changing world around us and taking actions today that prepare us to meet future needs of our communities.

Systems Appraisal input and feedback from key stakeholders provide the direction for NMC's ongoing commitment to continuous quality improvement.

Champion: Category Six, Supporting Organizational Operations Introduction

The primary mechanism for aligning administrative support goals with NMC's mission and values is the strategic plan. In order to achieve our administrative support goals, the college is organized in functional groups that share responsibility for achieving those goals.

NMC's process for identifying the support service needs of students and other key stakeholders (**6P1**) is *aligned*. The aligned planning process ensures that NMC's process for identifying the administrative support needs of faculty and staff (**6P2**) is *aligned*. The aligned planning process is in the third cycle and is stable though we continually try to improve it. It is consciously managed by a Coordinator for Planning and Market Understanding. At the mid-year check and end of year check on the strategic plan and the planning process, we evaluate the process for potential improvements.

The processes for designing, maintaining and communicating support process information that contributes to physical safety and security (**6P3**) is moving *from systematic to aligned* with the improvements that NMC has put into place (see 6I1). Our processes promote closer coordination among institutional units. Security personnel work together with Student Services staff and with Educational Services to ensure common messages to students, and employees.

Processes for managing our key support service processes on a day-to-day basis (**6P4**) are *systematic*. Likewise, documenting our support processes to encourage knowledge sharing, innovation, and empowerment (**6P5**) are also *systematic*. Managing these processes happens mostly at the departmental level.

Champion: Category Six, Supporting Organizational Operations

6P1   NMC gathers information about the support service needs of students and other key stakeholders institutionally through a systematic aligned planning process (further explained in 8P1). Before planning courses of action, NMC has three modes for "grasping the situation" or the current environmental context: Listening to the Community through community conversations and surveys, Listening to employees through surveys and other various mechanisms, and Listening to Students through surveys and our student complaint processes (see 3P6, Figure 3.3). On the Service Effectiveness Survey students are asked to rate the level of importance of key service areas of the college. The College prioritizes the information and acts by following up with student group meetings, reviewing written and verbal complaints, and through establishing continuous improvement projects.

"Grasping the Situation" is an on-going process of gathering and using information through the year. Not only is the information evaluated at the time it is gathered, we also synthesize our data and information prior to the kick-off of our strategic planning session each summer as part of the Strategy Retreat Workbook.

Operationally, prior to each semester start, cross-functional departments in Enrollment Management, Business Office, and Facilities areas meet to assess what worked well and what needs to be improved in terms of support services.

6P2   NMC identifies the administrative support service needs of employees in a number of ways. In NMC's process for Campus Master Planning, developers met with individual departments to assess long range facility needs, and created a plan to respond to those projected strategic growth areas.

Operationally, NMC's annual planning process is an effective mechanism for identifying administrative support service needs. Each academic and service department posts its annual plan on the College's intranet where service departments can view them to identify needs. In addition, the Leadership Group (defined in category 5), comprised of members from governance councils, and department directors and academic chairs, meets after the plans are submitted and, in a market-type setting, go around to representatives of the technology, finance, facilities, human resources, and institutional research departments to discuss needs of faculty and staff. This process ensures that operational priorities are aligned horizontally and also vertically with strategic priorities.

Other more tactical needs are identified through NMC Technology Help Desk ticket system, the Facilities Work Order ticket system (available to employees on the intranet home page) and semester meetings with building representatives to identify building needs.

6P3   Design of key support processes related to safety and security starts with the identification of the needs of our stakeholders. Campus Security provides public links on the NMC website with the most pertinent information for students and employees, including the "Red Flag" Information Reporting System (described below). The Emergency Management Team in collaboration with local authorities designs the Emergency Response Plan. The College's Emergency Management Team is comprised of the President, and the Vice-Presidents, and members of the Emergency Response Team, which includes Student Services, Security personnel and local authorities. The Management Team is chaired by the Vice President for Finance and Administration. The team regularly reviews the status of our safety and security systems, identifies issues, sets priorities, and follows up on changes. Select members of the team sit on a regional taskforce to ensure coordination of first responders.

In the event of an emergency the Incident Command Team will undertake an immediate evaluation of the emergency and assess the ongoing threat to the campus. This information will be relayed to the Policy Team for determining the extent of NMC's commitment and communications

position on an on-going basis. The Policy Team, led by the President, will specifically manage all external affairs of NMC during and after the emergency. During an emergency, the following individuals will be kept informed at all times: Director of Campus Security, Director of Facilities, Director of Public Relations, and the President. The Incident Command Team will respond to the incident under the advice of and in coordination with the Policy Team.

NMC uses a variety of tools to communicate time sensitive information to our entire community: email and voice mail broadcasts, audio broadcasts to phones and speakers, text messages, computer desktop alerts and local media. The Emergency Management Team communicates with meetings and email, and shares its documentation for handling emergencies in both written and electronic formats. Safety Training for students and employees is made accessible through videos in NMC's content management system. The College practices different safety and security scenarios regularly: fire drills, lock down drills, etc. All courses show a 7-minute security video to students at the beginning of the semester.

Additionally, for academic students, trends in national approaches to safety and security suggested the need for a process of early intervention into behavioral issues. NMC staff with assistance from external consultants from the National College & Higher Education Risk Management organization created and implemented the Behavioral Incident Report Team (BIRT) (also referenced in 3P6). BIRT is defined for students in [Staff Policy D-602.01](#) the Student Rights and Responsibilities process. For integration of information, several members of the Emergency Management Team are also on the BIRT. The BIRT meets on a systematic schedule or as needed based on the situation. A process flowchart for how NMC acts on behavioral incidents through BIRT is outlined in Figure 6.1.

6P4 NMC manages its key student, administrative and organizational support service processes on a day-to-day basis using [help desk](#) ticketing systems, project work order systems, and data dashboards. Learning Resources and Technologies (LRT) monitors its help desk ticket and project request systems daily to identify problems departments are having with our information technology infrastructure. LRT also uses specified service levels, developed in conjunction with users, to establish expected response times for different types of issues at different times of the week. Periodically, the help desk provides a chat service for quick resolution to technology issues. Facilities work orders are tracked for response time and completion (see results section).

The [digital dashboard](#) provides enrollment management information on inquiries, applicants, admits, and registrants. Academic chairs can access [course efficiency data](#) in real time to make decisions regarding section fill rates and section scheduling. Financial aid disbursements and recruitment statistics are presented in real time to inform decision-making. Daily data collection and reporting with weekly compiling in Health Services, Advising, and Outreach Services, helps track usage, and student support needs. Evaluation of that data by the Enrollment Management and Student Services team informs decisions regarding training needs in the case of faculty advisors, and resource staffing needs to be able to respond in high traffic time periods.

Human Resource on-boarding processes are tracked in our *Red Carpet* on-boarding software system. Tasks are automatically tracked and reminders are sent to candidates and supervisors digitally to complete those tasks in the on-boarding and orientation processes.

Figure 6.1 Red Flag/BIRT Process for behavioral incidents

```
Student, Staff or          BIRT Team Leader assigns                                          Decision
Faculty report             investigator and changes        Follow        NO              Documented
Student Red Flag           status to "under               -up?                           in Red Flag
incident                   investigation"

       |                                                    YES                              NO

Staff issues go to HR

Student, Staff or Faculty                    Investigator gathers
provides additional                          appropriate                       Follow
information                                  information and                   -up?
                                             documents in Red Flag

                                                     YES

Investigator refers                                                      Investigator
student to appropriate       Counseling                                  changes status
resources/ information       Judicial Affairs                            to "Under
and documents in Red         Security                                    Review"
Flag, conducts               Dean/VP
appropriate follow-up        Department Chair

                                          Monthly BIRT
                      NO                  reviews open           YES            Case closed
                                          cases.  Close                         in Red Flag
                                          case?
```

6P5 NMC documents support processes to encourage knowledge sharing, innovation, and empowerment through standard work procedures, and flow charts. Standard work procedures are typically departmental-centric. Flowcharts of processes that are cross-functional are shared with other departments on the intranet and shared drive. The Learning Resources & Technologies staff uses a wiki-based system titled ITDocs to share information about the configuration and management of NMC's enterprise systems. In addition the Help Desk Ticket system provides a record of how problems have been resolved and serves as a knowledge base for our IT support staff. Other cross-functional teams, such as the Curriculum Committee, use Google Sites and Google Docs to share agendas, minutes, and work processes among team members.

NMC's Intranet, the network shared drives, and Google applications, are used to share information between and among departments. Information about key services and frequently asked questions are communicated on the NMC website. The Intranet home page (Figure 6.2) is the first page employees see after successfully logging in to their computers. It provides a portal to the most important information required by faculty and staff to meet their administrative support needs. The main menu contains "Favored Links," for items that we "temporarily" promote; they change occasionally.

Figure 6.2 Screenshot NMC's Intranet Home Page

Within the main content area, there are three columns; the first is "Employee Announcements," limited to news important to employees for the daily operations of NMC; and also recent news items from NMC's Intercom (further referenced in category 5). The second column contains links to services that would normally require a separate login, but with Single Sign-On, logs in most employees automatically. The services are listed by generic description, with the brand name in parentheses; this helps employees better understand what these services are. The third column links to those sites that are most frequently used based on usage statistics. A search results page helps employees find what they might be looking for, and an employee directory contains thumbnail photos of employees. Sharing information in this way is a more proactive approach and meets some of the most basic administrative needs of faculty and staff.

6R1 To assess student, administrative and organizational support service processes, NMC measures student satisfaction with regard to specific student service areas such as tutoring, library, orientation, facilities, and scheduling by means of surveys both NMC originals and through the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). The Technology Help Desk survey measures satisfaction of both students and staff with technology support services by randomly surveying about 10% of the tickets it receives with an emailed web-based survey. Over the past year we have revised the process to increase user response. Users indicate if they are satisfied or dissatisfied, and then can provide additional comments.

Additionally, NMC uses course efficiency rates (number of seats filled divided by the number of seats taken) to measure and inform scheduling efficiency processes. We use overall expenditures per full time equivalent student, by awards conferred, and by institutional activity (Table 6.5) as measures of institutional productivity, and benchmark those results state-wide with the other similarly sized community colleges. Moreover, establishing a budgetary model and tracking budget to actual is a continual process throughout the year for the business office to best manage NMC's fiscal responsibility. Financials are reported every month in the Board of Trustees regular meetings. Fiscal metrics tracked as a part of our strategic plan include: the primary reserve ratio, the composite financial index, and the net operating ratio.

Every academic and service department tracks programmatic or service-specific metrics on their A3 annual planning documents (further explained in category 8). A summary of departmental metrics is compiled by the Coordinator for Planning and Market Understanding and made available on the Office of Research, Planning, and Effectiveness intranet site for college employees. For instance, Student Life, Disability Support Services, and Advising all track the number of students serviced by month and year and the nature of the visit. The Library evaluates the use of the print and book collections to identify the parts of the collection most effective in meeting the needs of the students and faculty. In Financial Aid, metrics include "Peak" financial aid processing times, number of applications and verifications.

6R2 The Service Effectiveness Survey administered to students gauges the perceived importance of and satisfaction with several key NMC services. Results from NMC's Service Effectiveness survey are presented in category 3R2. The importance results led NMC to discontinue its printed schedule and catalog, and to pursue wireless internet access in all common areas and most classrooms (category 3R2, Table 3.3). The satisfaction results prompted NMC to revise its new student orientation (category 3R2, Table 3.4).

The gap between importance and satisfaction is plotted to give the Performance Priority Matrix and serves to start the discussion about where NMC's service retention priorities and marketing opportunities reside (category 3R2, Figure 3.4). It suggests areas that are meeting expectations and others that are exceeding expectations but also fall below the importance mean. Directors use these

results as they plan for improvement projects on their annual A3 planning documents and budget requests.   NMC's cost to educate model (available to NMC employees) regularly helps NMC track programmatic revenue and expenditures in the digital dashboard.

This past spring 2013, NMC administered the CCSSE to set baselines for our efforts in improving Active and Collaborative Learning and Student and Faculty Interaction. We also are using the results to benchmark the Student Support category with other medium-sized institutions across the country (Figure 6.3). We are assessing those specific areas in all the categories in which NMC was significantly below the national benchmark for our peers. We are considering the frequency for administering CCSSE this fall. The plan is for our second administration in spring 2015.

