Seward County Community College

HLC ID 1298

AQIP: AQIP Pathway Systems Appraisal   Visit Date: Not Set

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1 - Reflective Overview

The first section of the System's Appraisal Feedback Report is the Reflective Overview. Here the team provides summary statements that reflect its broad understanding of the institution and the constituents served. This section shows the institution that the team understood the context and priorities of the institution as it completed the review.

In the Reflective Overview, the team considers such factors as:

1. Stage in systems maturity (processes and results).
2. Utilization or deployment of processes.
3. The existence of results, trends and comparative data.
4. The use of results data as feedback.
5. Systematic improvement processes of the activities each AQIP Category covers.

Instructions for Systems Appraisal Team

During this stage of the Systems Appraisal, provide the team's consensus reflective overview statement, which should be based on the independent reflective overviews written by each team member. The consensus overview statement should communicate the team's understanding of the institution, its mission and the constituents it serves. Please see additional directions in the Systems Appraisal procedural document provided by HLC.

Evidence

Overall:

Seward County Community College, located in Liberal, Kansas, is a small, public, rural community college. The College's mission is to "provide opportunities to enrich and improve each person's life through a range of academic programs, including technical education, certificate and degree programs, and transferable degree programs, for the advancement of the individual and the community."Of the total student headcount of 2,587 majority (75%) are first generation, with a full time equivalent of 1261, 27 percent of the students age 17 or younger; and 46 percent of the students are between the age of 18 and 23. There are 50 international students. Of the entire student body, 48 percent are Hispanic and 55 percent consider themselves as racial/ethnic minority. There are 63 full time and 61 part time faculty. Of the academic programs offered, seven programs are in Allied Health, seven in Business, Agriculture, and Personal Services, ten in Humanities and Social/Behavioral Sciences, fourteen in Industrial Technology, and seven in Math, Science, and HPERD. Seward County Community College also offers dual credit courses and evening classes in eleven outreach communities. Online offerings include programs in Medical Laboratory Technology and Surgical Technology as well as courses that lead to an online associate degree through the Edukan consortium. The Respiratory Therapy program is available to another community college's students through video conferencing. The College is home to the Southwest Energy Institute, which has served the oil and natural gas industry for 60 years. Adult Education program is consistently one of the top three in the state of Kansas for numbers of students served and for educational gains. Career and technical education programs have added multiple exit points and industry certifications,

creating stackable credential options. A Blendflex course delivery model has been successful in providing instruction to high schools without qualified faculty. One of the challenges for the College related to loss of funding caused by the governor's tax cut experiment. This resulted in 5 percent state funding cuts each year. In addition, local energy companies protested property tax evaluations, which resulted in a loss of $2 million in local support. Data and instructional technology systems security are also challenges. Seward County Community College states its processes as largely systematic, with results often reactive.

Category 1:

In 2017, Seward County Community College introduced Blendflex course delivery to help students toggle between face-to-face, hybrid, and online instruction. As part of learning support, the College established a Writing Center, Math Resource Center, and online tutoring and multiple languages support.   Seward County Community College has aligned co-curricular learning outcomes in the following five life skill themes: leadership, development, community, self-advocacy, working in teams, and understanding others. The collection and evaluation of these learning outcomes is underway. Faculty have worked on critical reading assessments, defining diversity outcomes and the development of new associated rubrics. Professional development activities have involved assignment designing and assessment of student artifacts. Efforts have also taken place on the development of course level assessment and curricular mapping. The College has created a new program feasibility approach that replaces the prior administrative program review process. A new classroom observation tool has been developed. The College believes that its processes and results are at the systematic level of maturity except for co-curricular assessment, which is reacting.

Category 2:

Seward County Community College has created a list of student subgroups and has taken action to provide support services to each. Most recently, they have added mental health, bilingual advising, parent information and sexual assault/domestic violence supports to its existing portfolio of services. Related, considerable renovation and construction work has been underway associated with the Hispanic-Serving Institutional grants the College has received. The College acknowledges that student retention levels have continued to erode, however officials have indicated that they have engaged its Retention Committee to evaluate possible interventions and process changes in the awarding of aid. The College utilizes a faculty and staff advising model which has been updated to include the addition of full-time advisers for special populations and vital instructional areas. The College routinely tracks student satisfaction data, learning support usage (i.e., online tutoring), student success data in developmental and gateway courses, and data from the Early Alert System. The College states its processes and results are at a systematic level of maturity.