Figure 6.3 Benchmark Results from the CCSSE (NMC N=778)
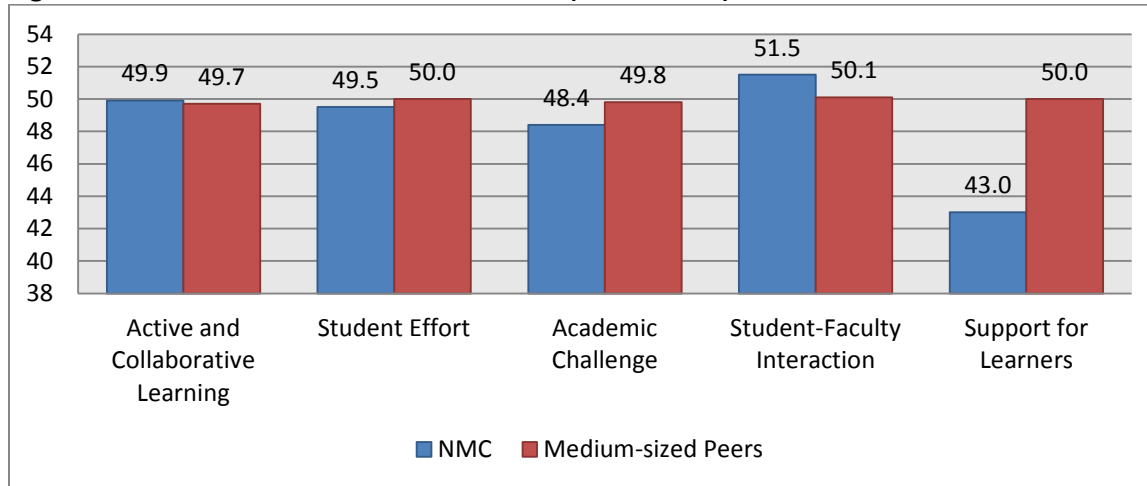
6R3 NMC's instructional expenditure rate is a measure of administrative support service processes. As compared to peers, NMC's rate of instructional expenditures per credit hour and per full-time equivalent student is above the median (68th percentile) on the National Community College Benchmark Survey (Table 6.1). Overtime, NMC's efficiency has increased as instructional expenditures per credit hours and FTE have declined.

	Table 6.1 Instructional Expenditure Rates				
		FY09	**FY10**	**FY11**	**FY12**
1	**Instructional Expenditures per Credit Hour**	$175	$158	$164	$163
2	NMC Percentile of Peers	80%	72%	73%	68%
3	Peer Median	$130	$126	$131	$136
4	Number of Peers Reporting	244	251	233	225
5	**Instructional Expenditures per Full-Time Equivalent Student**	$5237	$4753	$4908	$4892
6	NMC Percentile of Peers	80%	72%	73%	68%
7	Peer Median	$3914	$3766	$3932	$4079
8	Number of Peers Reporting	244	251	233	225
9	Note: Instructional expenditures for the fiscal year includes salaries, benefits, supplies, travel, and equipment for all full and part-time faculty and other instructional administration and support personnel				
10	Source: National Community College Benchmark Project; Full-Time Equivalent Student = Total semester credit hours for the fiscal year divided by 30.				

NMC's productivity is also measured by comparing the instructional expenditures per awards conferred with the other community colleges in the state of Michigan (Table 6.2). While NMC's instructional expenditures have increased overtime, so have the awards conferred, so that NMC expends less per award conferred. As compared to all the 28 community colleges in the State of Michigan, NMC spent less per award conferred in 2011-2012, which is our target. NMC's instructional expenditures include at least two higher cost programs the other Michigan community college do not have: the Great Lakes Maritime Academy with the Training Ship, State of Michigan, and an Aviation program with a fleet of airplanes.

Table 6.2 Instructional Expenditures per Awards Conferred					
		FY2009	**FY2010**	**FY2011**	**FY2012**
1	NMC Awards Conferred	475	618	706	943
2	Instructional Expenditures	$13,723,786	$15,310,345	$16,653,483	$16,788,422
3	NMC Productivity Rate	$28,892.18	$22,206.77	$19,438.79	$14,553.33
4	Average MI Productivity Rate	$18,783.99	$18,859.46	$18,016.46	$16,954.82
5	Difference	$10,108.19	$3,347.31	$1,422.33	($2,401.49)
6	Source: State of Michigan Databook					

NMC's fiscal metrics from the strategic plan show that we are within our target ranges, for fiscal strength, for our unrestricted net assets to total expenses ratio, and in the net assets to total revenue ratio (Table 6.3). The distribution of operating fund expenditures by activity at NMC has remained relatively consistent over the past four fiscal years (Table 6.4). The percent of operating funds to student services and instructional support has increased, though NMC is lower than the peer group average in the percent expended in student services, and higher in instructional support. The percent going toward administration and plant operations has decreased. We track how we compare with our state peers to rationalize our budget annually.

At the course section level, NMC tracks course efficiency rates for decision-making regarding section scheduling (Table 6.5). For the past three years, NMC's fall course efficiency rate (total seats filled/total seats available) had been 84% on average in fall and averaging 83% for spring. NMC's target course efficiency is 90%.

Over 90% of Technology Help Desk users were satisfied with the service received from Help Desk staff (Figure 6.4). Comments from users provide additional information for which we can identify improvement actions.

Table 6.3 Board Level Strategic Goals and Metrics: Financial Thriveability						
	NMC will develop and implement a budget plan that includes expansion of revenue opportunities along with operational efficiencies to assure fiscal thriveability.					
		FY2009	**FY2010**	**FY2011**	**FY2012**	**Target**
1	Primary Reserves ratio	0.26	0.27	0.31	0.32 ↑	0.20-0.40
2	Composite financial index; Compares unrestricted net assets to total expenses	1.93	3.32	3.05	3.62 ↑	3.0-5.0
3	Net Operating Ratio; Net assets/total revenue	0.13%	5.36%	3.29%	4.94% ↑	> 0

Table 6.4 Operating Fund Expenditures By Activity

		FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY12 Peers (Group 2) Ave.
1	INSTRUCTION	40.3%	44.4%	44.6%	43.9%	46.7%
2	PUBLIC SERVICE	1.0%	0.9%	1.8%	1.2%	0.9%
3	INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT	16.2%	16.6%	16.6%	18.1%	13.6%
4	STUDENT SERVICES	9.4%	10.3%	10.2%	10.6%	12.6%
5	ADMINISTRATION	12.7%	13.8%	14.0%	13.4%	14.8%
6	PLANT OPERATIONS	14.3%	14.0%	13.8%	12.8%	11.5%
7	Informational Technology	6.3%	-	-	-	-
10	Source: Michigan Activity Classification Structure (ACS)					

Table 6.5 Course Efficiency Ratings – Summary for All Disciplines & Departments

		2010	2011	2012	2013	Target
1	Fall Semester	87.6%	83.8%	83.5%	84.8%	90%
2	Spring Semester	86.0%	83.8%	84.2%	82.3%	90%
3	Source: NMC Digital Dashboard					

Figure 6.4 User Satisfaction with Help Desk Performance – Monthly for 2013
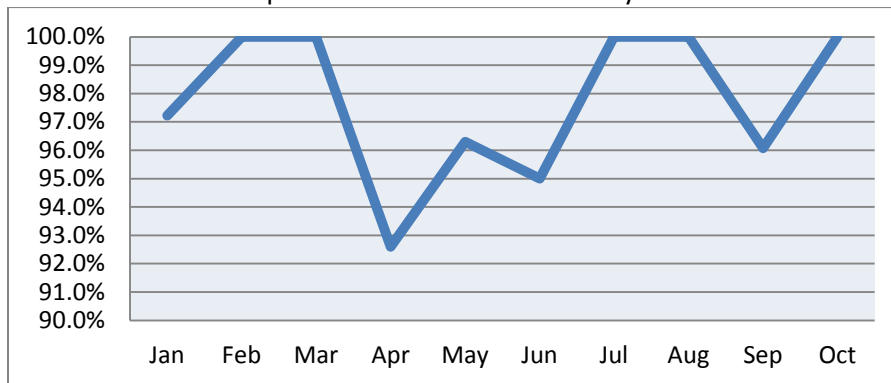
The Facilities Work Order Tracking data show us that while completion rates are meeting or exceeding our targets, time to completion is an area for improvement (Table 6.6).

Table 6.6 Facilities Work Order Tracking

		2010	2011	2012	2013*	Target
1	Number of Demand - Requests	6709	7709	7552	5555	
2	Percent Completed	97%	98%	98%	92%	95%
3	Average Time to Complete (days)	7.7	7.8	7.8	5.7 ↓	3.0
4	Planned Maintenance Items	3195	3162	3090	2089	
5	Percent Completed	98%	99%	97%	82%	95%
6	Average Time to Complete (days)	8.8	12.2	12.9	14.7 ↑	3.0
7	*as of September 10, 2013					

6R4 Many of the ways in which NMC uses the information and results to improve services was outlined in the process questions. The most formal way is through the aligned planning process, where departments review results from the metrics and set courses of action based on whether those metrics meet their targets. Real time data accessibility through the digital dashboard and the help desk and work order ticketing system provide automatic updates and reminders are pushed to those that need to take action. A Withdrawal Survey administered weekly to students who have dropped a course within that week, helps academic area chairs and service department directors know whether they can make adjustments within the semester to keep other students enrolled.

Using the plan-do-check-adjust cycle, NMC tests new processes and analyzes if the change resulted in improvements in service, efficiency or satisfaction. Feedback from these areas is addressed and corrective action taken as appropriate.

6R5 Where available, the data presented in the results sections show benchmarking. NMC benchmarks these results using the National Community College Benchmark Survey, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement, and the state-wide data for Michigan community colleges.

6I1 Some of NMC's improvements in this category have stemmed from the work of AQIP action projects. Pathways to Completion action project designed processes to help students who were eligible receive their degrees. NMC is cultivating a culture of advising based on the results of the action project. The Enhancing Developmental Education action project has helped to facilitate curricular alignment between the high schools and NMC for improved student preparation. Also, the creation of a Math Center staffed by faculty members and tutors has helped provide support services to students when they need it. Departments throughout the College are engaged in continuous improvement based on an assessment of their current processes. Here are some recent examples:

1. Enrollment Management and Business Office
Following a plan, do, check, adjust cycle led to the integration of financial aid and cashiering personnel into Student Financial Services. NMC is better able to support student needs with this type of collaboration. At the beginning of each semester, all enrollment management offices are open for extended hours to support students.

Additionally, tracking data in enrollment management on the digital dashboard indicated a problem with the online application because real time information showed the number of online applicants as lower than expected. Also, a discrepancy noted between applicants and admits identified a gap in dealing with applications where a piece of information or the application fee was missing. Once put into a pending folder, now the Director of Admissions follows up on those applications by notifying students of missing information, and the application is processed.

The Vice President of Finance and Administration implemented a new ADA compliance committee and improved ADA accessible parking and ADA entrance identification on campus maps, the web, and on buildings. NMC received positive results from a recent civil rights audit in fall 2013.

2. Campus Safety and Security
NMC has installed new additions to the security systems and we are training students, faculty and staff how to respond in the event of a dangerous situation. The College has initiated a new lockdown training procedure, updated its phone alert system, and has been installing new locks on campus doors that can be locked quickly from the inside. The college also created a 7-minute safety video that was required viewing for all students on this fall's first day of classes.

3. Human Resources

Considerable transformation in the systems used by Human Resources has occurred over the last four years since the last Systems Portfolio, many of which are outlined in category four, Valuing People. These transformations have been a response to the work of the Talent AQIP action project. Upgrades to administrative support systems in human resources have included the *Red Carpet* software suite for recruiting, hiring, on-boarding, and orientating employees, and *Wing Span* for the performance assessment and planning system (MyPDCA).

4. Technology

In Technology, NMC has:

- Implemented a Single Sign On system for nearly all enterprise systems to improve the ease of use in accessing those systems and enable users to recover or reset passwords without help desk support.
- Developed an electronic process for security approval to reduce the length of time it took to grant access for both new and current employees;
- Enhanced computer security by converting all computers to Active Directory and implementing an automated system to update computers with new software versions;
- Implemented a one-stop search tool for library book and journal article databases to make searching for information easier for students
- Developed a communications manual for technology announcements and for handling system downtime and phone issues
- Converted telephone system to a digital platform to reduce network complexity, provides advance telecommunications tools to all employees, and reduces annual maintenance costs;
- Increased Internet bandwidth by more than a factor of 10
- Within the Self-Service domain of the Banner ERP system, LRT improved grade entry procedures, automated printing of admissions letters, automated financial aid calculations for special programs
- Transitioned to a faster and more reliable texting service to improve the emergency alert system and provided voice broadcasts to all campus phones.
- Converted to Google Apps for email and calendaring services for students and employees
- Continuously transforms the Digital Dashboard to provide the data executives and managers need, such as financial aid statistics most recently

6I2 The most substantial infrastructure improvement to help NMC select specific processes to improve upon is the development and implementation of the aligned planning process (further outlined in category 8). The process has facilitated communication both horizontally and vertically through the organization so that operational action plans are aligned with strategic goals. Moreover, departments that provide services to other academic departments and service departments collaborate on goals. This alignment has continued to build NMC's culture of continuous improvement. The use of data in decision-making has led NMC to build systems that provide real-time results: the help desk, work order system, digital dashboard, withdrawal survey, point of service surveys, and the BIRT process have helped NMC improve performance in Supporting Organizational Operations.

Operations: Category Seven, Measuring Effectiveness Introduction

NMC's data processes are designed to meet external and internal stakeholder demands. The aligned planning and continuous improvement processes primarily drive internal information needs. Strategic goals and instructional and non-instructional unit goals are measured and results determine our action plans in a continuous improvement cycle of plan, do, check, and adjust.   Data and performance information are accessible through many mechanisms:

- The digital dashboard provides real-time information and projections for enrollment management and course efficiencies
- The Datamart provides data in a format that can be queried and analyzed for customized and ad hoc research
- The SunGard Higher Education Banner Self Service system provides reports to end users directly
- NMC's major enterprise systems (i.e., Banner, Resource 25 for scheduling and facility use, Raisers' Edge for resource development, and the Moodle course management system) provide access to data for operational work processes
- The Office of Research, Planning and Effectiveness (ORPE) employs multiple research methodologies to collect and analyze data in order to inform decision-making

NMC's processes for Measuring Effectiveness have progressed along the maturity scale from *reactive* to *aligned* in some areas over the last four years. Processes related to selecting, managing and distributing data and performance information, and ensuring the alignment of departmental data analyses (**7P1**, **7P2**, and **7P6**) are *integrated* with the College's planning processes. Developing organizational and department metrics follows a systematic annual schedule, and is supported by cross collaboration among the members of the Leadership Group (further defined in 5P1). Other institutions of higher education request permission to study our aligned planning process, program review process, and our digital dashboard.

Our processes for departments (**7P3**) are at the *systematic* stage in that departments have a consistent set of reports and use data for operational management. Users of those reports have a process, via our help desk ticket system, to request changes and improvements. With NMC's datamart, departments create and modify their own reports related to student data. The College is working to provide this type of access and flexibility for users of human resource and finance data.

Processes for collecting and analyzing data for overall performance (**7P4**) are moving from *systematic to aligned.* While NMC has data collection processes that are aligned throughout the organization at multiple levels (i.e., course, program, departmental unit, and functional area) that are consciously managed and improved upon, we are still striving to create processes to share and communicate the "big picture" of institutional effectiveness beyond tracking the strategic plan metrics.

NMC benchmarks its metrics and data with several established sources described throughout the Systems Portfolio and more fully in 7P5. Benchmarking is *integrated* into NMC's strategic planning process as comparative data informs strategic goal targets (**7R3**).

Our processes for timeliness, accuracy, reliability and security of our information (**7P7**) are *aligned* with multiple operational processes and are centrally managed by the Information Technology Services (ITS) department. ITS works with security champions in different areas such as Financial Aid, Student, Human Resources and Finance to ensure that our processes for managing and controlling access to data are efficient and meet our needs.

Operations: Category Seven, Measuring Effectiveness

7P1 NMC provides data and performance information for its instructional and non-instructional programs and services through many mechanisms. The digital dashboard provides real-time information for formative decision-making in enrollment management and in the management of classroom and instructional delivery (i.e., section efficiency, fill rates, and faculty assignments, etc.). For enrollment management planning, the digital dashboard provides data that compares current and past semesters, and projects future semesters. A significant addition to the dashboard in the past three years is the Cost to Educate model – a breakdown of each program's personnel, operating and capital costs and its revenues from tuition and fees is available to NMC employees. The Vice President for Educational Services, the Vice President for Lifelong and Professional Learning, and academic chairs use the model and the analysis of data for justifying budget requests and informing enrollment management processes.   Most recently, a systematic program by program review resulted in the recommendation of differential tuition in several programs to reduce the subsidy for the direct costs of high-cost programs. The Planning and Budget Council uses it in the budgeting process in order to allocate resources to support the needs of academic programs.

The student datamart provides a data warehouse type platform of flat files related to admissions, placement, course schedule, transcript, awards, transfer, and student demographics with which researchers create customized reports and analyses. Standard and customized reports are available in all of our enterprise (Ellucian-Banner) and departmental systems – especially for non-instructional programs and services: admissions, registration, finance, human resources, financial aid, scheduling and facility use, the Foundation; and educational media technologies.

The Office of Research, Planning and Effectiveness (ORPE) uses several research methods, such as survey research, data mining, and focus groups to collect data, analyze data, and provide reports to decision-makers. Employees who need data and information for their work submit requests directly to Information Technology Services (ITS) or ORPE for prioritization. The ORPE develops and maintains process maps for data collection through surveys and reporting to governmental and community stakeholders. ORPE maintains a metrics dashboard on the intranet with a goal to enhance it in the annual plan.

 7P2 Individual instructional and non-instructional units and ORPE select performance data based on the strategic goals of NMC at the institutional level and distribute that data in the form of metrics dashboards on the intranet for the whole college to use in decision-making (**Accreditation Core Component 5D1**). At the AQIP action project level, a member from ORPE participates as part of each action project team in order to provide guidance in measuring outcomes. For instance, the Enhancing Developmental Education action project team tracks developmental math and developmental English course persistence and success rates, along with success rates in the developmental sequence pipeline. All action projects stem from articulated goals on the strategic plan. Planning at the program level is part of an annual cycle; each academic program has defined metrics by which its success is measured. Those data are provided by ORPE on the intranet every fall for program review and planning (see category 1, Table 1.2 for the list).

External stakeholders such as the Carl D. Perkins Act core indicators, the Governor's Educational Dashboard, the State of Michigan Activities Classification Structure and appropriations legislation, and accrediting bodies determine metrics for the College. NMC's framework for evaluating performance of instructional and non-instructional units determines metrics and the data that is collected and analyzed.

Information to support planning and improvement efforts is compiled, managed, and distributed primarily by ITS and ORPE which collaborate to ensure the information needs of all departments are met. Both ITS and ORPE are asked for reports to evaluate various services and

programs. ITS creates operational reports in our enterprise system that others can run as needed. As described in 7P1 (and 3P1), ITS maintains an interactive web-based digital dashboard. Academic area chairs use the digital dashboard to inform course scheduling by tracking course efficiency rates (**Accreditation Core Component 5D1**).

ORPE maintains an institutional research agenda consistent with the strategic planning process. The research agenda includes systematic environmental scanning, scheduled survey administrations, and data analysis that provide performance information to action project teams, instructional, and non-instructional units (**Accreditation Core Components 5D1**). When requested ORPE provides ad hoc reporting and research to support specific research questions, such as pre-requisite analyses, and placement cut score studies.

7P3 The ITS department determines data collection, storage, and accessibility needs through conversations with unit administrators. ITS initially designed the digital dashboard as an executive level interactive web-based tool for leaders to access enrollment and student demographic data. It now includes information on financial aid and program financials. NMC maintains a student datamart from which data are accessed by researchers for the purpose of conducting analyses. The student datamart is dynamic and fed from the Ellucian-Banner system. It also contains archived information for specific dates during the fiscal and academic year, such as count day. Departments can access the datamart information using MS Excel, SPSS, Tableau or MS Access. The Datamart users group provides further input on the fields and tables that are needed. Users ask for additional variable fields in the datamart through requests to the Technology Help Desk as needed.

NMC's Intranet is another tool used to provide data and information for our employees (see screenshot in 6P5, Figure 6.2). NMC's content management system lets individual departments manage the content on their intranet site to be more responsive and agile to user needs. A recent AQIP action project – Enhancing Employee Communication - revised the intranet based on extensive employee feedback, including a card sorting exercise that involved more than 150 employees at the spring 2012 opening conference. Based on the results of that exercise, the intranet project team determined how to label tabs and how to organize information to provide better access.

ORPE works with unit leaders on self-assessments and program review. After compiling an aggregated list of program and service metrics, we determine departmental needs regarding performance information and help measure. Moreover, ORPE works with units requiring ad hoc research through the research design process beginning with clear articulation of a research question and hypotheses about what is being studied, and the potential decisions to be made. This process helps ORPE prioritize work as well. ORPE determines the appropriate methodology for the research and performs the data collection and analysis. On the ORPE intranet site there are links to all the reports and research conducted as a part of the institutional research agenda available to internal and some external stakeholders. Additionally, NMC uses the report taxonomy created by the Michigan Community College Data and Evaluation Committee to track data required by external stakeholders and creates internal process maps and work instructions for the sharing of knowledge.

7P4 The data and information required to measure NMC's overall performance is guided by the strategic plan and the Board of Trustees approved metrics and targets. The aligned planning process (see 8P1) begins in June with the Board of Trustees' performance evaluation of the Board-level strategic goals over the past year. ORPE synthesizes the previous year's results in three broad categories, "Listening to Employees", "Listening to Learners", and "Listening to the Community." This synthesis is the "grasping the situation" summary reviewed at the Strategy Retreat in August by the Leadership Group. The Leadership Group is responsible for identifying possible goals for the future fiscal year after

considering the synthesis of institutional survey results, the quarterly NMC Scan, our planning assumptions (8P2), and action project performance (**Accreditation Core Component 5D2**).

A plan, do, check, adjust continuous improvement cycle is regularly implemented each fiscal year. At the mid-year and end of year checks (President's Evaluation p.46-55) on the strategic plan, the Board of Trustees checks the metrics and progress on the strategic goals. The metrics are updated and shared through the organization on the intranet as part of the metrics dashboard.

Every department uses a standard A3 planning document (further described in 8P2) to articulate goals that align with the overarching college-wide strategic plan. Both instructional and non-instructional areas use the A3 to track metrics and targets which suggest action plans for improvement. ORPE builds an aggregated view of area plans and metrics in order to ensure outcomes are aligned with NMC's outcomes and posts on the intranet with all the area annual plans.

NMC's Quality Check-Up reviewers reported that, "…data-informed decision-making is being made more systematic through the alignment of planning processes. NMC has rolled out an internally developed A3 tool at the functional unit, division and aggregate levels. The A3 tool neatly summarizes current and future states with corresponding measures."

Institution-wide AQIP Action Projects are determined by priorities in the strategic plan. Each project team is expected to use an A3 project plan in which quantifiable progress metrics are tracked. Action project teams document their work and post shared documents on the shared drive for the campus community. About twice a year, in addition to the progress updated to AQIP, the action project teams report their progress to the whole campus through presentations and/or videos available on the intranet. A phased approach to action projects ensures iterative improvements and continual progress toward our strategic goals (**Accreditation Core Component 5D2**).

7P5   The need for comparative data is inherent to our decision-making processes, including employee compensation, enrollment management, and in measuring institutional effectiveness. As part of the decision-making process (D-502.02) (explained in 1P3), different stages of the process require us to collect and analyze comparative information. For instance, in market research, we research the primary competitors for a program or service we are starting or revising. We research best practices in program content and delivery, as well as services offered, in the decision-making model. We deliberately find a mix of descriptive and predictive data for labor market information even when we see the environment changing faster than data capture.

In enrollment management, decision-makers look at educational competitors for students. Enrollment management models require us to look at persistence, retention, graduation, and transfer rates of our students. We set targets for each of those measures, and in order to understand whether those targets are realistic, we use comparative benchmarking data through the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP) and through state and federal-level benchmarking such as the Integrated Post-Secondary Data System (IPEDS).

For performance comparisons, we have many sources of comparative data as evidenced by the results sections in the other portfolio categories (such as outlined in 3R6). We use benchmarking data to set targets and to understand the larger perspective of community college operations and how we fit. For instance, we use comparative data to benchmark the persistence and completion at the course level (3R2) from the NCCBP. Beginning in spring 2013, NMC engaged in the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) in order to benchmark student engagement on a national scale. Moreover, NMC is a beta tester for the American Association of Community Colleges' (AACC) Voluntary Framework for Accountability (VFA), which gives us the opportunity to benchmark student progression and outcomes metrics.

The primary criteria for selecting sources of comparative data are:
- Number of participants contributing data

- Geographic diversity of participants contributing data
- Number of colleges similar to NMC's demographic makeup, locale, budget-size, and purposes to make peer comparisons useful
- Range of data and measures being collected, with little to no overlap on what is reported to other agencies, such as IPEDS and the Higher Learning Commission

7P6 NMC's aligned planning process ensures that departmental data analysis is in line with organizational goals. Leaders of academic and service departments gather in August for the Strategy Retreat to provide input into NMC's strategic plan. Once the goals are articulated the department leaders work with their units to identify operational goals that support the strategic goals. All the operational action plans are informed by several common metrics, such as the Perkins Core Indicators, course success rates, and advisory group feedback. For academic programs, common metrics are reported in each program review document. The data are available on the ORPE's intranet site. The common metrics were determined by the Academic Program Review AQIP action project team and were guided by a theoretical evaluation framework (1P13). These metrics can be aggregated to measure performance at the institutional level. Service units follow the same protocol. Each unit has a series of metrics to measure its effectiveness and inform its action plans for the coming year in support of the strategic plan.

All the program and service planning documents (A3) are shared on the intranet. ORPE also aggregates the action plans and metrics in order to provide an overarching view of how the strategic plan is being supported by the operational plans, and how the department level metrics contribute to success on the institutional level metrics and targets.

7P7 Most of NMC's information systems follow a one-piece flow process. For instance, timeliness is assured because data are entered into the system as received, through on-line applications and registration. When the students enter the data there is the greater likelihood for admissions accuracy. The Ellucian Banner software system, a transactional system that provides live data is constantly being updated and refreshed. Other information system processes follow a batched process flow for data collection and entry, which may challenge timeliness but have a high likelihood for accuracy and reliability. For instance, ORPE coordinates most of the external accountability reporting and can monitor data accuracy and reliability. It uses observation and trend analyses to check annual results with data from previous years.

Personal data is updated at the request of students and employees. Each semester, the on-line registration system prompts students to update personal information, such as major, to ensure accuracy.

Security and reliability of our information systems is ensured in a number of ways. First, the network room has an uninterruptable electrical power supply; entrance security protection; fire, water and smoke detection and automatic reporting to a monitoring station; and an automatic fire suppression system. A firewall and intrusion prevention system also protects NMC's systems. Second, NMC maintains policies for password changes and the use of personally identifiable information (Staff Policy D-506.06). Third, NMC backs up its information systems daily, and sometimes even hourly, depending on the priority and level of importance of the system. Finally, a third party firm, Rehmann-Robson, conducts an audit of the security of NMC's information systems annually.