Category 3:

Seward County Community College has updated their hiring and evaluation processes to improve processes and services to employees. The employee performance evaluation process begins with a self-evaluation and planning phase where the employee recounts goals and achievements, identifies strengths, and describes their associated performance level for each of the essential job functions. The College is working to advance competitive salary schedules and associated targets for all employees through a salary administration system called Compease, as they seek to attract and retain quality talent. Health care premium costs continue to stress their budget, but they have found ways to reduce costs using a consulting firm, which resulted in over $100,000 in savings last fiscal year. The College maintains a priority of employee development. The process for advancing training and professional

development includes adhering to mandatory external requirements, and an employee needs assessment. The College acknowledges the need for a better way to make these determinations to better align professional development activities with institutional objectives. All employee professional development activities are recorded in the College's ERP system. The College indicates that their processes are at the systematic level of maturity and their results are at a reacting level.

Category 4:

Seward County Community College's strategic planning process is traditional in approach and includes related goal setting, combined with employee performance evaluation efforts as the principal means by which the actions of the organization reflect their organizational mission, vision and values. Core values of the College are trust, valuing others, student success, and quality. All of the mission documents are communicated throughout the organization and community through various media, as well as through a new emphasis on story telling. The College's strategic planning processes have improved in focus and goal setting over previous years, ensuring that all academic programs and support services are consistent with the mission. Budgeted allocation of resources is determined by relationship to the College's Five Key Directions (i.e., Promote a safe and healthy campus; Invest in teaching, learning, and curriculum development; Enhance financial and organizational vitality; Expect high outcomes in recruitment, retention, and graduation; and Broaden community education and business and industry collaboration). The six-member board of trustees is active in its oversight, planning and fiduciary responsibilities. The College states that its process and results level of maturity is systematic.

Category 5:

Seward County Community College added the Chief Information Officer to the President's Executive Team to assist with ensuring that security and IT infrastructure items are addressed and included in planning process. The College is transitioning to Microsoft Office 365. When combined with other software tools, employees will have access to key performance indicators critical for their work. Kansas Higher Education Data System institutional outcomes assessment, and comparison data from IPEDS and NCCBP are compiled and summarized with data analysis achieved in a distributed way through employees charged with making associated decisions. Committees select key data sources through the goal identification and College planning processes. The College monitors data accuracy and reliability and compares annual report information with previous years, looking for unsubstantiated variation.The process for maintaining fiscal, physical, and technological infrastructure is based upon regular review of the functionality and condition of the current infrastructure.Ultimately, the President, the Executive Team and Board of Trustees are responsible for ensuring that budget allocation will support strategic goals, operations, and educational support services. Current goals include improved investments in facilities and equipment by 20%, as well as increased external funding support by 10% per year. The College declares that both its processes and results level of maturity is reacting, but note that its budget processes are at a systematic level of maturity.

Category 6:

Although Seward Community College has made significant progress through several action projects in data quality and integrity, there has been a continuous challenge for the College to improve on data integrity at collection stages and dissemination of data to stakeholders. The College documents all relevant evidence of performance through Mover Group projects and initiatives. Overall, the College reports that its processes and results in Category 6 are systematic.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2 - Strategic Challenges Analysis

Strategic Challenges are those most closely related to an institution's ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning and quality improvement goals. Review teams formulate judgments related to strategic challenges and accreditation issues through careful analysis of the Institutional Overview and through their own feedback provided for each AQIP Pathway Category. These findings offer a framework for future improvement of processes and systems.

Instructions for Systems Appraisal Team

Strategic Challenges may be identified on the Independent Category worksheets as the review progresses. The team chair will work with the team to develop a consensus Strategic Challenges statement based on their independent reviews. Please see additional directions in the Systems Appraisal procedural document provided by HLC.

Evidence

Process. Throughout the portfolio, Seward County Community College identified activities undertaken by the College to attain its mission and goals. Yet, the activities did not appear to have been developed into organized, structured, measurable processes. The College stated that over 100 processes had been mapped but their process maps were not provided in the portfolio nor were the metrics designed to measure their performance. A process should have interdependent steps focused and leading to the attainment of a specific outcome which is measurable, direct and comparable to a target measure. Execution of the process should generate data that through analysis defines structured targeted improvements which feed back into the process. Within the portfolio, there is to be a flow with first the process description, correlating to process metrics/results, and finally improvements based upon analysis of those process results. By developing structured, organized, measurable processes, Seward County Community College can better understand its performance and target improvements to increase efficiency and effective distribution of resources.