Access to specific data is monitored by security points of contact in finance, human resources, student services, and financial aid. These individuals authorize access as required and set up the security measures, consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations, to be followed for each set of data. The permissions process is electronic and implemented by ITS.

7R1 The effectiveness of NMC's system for information and knowledge management is measured in a number of ways. Employees provide feedback through the Employee Engagement Survey and the Institutional Effectiveness System Survey.

Our primary concern with information and knowledge management is that employees know where to go to get the information they need in order to perform their jobs and that the information is timely and accurate. Three fourths of employee respondents to the Employee Engagement Survey agree that college information is communicated in a timely fashion (Table 7.1, row 1). Employees tend to agree that they review data in order to make improvements (Table 7.1, row 2). A large majority says they know where to access college information needed for their job (Table 7.1, row 3). We are still working on improving these three aspects of our system for information and knowledge management as we have not yet reached our target for these three measures.

When evaluating our results, NMC uses "stoplight" color coding to easily see where we are meeting target (green), not meeting target but trending in the right direction (yellow), and not meeting target and trending in the wrong direction (red).

Color coding and analyzing the trends helps NMC prioritize improvement actions and to decide on the areas that need further research. For metrics from the Employee Engagement Survey, NMC selects courses of action based on the percent of employees agreeing with the process and outcome statements. Currently, NMC's target is 90% agreement. However, we are reassessing the reasonableness of this target when factoring in all employee types: regular faculty and staff, adjuncts, and supplementals. We are considering setting multiple targets based on the employee type.

Table 7.1 Information and Knowledge Management: Level of Agreement from the Employee Engagement Survey (scale = Don't Know (0), Strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5))				
	2011 (n=402)	2012 (n=399)	2013 (n=402)	Target
1 Q6_3. College information is communicated in a timely fashion.	80.1%	79.9%	75.0% ↓	90%
2 Q6_7. I review the measures and targets for our goals in order to make improvements.	70.0%	71.0%	70.0% ↓	90%
3 Q9_13. I know where to access college information I need to do my job.	89.8%	86.0%	86.7% ↑	90%

Color Key	Meets or exceeds min/target	Does not meet target but trend in right direction	Does not meet target, trend steady or in wrong direction

7R2 NMC's system for Measuring Effectiveness is aiding the College in accomplishing its mission and goals as evidenced by feedback on the Institutional Effectiveness System Survey and in tracking regular progress checks and metrics for the strategic plan. NMC has tracked the Leadership Group perceptions about our culture of evidence and culture of continuous improvement through the annually administered Institutional Effectiveness System Survey. As we have developed our processes for Measuring Effectiveness, perceptions on how they are working has been positive as evidenced by the survey results (Table 7.2).

The results indicate that a large majority of Leadership Group respondents agree that NMC has systems in place to provide the necessary data to inform improvements, and that our system is effective in encouraging us to take action (Table 7.2, row 5, 6). We are working on allocating the required resources to support our Institutional Effectiveness System (Table 7.2, row 2). While nearly three

fourths of the respondents agree that our Institutional Effectiveness System is working we still have not met our target for that perception (Table 2, row 9). Nearly 90% of respondents agree that we do a good job of keeping everyone aware of our current AQIP improvement Action Projects (Table 7.2, row 10). Survey results indicate that the language of plan, do, check, adjust continuous improvement cycle is embedded in our processes and in our planning processes.

Table 7.2 Agreement with Institutional Effectiveness Survey Statements Over Time (scale = Don't know (0), strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5))		**2010 (n=46)**	**2011 (n=25)**	**2012 (n=44)**	**Target**
1	Q2. Roles and responsibilities within the Institutional Effectiveness System are communicated well throughout our organization.	26.0%	67.9%	74.4% ↑	75%
2	Q4. Our Institutional Effectiveness System has adequate resources (people, space, money, etc.) to enable continuous improvement.	39.0%	67.9%	53.7% ↓	75%
3	Q5. We do a good job of training faculty and staff to contribute to continuous improvement.	52.0%	75.0%	75.6% ↑	75%
4	Q8. We do a good job of creating a culture of evidence as it relates to continuous improvement. (7R2)			75.0%	75%
5	Q9. We have systems in place to provide data that inform improvement. (7P3)	57.0%	78.6%	82.5% ↑	75%
6	Q12. Our Institutional Effectiveness System encourages us to take action on ideas for improvement. (7R2)			82.5%	75%
7	Q13. We link our organizational planning systems with our continuous improvement efforts.	41.0%	82.1%	82.5% ↑	75%
8	Q14. Our processes use the plan, do, check, and adjust (PDCA) cycle of continuous improvement. (7R2)	55.0%	89.3%	82.5% ↓	75%
9	Q15. Our Institutional Effectiveness System of continuous improvement is working. (7R2)	67.0%	85.7%	72.5% ↓	75%
10	Q20. We do a good job of keeping everyone aware of our current AQIP improvement Action Projects. (7P4)	50.0%	71.4%	89.5% ↑	75%

Color Key	**Meets or exceeds min/target**	**Does not meet target but trend in right direction**	**Does not meet target, trend steady or in wrong direction**

7R3 As evidenced in preceding criterion categories, NMC has developed a benchmarking framework for the data and information it receives by participating in collaborative projects with other higher education organizations. For instance, the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP) is an important source for benchmarking NMC's performance. A useful collaboration for comparing how organizations measure effectiveness have been NMC's participation in the Michigan Community College Collaborative for Assessment, Research, and Effectiveness (MCCCARE). In MCCCARE, those responsible

for measuring effectiveness and the information systems at their respective colleges around Michigan discuss best practices and share resources. With NMC's membership in the Continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN), we are able to engage with learning partners outside of higher education in the shared goal to collectively build capacity to develop and manage quality systems in higher education. We expect to have a rich source for benchmarking institutional effectiveness by participating with the AACC's Voluntary Framework for Accountability (VFA) and the CCSSE.

7I1 The most comprehensive improvement NMC has made in this category is the implementation of our aligned planning process (further explained in 8P1). The institution's planning process applies the plan, do, check, adjust cycle of continuous improvement so that data and information are an integrated part of the process. In as much, we have developed a need for data so that instructional and non-instructional units alike "pull" information from ITS and ORPE. Previously, ITS and ORPE spent time "pushing" information that may or may not have been used in performance management or decision-making.

The Institutional Effectiveness System, which includes the development of the Systems Portfolio, is a comprehensive process that measures effectiveness from the course and unit level to the organizational and strategic plan level. Data dashboards have been created in the past four years in order to aid project teams and the college in tracking outcomes. The Systems Portfolio measures are also a part of this dashboard.

Institutions of higher education external to NMC frequently request permission to study our aligned planning process, program review process, and our digital dashboard. The program review process is the topic of a dissertation from a graduate of Ferris State University's Doctoral program in Community College Leadership (further defined in 1P13 and 8P1). (Hert, Fiona. 2013. *Increasing Efficiencies and Effectiveness in Community Colleges: Program Review, Program Cost Studies, and the Transformative Practices of Leaders in Two Community Colleges*.)

To provide better access to the information our employees need, the College Intranet was redesigned (see 6P5 and 7P4) so that its organization and labeling made sense to its users.

We also changed the process for requesting and approving access to parts of our information system. Previously, for example, a budget manager who needed access to a certain set of funds had to fill out a paper form, have it signed by a supervisor, and sent the form to the finance security champion who reviewed the request. If approved, the form was sent to the Information Technology Services department for entry into the system. Now this cumbersome process is entirely electronic and the request and approvals can be done much more quickly.

7I2 Culturally, NMC has worked to make "plan, do, check, adjust" part of our lexicon when designing processes. About 83% of our Leadership Group agrees that our processes follow this continuous improvement cycle. By performing the check part of the process, we select specific processes to improve when we are not meeting our targets. The digital dashboard, metrics dashboard, and intranet provide the infrastructure for data accessibility for internal and external stakeholders; making the metrics public signals NMC's value of transparency in operations. Structurally, 3.5 full time equivalent employees support ORPE, which allows that office to consult on measuring effectiveness at all levels of the College and on using the information to check and adjust.

Operations: Category Eight, Planning Continuous Improvement Introduction

NMC has focused significant attention in the area of Planning Continuous Improvement over the past four years. The Aligned Planning AQIP Action Project culminated in the commitment by the College to add a position focused on the coordination of strategic and operational planning and the launch of a new campus-wide process for planning at both of these levels.

At the end of the first two years of process implementation, NMC's process for planning continuous improvement has reached an ***aligned*** maturity level in that the process is stable, consciously managed, and regularly evaluated for improvement. The campus as a whole provides input on both process and outcome measures related to the aligned planning process through the Employee Engagement Survey. Members of Leadership Group also provide feedback and suggestions for improvement through the annual Institutional Effectiveness System Survey. Most recently fifteen members of Leadership Group provided feedback in one-on-one check-adjust meetings.

As the College enters its third year of implementation, the final piece of alignment has recently been launched with the new performance planning and assessment system (MyPDCA) effort spearheaded by Human Resources. This effort creates linkages between the organization's strategic plan, departmental operational plans and individual action plans. Other priorities for improvement include:

- Improved process communications campus-wide. A communication plan has been written and is being carried out in FY'14.
- Improved performance metrics within non-instructional departments which will provide improved input regarding continuous improvement. The Office of Research, Planning & Effectiveness (ORPE) will be working with a select number of departments each year in an effort to tighten up the definition of key metrics and consult on data gathering.
- Professional development for supervisors in using the *WingSpan* tool for individual goal setting, in having career discussions with employees, and with general support for their role in the Aligned Planning process through NMC's newly launched Professional Development Institute.

In an environment of static or declining resources, it becomes increasingly important to clearly articulate a strategic plan and create alignment throughout the organization to ensure that the strategy is successfully executed.

NMC is making steady progress towards achieving an integrated level of maturity within Category 8 as evidenced by being recognized by other institutions of higher education for our work with academic planning – program review. The NMC planning process has also been a subject of study for dissertation work by individuals in the state.

Operations: Category Eight, Planning Continuous Improvement

8P1   NMC has one aligned planning process that incorporates strategic planning and operational planning at both the department and individual levels. All levels of the Aligned Planning Process incorporate a Plan-Do-Check-Adjust continuous improvement approach.

In May of 2010 NMC chartered an AQIP Action Project titled Alignment of Planning Processes. The impetus for this project was the 2009 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report that identified several opportunities for improvement with our then current planning process including:

1. An opportunity to define a more systematic approach to identifying objectives and setting targets
2. Opportunities for improving the ways in which NMC integrates data into decision-making
3. Evidence lacking of an integrated and shared approach to communication
4. An opportunity to better align college strategy with operational action plans

The Alignment of Planning Processes action project was primarily focused on the fourth opportunity listed above. However in the course of developing a comprehensive new planning process and its subsequent implementation, NMC has made progress in addressing all four of the above opportunities. Over the past year an internal advisory group, led by the Human Resources department, developed the individual planning process (MyPDCA) (see also 4P10) that meshes with strategic and department level operational planning. Individual planning incorporates both goal setting as well as prior year goal and performance review. An institution-wide tool called *Wing Span* was selected and implemented to engage the campus in inputting goals into a central location. *Wing Span* provides a tool for monitoring and tracking completion of goals and is monitored by employees, their supervisors, and Human Resources.

A key focus for the coming year is improving communications to the campus about planning. A communication plan was created using input from one-on-one Check & Adjust meetings with members of Leadership Group and based on a work session including members of the campus in the fourth quarter of FY13. The Leadership Group is comprised on the President's Council, Planning and Budget Council, academic area leadership, and service department directors. This plan is currently being implemented. Additionally, the Office of Research, Planning and Effectiveness (ORPE) will be working with department managers to refine and discuss data collection for operational plan metrics. The high level planning calendar and a detailed process map are available on the website. The calendar is created each year and identifies key process steps related to each step of the Plan-Do-Check-Adjust process. On a detailed calendar on the ORPE intranet key due dates and those involved in each process step so that everyone understands their role in the process. The process map is a detailed flow chart that depicts the planning process as a system of related activities across Plan-Do-Check-Adjust.

8P2   During the planning process, NMC employs different methods of selecting short- and long-term strategies. A key input to planning at NMC is the articulation of a set of Planning Assumptions based on a regular monitoring and summary of environmental trends. Planning assumptions are reviewed by the NMC Scan Team (the team that publishes four environmental scan reports a year) (3P5), then by Leadership Group and ultimately approved by the Board of Trustees. These assumptions along with the Strategic Directions and Institutional Effectiveness Criteria inform short- and long-term strategies.

Long-term strategies are guided by our Board of Trustees as part of the annual review of the President, as well as through numerous inputs such as from the local Chamber of Commerce, Northwest Michigan Council of Governments, advisory group meetings, community business owners and the local K-12 school system and the Intermediate School District. These strategies are ultimately expressed as NMC's Strategic Directions. They provide a 5-7 year vision for where the organization is headed. These

directions are drafted by a small group considering input from numerous sources and in consideration of the environmental trends expressed as Planning Assumptions. They are then taken to our 54-person, representative Leadership Group (President's Council, Planning & Budget Council, Policy Council Chair, Educational Services Instructional Management Team, Employee Group Chairs, and select department heads) for editing before they are shared campus-wide. We are currently implementing against our first set of Strategic Directions. They are:

1. Ensure that NMC learners are prepared for success in a global society and economy.
2. Establish national and international competencies and provide leadership in select educational areas connected to the regional economy and assets:
    a. Advanced Manufacturing
    b. Arts and Culture
    c. Entrepreneurship and Innovation
    d. Fresh Water
    e. Health Care
    f. Renewable Energy and Sustainability
    g. Value-Added Agriculture
3. Deliver learning through a networked workforce.
4. Establish lifelong relationships with learners.
5. Transcribe most learning to establish credentials of value.