Data. Throughout the portfolio, data and the documentation of direct measures of performance were lacking. Seward County Community College participates in a number of surveys and comparisons that lead to indirect measures of performance but not direct. Indirect measures raise questions of validity, which is due to the subjective nature of the responses provided in a survey. In order for an institution of higher learning to measure performance and make informed decisions, in essence effectively manage the institution and its resources, direct measures need to be reliably collected, analyzed, and converted to usable information. Data pertinent for decision-making needs to be disseminated to the area where the decision is being made which includes the faculty and staff levels. Reliable data is the key to increasing the success of any decision making process. In an environment where external demands placed upon higher education have limited resources, access to and use of reliable direct data is key. This has been raised as a concern in previous appraisals and continues to be a concern in this one.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3 - Accreditation Evidence Screening Summary

Systems Appraisal teams screen the institution's Systems Portfolio evidence in relation to the Criteria for Accreditation and the Core Components. This step is designed to position the institution for success during the subsequent review to reaffirm the institution's accreditation. In order to accomplish this task, HLC has established linkages between various Process and Results questions and the Criteria's Core Components. Systems Appraisal teams have been trained to conduct a "soft review" of the Criteria/Core Components for Systems Portfolios completed in the third year of the AQIP Pathway cycle and a more robust review for Systems Portfolios completed in the seventh year. The formal review of the Criteria and Core Components for purposes of reaffirming the institution's accreditation through the comprehensive evaluation that occurs in the eighth year of the cycle, unless serious problems are identified earlier in the cycle. As part of this Systems Appraisal screening process, teams indicate whether each Core Component is "strong, clear, and well-presented," "adequate but could be improved," or "unclear or incomplete." When the Criteria and Core Components are reviewed formally for reaffirmation of accreditation, peer reviewers must determine whether each is "met", "met with concerns", or "not met".

The full report documents in detail the Appraisal team's best judgment as to the current strength of the institution's evidence for each Core Component and thus for each Criterion. It is structured according to the Criteria for Accreditation and the Systems Appraisal procedural document. Institutions are encouraged to review this report carefully in order to guide improvement work relative to the Criteria and Core Components.

Immediately below the team provides summary statements that convey broadly its observations regarding the institution's present ability to satisfy each Criterion as well as any suggestions for improvement. Again, this feedback is based only upon information contained in the institution's Systems Portfolio and thus may be limited.

Instructions for Systems Appraisal Team

In this section, the team should create summary statements/suggestions for improvement for each of the Criteria for Accreditation.

Evidence

Criterion One: Mission

Strong, Clear and Well Presented

Seward County Community College's mission is developed consistent with a process suited to the institution. Degree programs, support services and enrollment profile support the mission. The mission is articulated through public documents in print and electronic formats. All documents are current. As an Hispanic-Serving Institution, attention is focused to address the needs of diverse communities in instructional delivery methods and co-curricular activities. There is a commitment to inclusive educational experiences. Seward engages its community and responds to their needs providing facilities for community organizations and business events.

Criterion Two: Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

Adequate but Could Be Improved

Seward County Community College demonstrates integrity through its audit reports, bond ratings, descriptions of hiring and performance evaluation practices, and documentation of academic standards. Fair and ethical policies are in place for the governing board, administration, faculty and staff. The institutional accreditation is posted on the College web site but not the programmatic accrediting organizations. The Board of Trustees is responsible for the operation, management and control of the institution but the integrity policy of the board indicates that the Board is also responsible to the taxpayers. The team questioned to what extent the taxpayers play a role in the administration of the College. Policy 415 addresses free speech and assembly but there is no policy addressing freedom of expression in scholarly practice. Also the execution of policies is not demonstrated in meeting minutes. An Institutional Research Board is in place and reviews all research projects. Students are instructed in research practices by the library personnel. The College has an Honor Code and Cheating Policy as well as Board and institutional policies on integrity.

Criterion Three: Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

Adequate but Could Be Improved

Seward County Community College's programs and course design have multiple levels of approval. Learning goals are specified in the syllabus, college website, and catalog. Learning goals are reviewed during program review and assessment. The team questions the participation of dual credit classes in the quality review process. The College does have intentional alignment of general education outcomes, degree requirements and institutional goals and learning outcomes. Outcomes are aligned with the Kansas Board of Regents Transfer and Articulation general education framework and articulation agreements. The College is a Hispanic-Serving Institution. There is professional development for staff and students on diversity. Curriculum mapping ensures that every degree addresses common institutional outcomes and program outcomes. Full time faculty teach 83.72 percent of total credit hours. Faculty to student ratio is 13:1. Seventy seven percent of full time faculty are involved in College support functions such as College committees. Faculty post office hours on a syllabus and on office doors. There was no evidence as to how online faculty are accessed by students. Policies are present on professional development but there is no evidence it is occurring. Student satisfaction surveys are conducted every six years. More timely surveys would better evaluate satisfaction and any trends in satisfaction. ACT and Accuplacer are used to determine preparedness for coursework. Additional evidence on how under prepared and at risk students are identified is needed. The College provides processes on how students are placed into appropriate courses. It is unclear what processes are formalized by contractual agreement or College policy. Processes are in place to evaluate effectiveness of programming to meet stakeholder needs. More evidence is needed on co-curricular programs to show how they enrich the learning environment.

Criterion 4: Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

Adequate but Could Be Improved

At Seward County Community College all programs are on a five year comprehensive review cycle. The College has five secondary accreditation standings. The Registrar evaluates all student academic records to ensure appropriate documentation within the Student Information Systems. Transfer credit is granted according to College and Kansas Board of Regents policies. Courses outside of

Kansas are evaluated by the deans and faculty which is a subjective process. Academic Affairs Council directs the awarding of credit through Prior Learning Assessment. Course rigor is set by faculty. Faculty qualification are set by the Board of Regents and are aligned with HLC guidelines. Concurrent faculty credentials are tracked by the Dean of Outreach. Employer satisfaction with graduates is reviewed through surveys. While graduate follow up data was reported to the Kansas Board of Regents through 2016 and no longer required, the College may want to consider continuing the practice as it relates to the sub-component. The College clearly states learning outcomes on its website and posts aggregate results. Co-curricular assessment was not completed until 2018 and data will not be analyzed until spring 2019. Assessment data was primarily indirect from student surveys. Faculty assess program learning outcomes including those aligned with institutional outcomes but this process is not fully developed. Goals for retention, persistence, completion and graduation are developed through comparison data and three year baseline. The Office of Assessment and Research sets the goals annually. Tools and methods to assess retention, persistence, and completion are based on a scheduled data collection timeline.

Criterion 5: Resources, Planning & Institutional Effectiveness

Adequate but Could Be Improved

Seward County Community College has had no material findings on financial audits for the past six years. Ongoing repairs of facilities is conducted using the eSupport work ticket system. Question is raised by the team as to whether deferred maintenance is addressed. Security for the IT infrastructure is a concern that goes beyond having IT behind a locked door. More evidence needs to be provided to indicate the security of the institutional and student information systems. Budget documents indicate a distribution of revenue but there is concern in regard to funding for staffing. The Institutional Research department only has one person who is required to carry out the Institutional Research functions as well as supporting assessment of student learning. The Board monitors finances as evidenced by Board minutes but evidence was not provided to indicate how employees are held accountable for their budgets. There is a three tiered system for training and support which is funded by two institutional funds. Yet the criteria for the funds was not provided. Policies and procedures are in place to engage the internal constituents in the strategic planning process. As evidenced in the Board minutes, the Board oversee and is involved in strategic planning. The Academic Affairs Council oversees academic matters. Budgeting considers local and state revenues in order to manage risk. Globalization is addressed through being a Hispanic-Serving Institution. There is a consistent lack of data and processes across the institution for continuous quality improvement. Some evidence of learning through processes but very little direct data analysis. More evidence needs to be provided on how the institution learns and how follow up is determine. More evidence is also needed to demonstrate how the institution applies learning to ensure improvement efforts are supported and sustained throughout the organization.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4 - Quality of Systems Portfolio

In this System Appraisal, peer review teams should acknowledge any work that the institution has begun toward addressing the Criteria for Accreditation and the Core Components. The more focused analysis remains on the AQIP Categories and the institution's evidence related to the Process (P), Results (R), and Improvement (I) questions. In cases where there was HLC follow-up stemming from the institution's previous reaffirmation review, the institution may request closer scrutiny of those items during this Systems Appraisal.

Instructions for Systems Appraisal Team

Because it stands as a reflection of the institution, the Systems Portfolio should be complete and coherent, and it should provide an open and honest self-analysis on the strengths and challenges facing the institution. In this section, the peer review team provides the institution with constructive feedback on the overall quality of the Systems Portfolio, along with suggestions for improving future Systems Portfolio submissions.