These five statements are NMC's long-term strategies and they, along with NMC's Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Criteria, provide actionable guidance for crafting short-term (1-2 years) strategic and operational goals. The IE Criteria are modeled on AQIP's nine categories.

Department leaders in collaboration with those in their departments draft short-term strategic and operational goals. These operational plans help ensure that the short-term strategies are helping to realize the long-term strategies. One way we check on this alignment is to create a summary of all operational plan goals which can be filtered by strategic direction, institutional effectiveness criteria and department. This is known as a "leadership tool" at NMC as it allows leaders across the organization to see the alignment both vertically and horizontally. ORPE creates this summary each year and posts it along with all operational plans on the intranet for access campus-wide.

Additionally, ORPE facilitates one Leadership Group meeting during operational planning to encourage department leads to share their preliminary operational goals with one another before they are finalized in order to identify inter-relationships between plans. This conversation ensures both vertical and horizontal alignment of goals.

NMC regularly re-evaluates our deployment of resources relative to our strategic and operational priorities. The intent of the leadership tool is that it will help us understand the scope of our goals – who's involved and to what extent. President's Council does this analysis and ensures that the operational goals are achievable given the resources at hand. In their regular check and adjust of the strategic plan, the Council also adjust goals mid-year should resources become constrained or the need for resources to achieve a goal increases beyond what was planned.

Once the strategic plan is finalized with the selection of short- and long-term goals, the Leadership Group is leveraged to help carry the message forward to the campus. Departments revise their operational plans based on a final strategic plan and budget before the start of the new fiscal year reflecting the iterative nature of the planning process.

8P3 For operational planning, NMC uses a planning tool called "the A3." The left side of the A3 document contains key outcomes/metrics for the department/team reflections on last year's activities and analysis/justification of this year's activities. The right side of the document includes an action plan detailing operational goals and key activities to achieve the goals expressed as a Gantt chart along with follow-up/unresolved issues and future budget implications. The tool is used for academic program review and service unit performance review. Department leaders meet with their President's Council member to review the strategic plan and identify key operational areas of focus for their department in response to the strategic plan. Each department level lead is charged with engaging department members in developing an Operational Plan A3. These are reviewed, discussed and revised working with their respective Presidents Council member. All operational A3's are submitted to ORPE via an intranet site and are made available to the campus through the same site.

Each academic program area is charged in program review to develop an action plan annually that considers outcome results. This action plan is the Operational Plan A3 for academic areas and programs. The A3 planning tool helps foster alignment by offering the advantage and power of a shared template that is succinct, comparable between departments and projects, and provides an instant snapshot of movement forward and obstacles that need to be addressed.

We also maintain a project level A3 template which is useful for breaking individual operational goals down into more detailed action plans. Supervisors follow up with project leads to ensure progress in implementing these action plans.

8P4 NMC's aligned planning process incorporates methods to ensure coordination of organizational strategies and action plans both vertically and horizontally across the organization. Several of these tools and methods are discussed above. They are:

1. Leadership Group's alignment meeting as operational plan A3's are starting to take shape. This encourages horizontal alignment throughout the organization of plans and resource needs before they are submitted.
2. The role of President's Council in working with department leads to ensure the interpretation of the Strategic Plan in developing operational goals and in reviewing operational plans with resource constraints in mind ensures vertical alignment
3. Operational Plan A3's and the operational goal summary created by ORPE that are placed on the NMC intranet allows all members of the campus to see the goals that have been developed and helps foster transparency
4. The MyPDCA process takes planning to the level of the individual plan. Employees reference both their department level operational plan A3 as well as the strategic plan for the College in defining personal goals for the year. Supervisor review of these individual goals in the *Wing Span* program is an important step in the alignment process

We align the planning process at NMC through 1) a defined planning process which is available to the campus and outlines NMC's commitment to Plan-Do-Check-Adjust at the strategic, operational and individual levels, 2) use of the A3 as a common tool for documenting and monitoring plans, 3) defined roles within the planning process at all levels of the organization, and 4) assigning clear responsibility for coordinating the planning process which rests with ORPE.

NMC's ongoing commitment to Plan-Do-Check-Adjust ensures that we regularly look for ways to enhance coordination and alignment. A recent process check took place in May and June of 2013 with fifteen members of Leadership Group via face-to-face meetings. These meetings confirmed that NMC has made progress with aligned planning, that we are still working to make check-adjust a habit and that employees need more help linking operational goals to the strategic plan. The communication plan that is being implemented this fiscal year will be important in addressing these latter two needs.

8P5 Organizational measures and performance targets exist for each of the AQIP Categories. These are informed by our IE System - the Systems Portfolio, Action Projects, and Strategic Planning. A review of these longitudinal measures helps inform a project pool for continuous improvement. Performance metrics are posted on an intranet dashboard for the entire campus.

At a study session each fall, NMC's Board of Trustees selects a subset of the Strategic Plan goals that represent what they want to use to measure the institutional effectiveness of the organization for the coming year. The metrics include a mix of process and outcome measures. These Board-Level Goals, as they are known, are then tracked for the year with periodic check-adjust.

As part of the aligned planning process, NMC has been working to teach employees to write SMART (specific, measureable, attainable, relevant, and time-framed) goals. This is reinforced both during operational planning at the department level and at the individual level. Academic departments have standard process and outcome metrics as defined by NMC's Program Review process (see 1P13). Performance targets are typically set based on historical trend analysis, or as baselines set by external stakeholders, such as the Perkins Core Indicators. Academic program areas have several common outcomes and measures; results are aggregated in order to inform an organizational action plans (see 1R2).

Service departments select and monitor their own key outcomes and metrics, and they are tailored to the specific work conducted in a given department. These outcomes and metrics are reviewed and monitored by the department head and periodically with their respective President's Council member as part of regular check-adjust of the operational plan A3's. A summary of all operational measures at the department level gauges the level of progress being made with both defining and tracking measures. Based on this review, one opportunity for improvement is a refinement of some of the non-instructional departmental outcomes and metrics.

The MyPDCA effort of individual goal setting also provides support for setting SMART goals. All employees are receiving additional training in goal setting through this effort being rolled out by NMC's Human Resources department.

Finally, in project management, a steering team charters each cross-functional project, such as an AQIP action project. The steering team determines the overarching objectives for the project team and selects measures by which to assess progress or success. The project team determines how to meet those objectives through defining an action plan.

8P6 The A3 tool used throughout the college asks operational plan authors to identify to which IE Criteria and/or strategic direction the goal or activity relates (Figure 8.1). This allows us to link strategy with operational goals at the department level. Since planning precedes budgeting, there is also a column in the A3 action plan section which identifies budget impact considerations with a specific goal or activity. These budget impacts are then carried over to the departmental budget request. In the event of limited resources, the A3 provides additional detail regarding the importance of the budget request. If a budget request is not granted, the A3 will be revised to reflect the impact of lessor or different resources.

For important opportunities that arise outside the regular budgeting cycle, NMC has innovative ways to provide resources to those efforts. For instance, the Fund for Transformation was established in order to act in an agile manner in responding to opportunities requiring resources. Moreover, our Foundation has established a process of awarding mini-grants for Innovation, lauded by the League for Innovation. Vice Presidents are empowered to restructure resources within their area of responsibility in order to execute action plans efficiently and effectively.

Figure 8.1. A3 Tool Action Plans

Institutional Effectiveness Criteria	Strategic Directions	Goals & Activities	Qtr 1 (Jul-Sept)	Qtr 2 (Oct-Dec)	Qtr 3 (Jan-Mar)	Qtr 4 (Apr-Jun)	Budget Impact
Ex.	SD4	Develop an Alumni organization by June 2013 in order to increase the positive perception of the college among alumni.		O		△	

Institutional Effectiveness Criteria: **IE1** – Scholarship; **IE2** – Partnership; **IE3** – Champion; **IE4** – Culture; **IE5** – Operations

Strategic Directions: **SD1** – Success in a Global Society & Economy; **SD2** – Nat'l/Int'l Competencies; **SD3** – Learning through Networked Workforce; **SD4** – Lifelong Relationships with Learners; **SD5** – Establish Credentials of Value

Furthermore, when we develop business models in Stage 3 of the decision-making process (see more detail in category 1P3), President's Council decides based on that assessment which business model if any gets expanded into an implementation plan. Ultimately any new program or service that goes through the decision-making process to implementation will have resources assigned prior to implementation.

NMC has demonstrated sound financial management over the past decade which has ensured that the College has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered (**Accreditation Core Component 5A1**). Evidence of this includes:

- For each of the past five years (2008-2012), NMC has posted a net operating surplus that has averaged three percent (3%) of our total operating expenses. The Board of Trustees determines what will be done with these funds and they are typically added to the Plant Fund to help cover future needs in infrastructure and to supplement annual planned contributions to this fund. At times, the Board has also directed these surplus funds towards specific initiatives such as the creation of the strategic professional development fund and most recently the decision to use surplus dollars to fund a staff restructuring in Human Resources.
- NMC's Capital Outlay Allocation Team (COAT) oversees the allocation of funds, which help to ensure NMC's evolving technological infrastructure and any capital purchases keeps up with needs in the classroom and in support services. Annually, department leaders submit requests along with a statement of the level of importance for funding, and a committee of peers selects those projects to fund within the level of resources allocated for capital for the coming year.
- NMC created a Technology Plant Fund that is funded by a student technology fee used to finance ongoing technology based initiatives, such as replacement or upgrade of computers in NMC's computer labs.

In order to help ensure that funding for NMC's educational purposes is not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas (**Accreditation Core Component 5A2**), the College created two funds expressly for funding needs outside of our regular operational budget. The funds are the

Strategic Fund and the Fund for Transformation. The former is managed by the President and is intended to help fund strategic initiatives that don't have resources available yet through the regular budget. The Fund for Transformation is a Board-designated fund for transformative and innovative initiatives.

Over the past decade, NMC has budgeted conservatively and built reserves in order to provide resources for innovation and improvements to existing programs and infrastructure. An audit of NMC's finances occurs annually. As such the college has excelled at preparing resources in advance of implementing plans. This helps ensure that the goals NMC incorporates into the strategic plan which fully supports our mission of providing lifelong learning opportunities for our communities are realistic in light of our organization, resources, and opportunities (**Accreditation Core Component 5A3**). NMC's planful budgeting has also allowed us to be in a position to show agility in responding to market opportunities. One such example is the purchase of the Aero Park Laboratories (APL) Building on NMC's Aero Park campus where NMC was in a position to purchase the building out right and refurbish it with resources on hand.

NMC's Talent AQIP action project focused on orienting, training and developing employees in a way that aligns with core values and core competencies for the College, assists with regulatory compliance, and helps develop skills unique to specific functions. As part of Talent, NMC has revamped its new employee on-boarding and orientation process and recently launched a Professional Development Institute in order to facilitate personal and professional development. It supports individuals and teams to achieve their full potential and contribute to learner success and organizational effectiveness. As part of the Professional Development Institute, the first cohort of the Foundations of Leadership will work with senior leadership to understand their leadership style, develop leadership goals and receive mentoring from existing college leadership over a six-month period. The goal of this new program is to develop current and future leaders for the College. The Talent initiative along with significant investment in professional development as part of our General Fund budgeting process ensure that NMC's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained (**Accreditation Core Component 5A4**) (see also Category 4).

NMC maintains an established, stable process for annual budgeting along with a well-developed model for future budget scenario development that is maintained by our Finance & Administrative Services department (**Accreditation Core Component 5A5**). This office provides training each year to budget managers and department heads in the procedures of budgeting. NMC utilizes electronic budget submission offering increased efficiency and reduction in input errors. Planning & Budget Council (PBC), a key component of our shared governance model, engages fully in the process of developing the annual budget and its recommendation to the President. PBC reviews and provides feedback to all key inputs – both revenues and expenses – to the budget, engages in a prioritization of new position requests consistent with NMC's strategic plan, and reviews the COAT recommendation. PBC also reviews and recommends changes to the College's Resource Guidelines to the Board of Trustees, which ultimately approves NMC's General Fund operating budget each summer.

Once a budget has been approved, the Finance & Administrative Services department closely monitors the budget throughout the year providing monthly actual to plan summaries to PBC and President's Council, and to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees meeting agendas and minutes are available publicly.

8P7 Operating in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous environment (VUCA), makes assessing and addressing risk in our planning processes difficult yet essential. In the decision making process, we seek to understand financial risk through developing financial models which look at sensitivity around key input variables such as enrollment, retention, equipment replacement cycles, and usage levels in general.

Within the aligned planning process, risk is addressed generally in two ways. The first is the window of opportunity. This is the risk of acting at the right time to gain market leadership. The selection of key strategic goals on which to focus is one way we come to terms with timing. Less time sensitive goals are likely to be placed in a pool for future consideration based on resource availability. At the operational plan level, the A3 template contains sections where plan authors are asked to analyze and justify their activities. Key assumptions are recorded here and are another way to articulate aspects of risk.

Additionally, within NMC's decision making process (see more detail in category 1P3) risk is assessed using internal and/or external experts based on the decision at hand. In considering significant opportunities and decisions, the President and/or the Board of Trustees makes a determination as to the actual level of risk and whether the organization can live with the implications of making a certain decision. These decisions are informed by open discussions at public Board of Trustee meetings. NMC's Planning Assumptions and the NMC Resource Guidelines both reviewed and approved annually, inform these decisions and therefore seek to reduce or at the very least, understand the risk associated with key planning decisions.

In addition to assessing risk, NMC takes steps to mitigate it. One such way is through the establishment of contingency funds for building projects and other significant purchases of products and/or services. Our reserve funds are also a resource NMC maintains to mitigate risk.

8P8 NMC's Resource Guidelines, which are recommended by Planning & Budget Council and authorized by our Board of Trustees each year, include a statement about the importance of Professional Development. The College has consistently appropriated 2.25% of general fund salaries and wages to professional development activities. Fortunately NMC has been successful, even during challenging funding years, in maintaining our commitment to the continued development of faculty and staff (**Accreditation Core Component 5A4**) (see also 4P4).

Each year the President provides direction regarding the institutional priorities relating to professional development – such as sabbatical justifications. Funding for staff professional development is currently maintained within department budgets. Additionally, employee groups typically host at least one professional development activity for their members annually with funding from Human Resources. With the recent formation of the Professional Development Institute, discussions of a centralized funding pool for staff professional development are taking place.

The faculty maintains the [Center for Instructional Excellence](#) (CIE) at NMC which offers professional development for both regular and adjunct faculty. CIE puts on a professional development day in conjunction with NMC's Opening Conference in fall and spring, and also a day long Professional Development Day each fall. Additionally, CIE hosts Friday Forums during the academic year which offers a monthly opportunity to convene faculty on a selected topic along with AdChats which are specifically geared towards adjunct faculty to support their professional development and connectedness across academic areas. Adjunct instructors are also supported within their respective academic area with training specific to their discipline (see also 4P4). Adjunct faculty members are compensated for their participation in institution-wide professional development activities.

8R1 NMC collects and measures the effectiveness of our planning processes that are both outcome metrics and process metrics. The following are measures of our aligned planning process:

Process Measures

- *I understand my role in planning at NMC.* (Employee Engagement Survey)
- *My supervisor works to align the goals of our department with the goals of the College.* (Employee Engagement Survey)
- *My supervisor asks for my input in developing departmental goals.* (Employee Engagement Survey)
- *We link our organizational planning systems with our continuous improvement efforts.* (Institutional Effectiveness System Survey)
- *ORPE's communication effort (i.e. planning calendar, tutorials, training, templates, etc.) equips me to lead planning within my department or group.* (Institutional Effectiveness System Survey)

Outcome Measures

- *NMC has a clear vision for the future.* (Employee Engagement Survey)
- *I understand how my job contributes to achieving NMC's strategic directions.* (Employee Engagement Survey)
- *I understand how my job contributes to institutional effectiveness improvements.* (Employee Engagement Survey)

Overall Planning Index

NMC's Planning Index is a compilation of both direct and indirect measures. All of the above questions contained in the Employee Engagement Survey are components of the 2013 Planning Index. Additional questions included in the index are:

- *I have the necessary skills in order to help NMC achieve its strategic directions.*
- *I have the necessary skills to contribute to NMC's continuous improvement efforts.*

The Employee Engagement Survey is administered to all NMC employees inclusive of supplemental staff and adjunct faculty. The survey has been administered annually since 2010. The Institutional Effectiveness System Survey is administered to the members of Leadership Group annually.

Board Level Strategic Goals

As mentioned in 8P5, NMC's Board of Trustees selects goals from the Strategic Plan that it will use to measure the effectiveness of the college over the course of a year. It is expected that these goals for 2013-14 will include a mix of those that will change annually and those that will provide longitudinal measures of performance.

The 2012-13 Board Level Goals and metrics are:

1. *NMC will improve learner success in terms of student persistence and completion.*
   - College-level Course Persistence
   - College-level Course Enrollee Success Rate
   - College-level Course Completer Success
   - Fall to Spring Persistence
2. *All learners will be able to document their intercultural learning experiences.*
   - Process metrics
3. *NMC will develop and implement a budget plan that includes expansion of revenue opportunities along with operational efficiencies to assure fiscal thriveability.*
   - Primary Reserves Ratio (fiscal strength)
   - Composite Financial Index (compares unrestricted net assets to total expenses)
   - Net Operating Ratio
4. *NMC will incubate partnerships resulting in developing national and international leadership competencies in select areas.*

Category 8, Planning for Continuous Improvement

- Process metrics

5. *NMC will evaluate the employee classification and compensation systems and make adjustments as required.*
6. *NMC will increase institutional leadership capacities needed to implement the strategic plan.*
   - Employee Engagement Index score
   - Employee agreement on likelihood to recommend NMC to a friend.

8R2 When evaluating our results, NMC uses "stoplight" color coding to easily see where we are meeting target (green), not meeting target but trending in the right direction (yellow), and not meeting target and trending in the wrong direction (red).

Color coding and analyzing the trends helps NMC prioritize improvement actions and to decide on the areas that need further research. For metrics from the Employee Engagement Survey, NMC selects courses of action based on the percent of employees agreeing with the process and outcome statements. Currently, NMC's target is 90% agreement. However, we are reassessing the reasonableness of this target when factoring in all employee types: regular faculty and staff, adjuncts, and supplemental employees. We are considering setting multiple targets based on the employee type.

With about 62% of employees understanding their role in planning at NMC, we were prompted to create a communication plan regarding the planning process (Table 8.1, row 1) and only 70% agreed that communication equips them to lead planning (Table 8.2, row 2). Our target for the Planning Index metric (Table 8.3, row 4) is that we will achieve 90% of the maximum score. Our results show that NMC enjoys high marks in several areas and that we also have opportunities for improvement. The Board Level Goals and metrics are annotated in Table 8.4.

	Table 8.1 Aligned Planning Process Measures	**2011 (N=402)**	**2012 (N=399)**	**2013 (N=405)**	**Target**
1	Q2_4.I understand my role in planning at NMC.		62.9%	62.2% ↑	90%
2	Q1_7.My supervisor works to align the goals of our department with the goals of the College.	78.6%	81.7%	79.0% ↓	90%
3	Q2_5.My supervisor asks for my input in developing departmental goals.	71.6%	72.7%	70.1% ↓	90%

	Table 8.2 Aligned Planning Process Measures (Institutional Effectiveness System Survey)	**2012**	**2013**	**Target**
1	We link our organizational planning systems with our continuous improvement efforts.		83.0%	90%
2	ORPE's communication effort equips me to lead planning within my department or group.		70.0%	90%
3	Percent of department heads submitting their operational plan A3.	90.7%	94.7% ↑	90%

Table 8.3 Aligned Planning Outcome Measures	2011 (N=402)	2012 (N=399)	2013 (N=405)	Target
1 Q1_5.NMC has a clear vision for the future.	79.1%	81.5%	80.2% ↓	90%
2 Q1_1.I understand how my job contributes to achieving NMC's strategic directions.	87.6%	88.5%	87.4% ↓	90%
3 Q1_2.I understand how my job contributes to institutional effectiveness improvements.	84.6%	88.0%	83.2% ↓	90%
4 Planning Index (percent of maximum score)	80.0%	82.0%	83.0% ↑	90%

Color Key	Meets or exceeds min/target	Does not meet target but trend in right direction	Does not meet target, trend steady or in wrong direction

8R3 For all Process Measures, Outcome Measures and the Planning Index, more progress is needed to reach the target. NMC will continue to develop strategies and action plans over the next 1-3 years to move the organization closer to the targets for each of these measures.

The Board Level Goals for the year are selected each fall (Table 8.4). With all performance targets related to improving learner success in terms of student persistence and completion, NMC has already achieved the fall 2014 goal thereby exceeding the selected benchmarks for our national peers. Therefore over the coming 1-3 years, NMC will review these benchmark targets. The fiscal thriveability goals have also shown great positive progress placing NMC within the target range. The 1-3 year goal for the first two goals is to maintain a measurement within the ideal range. For the third metric, the effort will be to optimize that ratio while attaining year over year consistent progress.

Incubating partnerships will be an ongoing effort as necessitated by enduring business realities. Key areas of focus for NMC will be in the areas of value-added agriculture, entrepreneurism and allied health initiatives all of which are directly related to our local economy.

The charge of the Compensation Review Team is to ensure that NMC's compensation systems are aligned with the values that are important to our stakeholders (all of our employees, our Board as representatives of the public, and the college as a whole) and are best for the college's future ability to attract and retain the talent we need. Over the next 1-3 years NMC will complete an evaluation of our classification and compensation systems and work to implement any recommendations for change that come out of this process.

8R4 NMC looks to benchmark results in Planning Continuous Improvement with impactful practices in higher education and outside higher education. As an example, we use our membership to the Society for College and University Planning (SCUP) at both the state and national levels to qualitatively help gauge how our performance in this area compares to peer institutions. In this area, NMC follows many of the impactful practices and is also in a leadership role in our use of Hoshin planning tools such as the A3 template.

Strategic-level professional development in innovation, leadership and continuous quality improvement results from NMC's membership in the Continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN). Each year, a team of about ten attends the CQIN Summer Institute to learn from our peers in higher education and also to interact with a learning partner outside of higher education, such as "Partners in Leadership," Toyota, Poudre Valley Health Care System, Disney Leadership Institute, Ritz-Carlton, etc, in order to tap into promising and effective practices.

8R5 Each meeting of the Leadership Group includes a short process check. Additionally, periodic checks of the process are also conducted at Planning & Budget Council in addition to the measures gathered related to planning as part of the annual Institutional Effectiveness System Survey and the Employee Engagement Survey. NMC provides evidence of the effectiveness of our system for Planning Continuous Improvement through the Institutional Effectiveness System Survey administered to the NMC Leadership Group annually (Table 8.5). Measures for the planning process and key activities are addressed in 8R1 above. Evidence as to the effectiveness of the process is addressed in 8R2 where current measures are provided.

Table 8.4 Board Level Strategic Goals and Metrics						
Learner Success						
B1	NMC will improve learner success in terms of student persistence and completion.	**Fall 2009**	**Fall 2010**	**Fall 2011**	**Fall 2012**	**2014 Goal***
1	College-level Course Persistence	90.2%	90.9%	90.7%	92.3% ↑	92.0%
2	College-level Course Enrollee Success Rate	76.6%	77.2%	77.6%	78.5% ↑	78.3%
3	College-level Course Completer Success	85.0%	84.9%	85.6%	85.0% ↓	87.1%
4	Fall to spring persistence (all currently enrolled less dual enrolled, grads)	78.1%	76.3%	75.9%	75.8% ↔	77.0%
B2	All learners will be able to document their intercultural learning experiences. (Process measure - Evaluation will indicate complete or incomplete)					
Financial Thriveability						
B3	NMC will develop and implement a budget plan that includes expansion of revenue opportunities along with operational efficiencies to assure fiscal thriveability.					
		Actual FY2009	**Actual FY2010**	**Actual FY2011**	**Actual FY2012**	**Target FY2013**
1	Primary Reserves ratio (fiscal strength)	0.26	0.27	0.31	0.32 ↑	0.20-0.40
2	Composite financial index; Compares unrestricted net assets to total expenses	1.93	3.32	3.05	3.62 ↑	3.0-5.0
3	Net Operating Ratio; Net assets/total revenue	0.13%	5.36%	3.29%	4.94% ↑	> 0
International Competence						
B4.	NMC will incubate partnerships resulting in developing national and international leadership competencies in select areas. (Process metric)					
Networked Workforce						
B5.	NMC will evaluate the employee classification and compensation systems and make adjustments as required. (Process metric)					
B6.	NMC will increase institutional leadership capacities needed to implement the strategic plan.	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**		**Target 2013**
1	Employee Engagement Index (11 survey items on engagement); % maximum possible score (55pts)	85.5%	85.5%	84% ↓		90%
2	Employee agreement on likelihood to recommend NMC to a friend	87.6%	89.0%	81.2% ↓		90%

Table 8.5 Institutional Effectiveness System Survey		2011 (N=45)	2012 (N=22)	2013 (N=44)	Target
1	Our processes effectively use the PDCA cycle of continuous improvement.	56.0%	89.0%	83.0% ↓	90.0%
2	Our continuous improvement system is working.	67.0%	86.0%	73.0% ↓	90.0%

8I1 NMC has made a significant investment of time and attention in creating a responsive and effective planning process. The addition of a Coordinator of Planning position in 2012 is one way that NMC has shown its commitment to effective planning. Following the initial implementation of the Aligned Planning process in 2012, NMC continued to check and adjust the process making improvements in 2013 specifically related to:
- The timing of operational plans
- The leadership tool
- Adding online training and a toolbox
- Publishing a summary of operational goals as well as all operational plan A3's
- Development of the Strategy Retreat Workbook which provides summaries of research conducted in the prior year as a way to ensure that NMC's strategic plan is data informed.
- Launch of MyPDCA which forges alignment between organizational, departmental and individual goals.