Evidence

Seward County Community College demonstrated that the development of the Systems Portfolio was a collaborative process, encompassing the involvement of members of the College community. While the collaboration is commended, it may be beneficial for the College to have one individual in charge of melding the portfolio content into one voice.

The review team identified a number of challenges with the portfolio construction. These areas of concern are described in the bullet points below. Special emphasis needs to be placed on the documentation for the Criteria for Accreditation with the institution's Comprehensive Quality Review on the horizon:

- Throughout the portfolio, Seward County Community College often responded to the AQIP Framework questions with activities rather than processes. A process is a number of interrelated steps an institution takes to attain a measurable outcome or target/goal. While the College provided a number of activities undertaken by the College related to the portfolio request, the request is for a description of a defined process, not the associated activities. The College mentioned in the narrative that over 100 processes had been mapped but yet no process maps were included in the portfolio.
- With a lack of defined processes within the portfolio, there was an associated lack of outcome/results data to determine if the processes undertaken were successful in meeting a target or goal. Often internal targets were not provided which made the interpretation of the results challenging for the institution. In addition, the data provided by Seward County Community College was often indirect in nature, such as survey data, which are also frequently subjective data and can lead to invalid conclusions or decisions without corroboration from direct measures.
- This is the first portfolio Seward County Community College completed in the Assurance System. The Assurance System requires the College to provide evidence and make a case for its compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. While some evidence was provided in the

Assurance System, the quantity and quality of this evidence varied by category and Core Component. As this was a transition portfolio for the College, reviewers accepted some narrative as evidence for adequacy of evidence; however, the reviewers have concerns that the College has the evidence to support that narrative. Actual documents need to be provided in the assurance system evidence file for all core Components for ongoing accreditation. Those categories that did not provide evidence often talked about the evidence, leading the peer review team to believe that the evidence does exist but was not uploaded into the system. Talking about the evidence was part of the old portfolio process, now the actual documents need to be provided, including policies and minutes to support the execution of the policy as stated.

- There were instances in the portfolio where the College tried to address more than one question in a single response. This frequently resulted in insufficient responses to one or more of the requested response areas.

The review team hopes these comments will help the College in the writing of its next accreditation document and the upcoming Comprehensive Quality Review. The College, as stated in the Strategic Challenges, is encouraged to develop processes and associated metric outcomes with targets. It is highly recommended that the College build their case for compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation core components by providing clear, direct and documented evidence as you would to bring a case to court before a judge. It is hoped that these comments will help Seward County Community College advance their quality process.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5 - AQIP Category Feedback

The Systems Appraisal Feedback Report addresses each AQIP Category by identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement. Through detailed comments, which are tied to the institution's Systems Portfolio, the team offers in-depth analysis of the institution's processes, results and improvement efforts. These comments should be straightforward and consultative, and should align to the maturity tables. This allows the team to identify areas for improvement and recommend improvement strategies for the institution to consider.

I - Helping Students Learn

Focuses on the design, deployment, and effectiveness of teaching-learning processes (and on the processes required to support them) that underlie the institution's credit and non-credit programs and courses.

Instructions for Systems Appraisal Team

In this section, the team should provide a consensus narrative that focuses on the processes, results and improvements for Common Learning Outcomes, Program Learning Outcomes, Academic Program Design, Academic Program Quality and Academic Integrity.

Independent Category Feedback for each AQIP Category from each team member should be synthesized into an in-depth narrative that includes an analysis of the institution's processes, results and quality improvement efforts for each category. Wording from the Stages in Systems Maturity tables for both processes and results should be incorporated into the narrative to help the institution understand how the maturity of processes and results have been rated. The narrative should also include recommendations to assist the institution in improving its processes and/or results. It is from this work that the team will develop a consensus on the Strategic Challenges analysis, noting three to five strategic issues that are crucial for the future of the institution. Please see additional directions in the Systems Appraisal procedural document provided by HLC.

Evidence

CATEGORY 1: HELPING STUDENTS LEARN

Category 1 focuses on the design, deployment and effectiveness of teaching-learning processes (and the processes required to support them) that underlie the institution's credit and non-credit programs and courses.

1.1: COMMON LEARNING OUTCOMES

Common Learning Outcomes focuses on the knowledge, skills and abilities expected of graduates from all programs. The institution should provide evidence for Core Components 3.B., 3.E. and 4.B. in this section.

1P1 Describe the processes for determining, communicating and ensuring the stated common learning outcomes, and identify who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Aligning common outcomes (institutional or general education goals) to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution (3.B.1, 3.E.2)

Systematic

Seward County Community College's processes for aligning common outcomes to the mission and educational offerings are systematic. The faculty identify the essential outcomes expected of all graduates and these outcomes undergo an annual review process that involves the assessment committee and Academic Affairs Council, as well as a review of outcomes at the program level. In addition, the general education learning outcomes, established through the statewide agreements, are reviewed every three years illustrating coordination not only across College units but also with other higher education institutions. The process can be brought to the next level by clearly defining how the common learning outcomes are tied to the mission.

- Determining common outcomes (3.B.2, 4.B.4)

Systematic

Seward County Community College has identified three learning goals: Effective communication, intellectual skills, and personal and social responsibility. The first step in determining institutional level common outcomes starts with the faculty who identifies skills and knowledge needed for Seward County Community College students to have upon completion. The faculty then determine the specific skill sets and measure the student's knowledge. The Assessment Committee reviews common institutional outcomes annually to identify needed changes. While the common learning outcomes are based on the College's general education philosophy and also tied to the state's general education outcomes, Seward County Community College has an opportunity to clarify, distinguish, or integrate the overlapping general education and institutional outcomes and goals.

- Articulating the purposes, content and level of achievement of the outcomes (3.B.2, 4.B.1)

Aligned

Seward County Community College's Assessment Committee is responsible for articulating the purposes, content and level of achievement of the outcomes. The College website lists purpose, knowledge and skill sets, and dashboard outcomes. These are accessible to the members of the college community and the public.

- Incorporating into the curriculum opportunities for all students to achieve the outcomes (3.B.3, 3.B.5)

Systematic

At Seward County Community College, the faculty process of identifying common learning outcomes is the same process used to incorporate into the curriculum, opportunities to achieve the learning outcomes. Faculty subsequently identify relevant skill sets, identify assessment measures and map them to the learning outcomes in courses throughout the curriculum. The faculty use a curriculum map to identify where they will introduce the outcomes, reinforce, and then assess them in each

program. An opportunity exists in the consideration of different learning styles of students in making these determinations.

- Ensuring the outcomes remain relevant and aligned with student, workplace and societal needs (3.B.4)

Systematic

Seward County Community College uses its annual review process by the Assessment Committee to ensure the outcomes remain relevant and aligned with student, workplace and societal needs. It is unclear how this process unfolds across each academic year and how changes are implemented and evaluated for effectiveness. By developing a more standardized, defined process the process may move to the aligned level of maturity.

- Designing, aligning and delivering cocurricular activities to support learning (3.E.1, 4.B.2)

Reacting

Seward County Community College's processes for designing, aligning and delivering co-curricular activities to support learning is at the reacting stage since the intended learning outcomes of these activities are not well established and thus the intentional integration of specific outcomes is sporadic.   Efforts in this area would be more systematic and moving toward aligned levels of maturity if the co-curricular programming was designed with stated, measurable outcomes that were clearly aligned with general education or institutional outcomes. While the College consistently notes that co-curricular activities are centered around five themes-- leadership development, community service, self-advocacy, working in teams, and understanding others—these appear to be a whole new set of common learning outcomes. The nine institutional outcomes are connected to some of these "themes" but more intentional integration of co-curricular programming that supports development of the measurable common learning outcomes will allow for ongoing evaluation of the co-curricular activities in advancing the College's mission and institutional goals. While the College indicates that a new database will improve tracking of student learning outcomes and that annual reports will provide results and alignment of co-curricular and curricular outcomes, a review of all of the expressed common outcomes might present an opportunity for tighter integration.

- Selecting the tools, methods and instruments used to assess attainment of common learning outcomes (4.B.2)

Systematic

Seward County Community College's processes for selecting tools and methods to assess common learning outcomes are at the systematic level and include a codified assessment plan developed primarily by faculty. The College has recognized the limitations of indirect assessment methods (such as those used for diversity and for the co-curricular) and the faculty are involved in the selection of tools, ultimately making recommendations to the Assessment Committee. While the College has committed itself to using nationally-normed instruments in order to triangulate results and gather comparative data, it appears there is an opportunity to evaluate the relative value of these instruments for enhancing curriculum and instruction. Reports were provided for the direct assessments used for oral and written communication, but no recent data for these methods were provided. Thus, if not already underway, the College might be able to improve the usability of results if the faculty expand the use of direct assessment methods, such as the use of rubrics with student

artifacts drawn from courses.