In 2013-2014, continued improvements are occurring including:
- Implementation of a Planning Communication Plan which will bring the whole campus into planning by keeping them better informed of the process of planning and providing educational opportunities to add new and refresh existing knowledge of the process.
- Increased supervisor training through the newly launched Professional Development Institute which will reinforce the important supervisor role in the practice of aligned planning.

NMC's Quality Check-Up report following the January 25-27, 2012 visit recognized our progress with the aligned planning effort stating: *"The College's Action Project to align planning processes and the outcomes being achieved as the approach determined by the Action Project Team is implemented received favorable comments from campus groups. Numerous faculty and staff members expressed they felt department needs and resource requests are being fairly considered. Their comments also indicated that they feel more connected to College objectives and initiatives."*

8I2 NMC maintains a collaborative culture that seeks to take a leadership position in our community and in our industry. We are committed to shared governance and the representative voices across the organization. With this in mind, ORPE conducted one-on-one check meetings with members of Leadership Group during the months of May and June 2013. The goal was to find out what was working well with planning and what could be improved. Based on this feedback, areas for improvement were identified such as the campus-wide communication plan for planning, continuing and perhaps expanding the Leadership Group "poster session" in January where horizontal alignment can be created as operational plans are taking shape, revising the timing of the operational plans to better fit with the flow of work across the college, and continuing to model "check-adjust" with campus leadership.

Partnership: Category Nine, Building Collaborative Relationships Introduction

Building collaborative partnerships is an important way in which NMC accomplishes its mission and provides services. NMC's commitment to creating and maintaining relationships is evidenced in an institutional value statement and in our strategic directions. Specifically, "we will **seek others** who share our vision and values, and **collaborate** with them on behalf of our communities." NMC's partnerships are driven by shared goals both internal and external to NMC, and initiated in response to NMC's strategic goals. The primary way in which NMC identifies and prioritizes strategic partnerships in pursuit of its vision and mission is through the strategic planning process (further explain in 8P1). Through scanning, community involvement and an understanding of regional priorities, NMC intentionally focuses its collaborative efforts. Broadly, NMC prioritizes partnerships by how they support NMC's purposes and coincide with regional priorities and anticipated community learning needs. Partnerships are created and nurtured at the strategic and operational levels where we can leverage strengths, opportunities, and resource capabilities to achieve college and community goals.

For the most part, NMC's processes related to building collaborative relationships are *systematic*. Our processes are informed by clear goals, managed by departments through our aligned planning process. Using the Plan-Do-Check-Adjust cycle of continuous improvement, our processes are regularly evaluated for what works and what does not. NMC has built close coordination internally for those responsible for managing relationships with feeder institutions (**9P1**) and receiver institutions (**9P2**) of our students, and with organizations that provide services to students (**9P3, 9P4**).

For building relationships with education associations, external agencies, consortia partners, and the general community (**9P5**), NMC's processes are ***moving from systematic to aligned***. NMC's "institute model" (defined in 9P5) ensures that partnerships are consciously managed. Coordination among departments is essential to developing and maintaining the relationships. For evaluating the varying needs of partners and whether those needs are being met (**9P6**), NMC processes are *systematic*. Many partnerships are departmentally managed, though documented and tracked on the A3 planning tool.

NMC's process for building relationships between and among departments and assuring integration and communication (**9P7**) is ***aligned***. The aligned planning process ensures departments communicate on shared goals and leadership involvement ensures accountability regarding performance on those goals.

Partnership: Category Nine, Building Collaborative Relationships

9P1   NMC builds relationships with organizations from which we receive students by focusing primarily on partnerships with K-12 school districts within a six-county area. In the Admissions department, we have increased the number of Presidential Scholarships to high school seniors. The program is outlined in the Student Services section of the NMC Catalog. We have also increased the number of Commitment Scholarship offerings/participants from 40 to 100 a year. With Commitment Scholarships, NMC promises a college education to selected northern Michigan ninth graders who show academic promise and have financial need. The Admissions department recruits in all 25 of the local high schools and participates in the local intermediate school districts awards night. Annually, NMC hosts a high school counselor breakfast to provide updated information about NMC admissions processes and programming. We leverage high school schedules to provide joint programming, for instance, high school freshman and sophomores attend an information orientation on the days when the high school juniors were taking the ACT college aptitude test.

In underrepresented counties in the College's service area, NMC has expanded its reach through the Local College Access Network (LCAN). The goals of the collaboration are to create a college-going culture and increase college access opportunities for students in our communities.
The process involved in building the relationship includes these steps:
1) Develop a college access landscape scan and asset map, which entails identifying services gaps to students
2) Gather baseline data on college enrollment and retention through the National Student Clearinghouse Student Tracker System
3) Create a leadership committee that represents the community
4) Establish common goals, shared measures, boundaries, and scope (Common Agenda)
5) Create a backbone infrastructure and basic communication plan
6) Align organizations with shared goals and measures (mutually reinforcing activities)
7) Create coordinated, strategic action plan focused on priority areas

With the creation of the office of Outreach Services , NMC further institutionalized its capacity to build relationships with organizations from which we receive students. Outreach Services facilitates NMC's Early College services to high school students, and makes connections between NMC and high schools for concurrent enrollment opportunities. Outreach Services works with the Consortium of Michigan Veteran Educators to support veterans.

NMC has partnered extensively with the Traverse City Area Public Schools (TCAPS) district at multiple levels. NMC's President and several members of the executive staff meet regularly with the school district Superintendent and executive staff members in order to identify opportunities for collaboration and areas in which resources can be shared. Recently, NMC and TCAPS agreed to share personnel resources in the area of information technology.

Academic leaders and faculty, primarily in math and English, meet regularly with math and English faculty from the high schools in order to align curricula and to align high school performance with college readiness standards. The result of this partnership is evidenced by a decline in the percent of in-coming students that need developmental coursework (see category 3 introduction, Figure 1.3).

9P2 NMC partners with educational institutions, employers and organizations who hire our students so that we accomplish our strategic goals, help students achieve their career and educational goals, and serve the community's needs.

NMC's University Center is home to eight educational partners offering 50 post-Associate degree programs. NMC's University Center has been a unique partnership between Northwestern Michigan College and senior universities located throughout Michigan offering select bachelor degree-completion, graduate, doctorate, certificate and endorsement programs. Students attending the University Center can complete a four-year degree — or advanced degree — without leaving northwestern Michigan. In short, they could "start here and stay here" to fulfill their educational goals without being away from families, their jobs or their communities.

We prioritize partnerships with gaining educational institutions based on what best serves our students. For instance, in order to help students receive credit for all coursework leading to a degree, NMC signed eleven Reverse Transfer Agreements with universities in the State of Michigan. These agreements assist students in transferring credits earned at their transfer institutions back to NMC in order to complete associate degree requirements. By working with the universities, both schools track where the students are in their progress to obtain credentials for which they are entitled.

Although there is limited data on community college university centers at the national level, NMC has participated in national surveys or studies as often as possible. Most recent is a 2013 survey conducted by the Roanoke Higher Education Center. Their "Survey of Higher Education Centers in the United States" has self-reported data on financial performance of participating centers and on the impact of recent trends in distance education. Additionally, we have been working in collaboration with all of Michigan's community colleges and universities on the Michigan Transfer Agreement, a block transfer initiative, in which 30 credits of general education requirements would transfer automatically to universities. NMC has multiple articulation agreements with specific colleges and universities related to academic programs.

NMC has several mechanisms for collaborating with employers. Every occupational program is required to have an advisory group comprised of employers and faculty members. Those advisory groups help ensure that our graduates have the skills, values and experiences needed to be successful employees in their fields. For example, the Health Education Institute (HEI) was developed in conjunction with Munson Healthcare, the region's largest employer, in order to align NMC's nursing program in a way that effectively and efficiently meets Munson's nursing needs. Every advisory group meets twice a year and the meeting minutes are posted on the intranet. To strengthen this relationship, the college invested in creating a new Internship Coordinator position that will work to provide additional opportunities for our students to have program-related internships and receive first-hand experiences that will better align with employer expectations.

One emerging practice for NMC, in building relationships, is a focus on industry-specific employer focus groups. The purpose of the focus groups is to better understand employer needs and align NMC's programming and curricula to meet them. We prioritize these relationship based a strategic direction to "Establish national and international competencies and provide leadership in select educational areas connected to the regional economy and assets." Those select areas include:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Arts and Culture
- Entrepreneurship and Innovation
- Fresh Water
- Health Care
- Renewable Energy and Sustainability
- Value-Added Agriculture

Category Nine, Building Collaborative Relationships

Each year as a requirement for community college appropriations in Michigan, the Board of Trustees certifies NMC's "local strategic value" with the Best Practices Resolution. It provides examples of NMC's community outreach and partnering.

9P3 NMC predominately creates, prioritizes, and builds relationships with those that provide services to our students through the efforts of Enrollment Management and Student Services. In Learning Services, students with documented disabilities are typically clients of other community agencies, such as Michigan Rehabilitation Services, The Bureau of Services for Blind Persons or Community Mental Health. These agencies provide housing and transportation services for our students, as necessary; and they periodically provide financial assistance for education, childcare, etc. NMC's Disability Support Services works with these agencies to make sure students get the services they need and/or are entitled to. We also work with agencies such as Michigan Works!, Goodwill Industries, and regional literacy services to ensure that GED and Adult Basic Education is available to community members who may become future students. To guide our efforts, NMC has a Special Populations Advisory Board with representatives from area agencies that support our students and their learning; agencies involved from outside of the college include: Disability Network, Michigan Works!, Poverty Reduction Initiative, Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District, and Michigan Rehabilitation Services.

    From Student Life, NMC is represented on 1) the Homeless Youth Initiative Collaborative, which has quarterly meetings to address homelessness for students in the 16-24 year old population, 2) the Anti-Bullying Coalition, meets monthly to address student bullying concerns from 8th grade through college, 3) the Suicide Prevention Coalition for Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties with quarterly meetings to address suicide prevention for students, 4) the Poverty Reduction Initiative, which meets quarterly to address poverty concerns in the greater Grand Traverse region, and 5) the Youth Opportunities Initiative with the Michigan Department of Human Services. NMC builds and maintains relationships by providing office space to partners such as the Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative education planner who provides direct services to foster youth who are attending NMC.

    NMC maintains a direct relationship with the United States Department of Education to deliver Title IV Federal Financial Aid funds to eligible students. This includes the Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Opportunity Grant, and Federal Direct Student and Parent Loans. Signed copies of the Program Participation Agreement (PPA) as well as the Eligibility Certification Approval Report (ECAR) are filed in the office of the Director of Financial Aid. The current ECAR expires 12/31/2018. The financial aid office also coordinates with various lending agencies to provide alternative loan options to students utilizing Fast Choice, an alternative loan tool provided by Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation. NMC's Net Price Calculator aids students in planning for the financial resources required to attend college. As part of the overall "financial aid" service for our students, the NMC Foundation provides scholarship support to our students through charitable gifts to the Foundation and also collaborates with many outside agencies to provide direct tuition assistance.

9P4 Specific staff members have oversight for creating contractual agreements with organizations that supply materials and services, subject to Board of Trustee or Presidential approval. Such services include safety, which is provided by external community agencies such as police and fire departments, and campus security provided by a vendor. Additionally, relationships for services such as technology support are managed by NMC staff, and are chosen based on NMC's needs for service as outlined in a Request for Proposal process. NMC works with area service providers and members serve on advisory boards such as the regional Emergency Response Team to build relationships with agencies. NMC maintains contractual agreements with service organizations to provide campus dining services, a multi-year agreement, subject to Board approval, with oversight by NMC staff. The threshold for Board level approval for vendor contracts is $25,000. If over $25,000 NMC's Board of Trustees evaluates the

contract and the soundness of decision-making the recommendation to engage a vendor. If below $25,000, contractual relationships are carried out as defined in the request for proposals, and the President evaluates the recommendation from a team. Procedures are available to the campus on the intranet, and are presented in Budget Manager's training from the Finance and Administration area.

9P5 In order to meet regional needs, NMC has developed an "institute-model" for some of its partnerships. For instance NMC's location in northwest Michigan and proximity to the Great Lakes has spurred the creation of the Great Lakes Water Studies Institute as a regional partnership of strategic importance. It is managed by an NMC director working with two advisory boards, one for educational programming and one for strategic long-range planning. The Health Education Institute (HEI) grew from a strategic conversation on "quality of life" through education and healthcare between NMC and Munson Healthcare, the region's largest healthcare provider. We prioritize these partnerships based on regional asset areas, and act in areas in which NMC can grow or provide strengths in the relationship.

       The criteria for developing an "institute," include: 1) desire to align, share, and efficiently use resources, 2) a shared vision for the region's assets and strengths, and 3) the skills sets required to achieve the goals and outcomes of a partnership, or minimally the capacity to attain or develop those skills. In the case of the Health Education Institute, leaders sought to thoughtfully align resources for 1) workforce development related to healthcare, 2) develop leadership capacity in healthcare through education, and 3) champion community learning related to healthcare. The HEI is in its eighth year.

       For state level partnerships, staff members are assigned to represent NMC in professional associations. For instance NMC's President has served in a leadership position in the Michigan Community College Association (MCCA) as chair of the executive team and on the legislative committee.