- Assessing common learning outcomes (4.B.1, 4.B.2, 4.B.4)

Systematic

Seward County Community College describes a five-step process created by the Assessment Committee that includes data collection, analysis by faculty, identification of improvement goals and the professional development needed to implement them, implementation of changes, and then begins again with data collection. Additional information about how these processes are communicated to faculty, how Assessment Day is structured and what the expectations for faculty are, how professional development and other support is provided and evaluated and how this is communicated to the campus community could move the College forward in maturity.

1R1 What are the results for determining if students possess the knowledge, skills and abilities that are expected at each degree level? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 1P1. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)

Reacting

Although Seward County Community College described processes for assessment and program review; there were no results of a completed program review and program assessment. Student artifacts have not been collected or reviewed for three years. Results data and nationally-normed instruments show how students perform over time and in comparison with peers, the use of results would be more systematic if the information was presented in a way that made the measures and targets widely understood and that would connect the results with decision-making or planned improvements.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Systematic

Seward County Community College has consistently made use of nationally-normed instruments such as CAAP and WorkKeys which allow the college to examine student performance against peers. Analysis of the data occurs at multiple levels and includes consideration of disaggregated data across different student groups. Results have validated that College's Latinx students perform at or above other student groups on some measures. The use of comparative data and specific benchmarks or targets would be more aligned with more widespread understanding or analysis of why targets are not met in a number of areas. To this end, the College may find it beneficial to consider the use of more direct measures of assessment rather than indirect.

- Interpretation of results and insights gained

Reacting

Seward County Community College has indicated that staffing changes between 2015 and 2018, meant that student artifacts were not scored. With student artifact scoring resuming in fall 2018, this

more direct method of assessment will assist the college in identifying and implementing improvement strategies tied to the specific areas of weakness noted in the learning outcomes.

1I1 Based on 1R1, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years? (4.B.3)

Seward County Community College remains in a formative state of common learning outcome assessment. While there have been a number of gains from the previous systems portfolio, and an expanded commitment to professional development for faculty, many of the College's efforts appear to be unaligned and not directed to a comprehensive approach to assessment. While It was noted that a number of software improvements will enhance reporting and review, an opportunity exists for the College to deepen its commitment to a comprehensive and integrated assessment methodology.

1.2: PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

Program Learning Outcomes focuses on the knowledge, skills and abilities graduates from particular programs are expected to possess. The institution should provide evidence for Core Components 3.B., 3.E. and 4.B. in this section.

1P2 Describe the processes for determining, communicating and ensuring the stated program learning outcomes and identify who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Aligning learning outcomes for programs (e.g., nursing, business administration, elementary teaching, etc.) to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution (3.E.2)

Systematic

Seward County Community College outlines a four-step alignment process, led by the Assessment Committee. Outcome data is reviewed annually by faculty or on an ad hoc basis as needed. Student course evaluation data is used for evaluation of how students perceive their progress, and curriculum maps show where outcomes are introduced, reinforced and assessed. Seward County Community College provided a rubric used to evaluate program outcomes as part of a three-year review cycle, but it is unclear what happens with these. Every five years during program review, a panel scores a rubric based on HLC's OO, O, S, SS evaluation to measure alignment. It is unclear how this four-step process is evaluated for effectiveness and changes made, which may advance the maturity.

- Determining program outcomes (4.B.4)

Systematic

Seward County Community College program outcomes are established through a systematic process with program faculty reviewing the outcomes annually when student learning results are gathered or when an external stakeholder (such as the Kansas Board of Regents Technical Education Authority or Transfer and Articulation Council, external accrediting or credentialing agency, advisory committee) recommends a change. The process could advance to a more aligned process with a more proactive approach that seeks to address or meet future needs as indicated by advisory committee members, employment trends, and other external factors.

- Articulating the purposes, content and level of achievement of the outcomes (4.B.1)

Systematic

Seward County Community College's faculty assessment committee incorporates input internally and from external stakeholders, via the web page. A rubric is used in making determinations regarding program outcomes. An opportunity exists to move beyond passive acquisition of communication from stakeholders, to consider the possibly use of focus groups that may result in stronger dialogue and discussion yielding improved input.