        For partnerships with the general community, NMC's Resource Development department works with forty members of the NMC Foundation Board to secure resources in support of the College. Foundation Board members are approved by the Board of Trustees. Members devote time, talent and treasure to the Foundation and the College. Hundreds of other community volunteers, engaged college-wide, are a significant resource for friend-raising and fund-raising for the Foundation, NMC's Dennos Museum Center, and other program areas. Foundation Board members and additional volunteers connect with their friends, neighbors, and colleagues to promote the College and gain community support for NMC and our learners. Throughout the year, NMC hosts several friend and fund-raising events including:

- The NMC Barbecue has raised more than $1.5 million for 230 NMC programs and special projects, serving nearly 10,000 guests per year
- The annual Tasters Guild Auction which raises $60,000-$80,000 annually to support culinary scholarships.
- The NMC Scholarship Open golf outing has raised over $1.3 million to support NMC honors scholarships.

Many NMC staff members are also engaged with other community organizations which help to inform our work. For example, the President, Great Lakes Maritime Academy Superintendent, Executive Director of the Dennos Museum Center, and Foundation Executive Director are all members of the local Rotary club. NMC is part of the fabric of our community and our staff and volunteer board members serve to maintain those essential connections. NMC measures the attitudes and awareness within the community with the Community Survey (9R2).

9P6 NMC systematically evaluates the varying needs of partners and whether those needs are being met through our aligned planning process, regular dialogue and periodic surveys. The success of virtually every program and service of the college depends on effective external partnerships. To ensure these partnerships meet the needs of the various stakeholders, NMC applies the same continuous

improvement methodology of Plan-Do-Check-Adjust that it uses for all other processes. In planning for a partnership agreement, the purpose of the partnership is clarified and success measures are identified, while answering the questions: 1) What are we trying to accomplish? and 2) What would success look like?

A timeline for evaluating those success factors and the effectiveness of the partnership is also established and written into the agreement ("to be reviewed annually, quarterly," etc.).   The frequency of the review varies depending on the nature of the partnership and its goals.

Those NMC personnel responsible for implementing the various program and service partnerships are accountable for their evaluation which will likely include both qualitative and quantitative process and outcomes measures. Quantitative data may be gathered by the departments or individuals involved in the partnership or from Office of Research, Planning and Effectiveness (ORPE). Qualitative data and informal feedback is gathered regularly by those involved in the partnership. Active listening, identifying and addressing concerns and opportunities, and other relationship-building strategies are essential for strong partnerships.

Depending on the partnership's effectiveness in achieving its goals, a number of adjustments are possible that might include: 1) expand the partnership or adjust membership, 2) adjust the goals or terms of the agreement, or 3) dissolve the partnership because it no longer serves a useful purpose. Goals, metrics, and action plans are documented on departmental annual planning documents (further explained in category 8).

9P7 The primary way in which NMC builds relationships between and among departments is through the aligned planning process. Beginning with a shared understanding of the strategic goals, several departments could be responsible for achieving the targets under a strategic goal. In Leadership Group (comprised of the President's Council, Planning and Budget Council, academic area leaders, and service department directors) sessions designed to facilitate communication among departments, we ensure that shared goals are annotated on the appropriate departments' annual planning documents (A3 tool). Regular check meetings throughout the year contribute to integration and communication across these relationships.

For instance, emerging markets for specific programming in robotics and unmanned vehicle systems, has led to collaboration in program areas including engineering technology on the ground, the Water Studies Institute underwater, and the Aviation program in the air. These areas work together to provide curricula that meets the needs and interests of our students and of employers.

Operationally, NMC uses councils, committees, teams and events to create and build relationships between and among departments. NMC's governance processes enable us to "fulfill the college's mission and ensure that the college provides an effective governance structure…with appropriate involvement of the faculty and staff in decisions of the college" (Staff Policy D-502-01). For example, our governance council membership assures that all employee groups have representation and all meeting minutes are electronically available to the campus community sent out by email and collected on the intranet. At the operational level, for example, the Educational Services Instructional Management Team (ESIMT) includes all the instructional chairs and directors and the team minutes are sent out electronically to all instructional areas.

We are building a directory to identify and annotate employee skill sets and affiliations to help us deliver learning through a networked workforce, which is one of NMC's strategic directions. The directory will help facilitate creating and building relationships among employees for specific projects. Various communication tools and mechanisms used are outlined in 5P7.

9R1 NMC systematically measures collaborative partnerships through direct, indirect, and progress measures. As outlined in 9P6, NMC plans for, tracks the progress of, and measures the outcomes of specific partnerships on area planning documents through our aligned planning process. We directly measure how well our partnerships with institutions from which we receive students are going by tracking our enrollment from those institutions. For relationships with those institutions that gain our students, we track transfer rates, and placement rates. Indirect measures include, transfer student perceptions on transferability of their credits, and advisory group feedback on students.

For relationships with donors, alumni, and the community NMC tracks direct tangible commitment in the form of financial contribution:

1) Annual foundation fundraising total dollars
2) Annual foundation fundraising per headcount
3) Percent of employees participating in giving back

Indirect measures of building external collaborative relationships with the community include metrics from the Community Attitude and Awareness Survey. For relationships among NMC's internal departments and employees, specific statements from the Employee Engagement Survey help measure our outcomes.

9R2 Market penetration for new high school graduates helps us measure our relationship with our feeder organizations. NMC had consistently enrolled nearly 24% of area high school graduates which is above the peer average from the National Community College Benchmark Project (Table 9.1). Our results in fall 2012, led to more proactive efforts by a new Director of Admissions who has brought new ideas and improved results.

Table 9.1 Percent area high school graduates enrolling at NMC		Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012
1	**% area high school graduates enrolling**	24%	21%	30%	20%	19%
2	High school graduates in service area	2499	2423	2293	2422	2389
3	Percent of peers below NMC	60%	47%	78%	59%	
4	Number of peers	182	214	210	200	
5	Source: National Community College Benchmark Project					

NMC's relationship with other post-secondary institutions is focused on a smooth transfer experience for students with that educational goal and on increasing transferability of courses for our students. NMC has met or exceeded its target for transfer student satisfaction (Table 9.2). A future metric will assess NMC's results for the Reverse Transfer agreements put in place this past year.

Table 9.2 Transfer Student Satisfaction with transfer credits from NMC to transfer institution	2009	2010	2011	2012	Target
% satisfied with number of credits transferring	93%	94%	94%	97% ↑	90%
# Responding	164	180	167	162	
Source: Transfer Student Survey					

Color Key	Meets or exceeds min/target	Does not meet target but trend in right direction	Does not meet target, trend steady or in wrong direction

Employers who serve as members of NMC's programmatic advisory groups have consistently rated their partnership with NMC faculty as above average or excellent (Table 9.3). The Advisory Committee survey is administered by each occupational program annually as part of the Academic Program Review process. While we have exceeded our target for this metric, program areas are working on increasing the response rate from their committees.

Table 9.3 Advisory Committee Rating of Program Faculty Partnership					
Percent rating the level of effectiveness of NMC in building collaborative relationships with program advisory committees as: Above Average or Excellent	**2009-2010**	**2010-2011**	**2011-2012**	**2012-2013**	**Target**
	87.5%	86.5%	95.1%	93.7% ↓	90%
Number Responding	72	74	41	48	
Source: Advisory Committee Perceptions of Occupational Education Programs Survey					

For building relationships with the general community, NMC measures its effectiveness indirectly through the Community Attitudes and Awareness Survey. Results show that NMC enjoys a high level of satisfaction from our community members (Table 9.4). We have set a high target of 90% positive rating.

Table 9.4 Community Attitudes about NMC's Overall Effectiveness						
		2004	**2008**	**2009**	**2011**	**Target**
1	NMC overall campus appearance	97%	95%	95%	98% ↑	90%
2	Overall academic reputation	89%	93%	97%	98% ↑	90%
3	Overall rating of NMC	91%	96%	98%	98 %↔	90%
4	Availability of scholarships and financial aid	78%	81%	92%	97% ↑	90%
5	Overall reputation of NMC in the community	99%	96%	95%	96% ↑	90%
6	Value of an NMC education		95%	93%	94 %↑	90%
7	Job NMC does responding to learning needs of community	97%	88%	93%	93% ↔	90%
8	Job NMC does communicating with the community		77%	98%	91%↓	90%
9	Job NMC does managing finances	92%	75%	86%	90% ↑	90%
(% "Positive" Rating (7-10) on scale 1-10, "Don't know" respondents excluded)						

More direct measures of our community partnership include friend-raising and fund-raising. NMC consistently is in the top 25th percentile as compared to our peers in Annual Foundation fundraising total dollars (Table 9.5) and Annual Foundation fundraising per headcount (Table 9.6).

Internal relationship building is based on employee service and engagement. One measure of the strength of internal relationships is through employee giving. The percent of regular employees giving back to NMC has declined for the last three years (Table 9.7). A restructure and new business plan for the Resource Development area along with considerable improvements made in the processes related to Category 4, Valuing People are expected to positively impact this percentage.

Table 9.5 Annual Foundation fundraising total dollars

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Target
Total Dollars	$4.1M	$2.8M	$2.6M	$1.2M	$1.9M	$1.7M	$1.4M ↓	$1.76M
Percent of peers below NMC	95%	89%	87%	69%	79%	78%	73%	
# peers responding	143	143	164	159	157	162	163	

Source: Council for Aid to Education – Voluntary Support of Education Survey

Table 9.6 Annual Foundation fundraising per Headcount

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Dollars per Headcount	$935	$646	$590	$278	$385	$317	$272
Percent of peers below NMC	99%	92%	91%	86%	92%	88%	88%
# peers responding	143	143	164	159	157	162	163

Source: Council for Aid to Education – Voluntary Support of Education Survey

Table 9.7 Percent of Regular Employees Contributing to NMC Foundation (All Gifts)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Target
Amount Contributed	$68K	$58K	$61K	$57K	$46K	$58K ↑	
Regular Employees Participating	164	162	181	197	170	160	
Total Regular Employees	295	297	320	282	316	328	
Percent Participating	56%	55%	57%	70%	54%	49% ↓	75%

Source: Resource Development

Indirectly NMC measures employee engagement on the Employee Engagement Survey. Several measures help us assess the effectiveness and strength of building relationships internally (Table 9.8). Color coding and analyzing the trends helps NMC prioritize improvement actions and to decide on the areas that need further research. NMC selects courses of action based on the percent of employees agreeing with the process and outcome statements. In this category, results indicate that while individuals tend to agree that they collaborate with others and believe that NMC employees are committed to continuous improvement, we have opportunities for improvement in clarifying the goals and roles of the shared governance structure in building collaborative relationships.

Table 9.8 Employee Engagement Survey	2011 (N=402)	2012 (N=399)	2013 (N=405)
Q3_16. I collaborate with others in performing my role at the college.	87.3%	87.7%	86.9%
Q2_17. I believe NMC employees are committed to continuous improvement.	88.6%	88.3%	84.9%
Q2_5. My supervisor asks for my input in developing departmental goals.	72.9%	73.4%	70.3%
Q2_15. Communication from NMC's shared governance councils and committees is useful.	67.7%	62.7%	62.8%
Q2_14. The shared governance structure is an effective way to lead the organization.	60.3%	61.4%	55.9%

9R3 NMC tracks comparative data with the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP) on high school graduate enrollments. We track measures over time and compare our results with the NCCBP peer group. Moreover, NMC participates in the Council for Aid to Education (CAE) – Voluntary Support of Education survey. NMC submits data to the VSE survey so that we may compare our fundraising outcomes with other community college peers. For public, two-year institutions, NMC's Foundation has consistently been in the top twenty in the nation in terms of funds raised.

9I1 NMC's strategic directions and results from our AQIP System Appraisal led us to develop and launch two AQIP action projects designed to address opportunities for improvement in this category. The earliest was the Enhancing Partnerships AQIP action project. The primary goal of the project was to strengthen the relationship between NMC and Michigan Works! at a time when fast and effective responsiveness to the region's workforce was critical. As a results of the project, NMC increased effective interaction between both organizations by: (a) understanding Michigan Works! funding streams and program requirements; (b) streamlining information on NMC courses, certifications, and degrees to meet Michigan Works! resources; (c) establishing clear and consistent communication between both organizations; (d) creating long-term relationship building between staffs; (e) producing a functional directory for both organizations to facilitate client support.

The second AQIP action project, Building Lifelong Relationships, was launched in response to NMC's strategic direction to establishing lifelong relationships with learners. The goal of this current action project is to develop a contact relationship management system to increase repeat business for the College, expand the ways we communicate with our stakeholders, increase conversion rates for donors, and to identify learning needs.

9I2 **I**n addition to the work in relationship management systems, the NMC Foundation and Resource Development department underwent a strategic assessment of its resource development programs. Recommendations for building the infrastructure to improve targets in this category included:

- Implementation of a database position within Resource Development to improve the collection and use of data on alumni and donors
- Development of a clear and compelling case for philanthropic support for the College
- Implementation of a Director of Development position to improve the management of a major gifts fundraising effort
- Creation of a new structure and new identity for the annual giving program, specifically focused on developing an unrestricted base of philanthropic support.
- Development of a comprehensive and integrated communications plan

While alumni represent significant potential as prospective donors, alumni giving has declined. Plans are in place to establish a staff position for Director of Alumni Relations. At that time, a comprehensive alumni relations program will be developed to increase engagement of alumni and cultivate greater affinity toward the College.

Tables and Figures