- Ensuring the outcomes remain relevant and aligned with student, workplace and societal needs (3.B.4)

Systematic

Every five years, each instructional program at Seward County Community College undergoes a comprehensive review, this in addition to annual program updates. Verification of alignment to mission and outcomes is conducted by a team from the Academic Affairs Council, who also serves as the final review body for making alignment determinations. The College may find it beneficial to determine the pace at which curricular changes are being made and the alignment of those changes.

- Designing, aligning and delivering cocurricular activities to support learning (3.E.1, 4.B.2)

Reacting

At Seward County Community College, faculty design and align their co-curricular activities around the five themes. At the program level, student organizations and community service associated with a course bear primary responsibility for co-curricular delivery. For each of these activities specific learning outcomes are determined. The College recognizes challenges in improving the data collection process for its co-curricular activities.

- Selecting the tools, methods and instruments used to assess attainment of program learning outcomes (4.B.2)

Systematic

Seward County Community College employs a four-step process used by faculty including identification of direct/indirect methods of assessment, selection of industry-specific credentialing exams, selection of methodologies and creation of targets. This could increase in maturity by including a step to evaluate the effectiveness and implement improvements.

- Assessing program learning outcomes (4.B.1, 4.B.2, 4.B.4)

Systematic

Seward County Community College's process for assessing program learning outcomes starts with the collection and compilation of data from the course level learning outcomes. Some program outcomes are aligned with institutional outcomes, and the data feeds into institutional level reporting and analysis. Furthermore, the College recognizes the need to improve co-curricular learning outcomes at the program level. The current process is uneven across the institution.

1R2   What are the results for determining if students possess the knowledge, skills and abilities that are expected in programs? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 1P2. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Overall levels of deployment of the program assessment processes within the institution (i.e., how many programs are/not assessing program goals)

Systematic

Twenty-six of twenty-nine Seward County Community College programs are currently assessing program outcomes, three having been newly created and are undergoing change due to instructor issues. A new database is expected to facilitate reporting and analysis of results. Co-curricular processes are insufficient and uneven.

- Summary results of assessments (include tables and figures when possible)

Reacting

Seward County Community College has experienced significant turnover in faculty, instructional leadership combined with an unfilled institutional research position. Not surprisingly, results from program outcomes are reportedly in decline in the areas of writing, critical thinking and information literacy. Assignment design review has not been undertaken in four years.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Reacting

Comparison of results with external and internal targets and external benchmarks is an area that offers an opportunity for improvement for Seward County Community College.

- Interpretation of assessment results and insights gained

Reacting

Seward County Community College's number of program outcomes meeting targets in critical thinking and information literacy has declined over the year, and over the past two years in writing. A new dean is hired and the faculty believe that the College now places less emphasis on critical thinking, writing, and information literacy. The interpretation of results is unclean and potentially confusing raising questions as to the usefulness of results.

1I2   Based on 1R2, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years? (4.B.3)

Seward County Community College's Assessment Committee has received recommendations from faculty about future professional development around assignment design, skills determinations for diversity, as well as rubric scoring. The College needs to work aggressively to fully incorporate co-curricular learning outcomes assessment. The Assessment Committee is undertaking responsibility for data compilation, analysis generation, and the creation of recommendations for improvement. The College has purchased software that will, when fully implemented, help to help facilitate data

evaluation.

1.3: ACADEMIC PROGRAM DESIGN

Academic Program Design focuses on developing and revising programs to meet stakeholders' needs. The institution should provide evidence for Core Components 1.C. and 4.A. in this section.

1P3 Describe the processes for ensuring new and current programs meet the needs of the institution and its diverse stakeholders. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Identifying student stakeholder groups and determining their educational needs (1.C.1, 1.C.2)

Systematic

Seward County Community College uses various groups across the College to identify student stakeholder groups and determine their educational needs. In order to best understand student needs, this cross-functional team examines various sources of information that determine whether students are first generation, single parents, working full-time, etc. The Enrollment Management Plan provides a summary of these data and subsequent strategies to be used to support the diverse student population of the College. There was not evidence to support the processes being described as being repeatable or documented.

- Identifying other key stakeholder groups and determining their needs (1.C.1, 1.C.2)

Systematic

Seward County Community College processes for identifying other key stakeholder groups and determining their needs are systematic with the Instructional Team leading the effort along with the Director of Business and Industry. Repeatable processes include advisory board meetings which provide opportunities for ongoing input. The processes could become more aligned with formal, documented processes for gathering information that results from conversations with business and industry contacts and local school districts, alumni, transfer institutions, and participation in community organizations.

- Developing and improving responsive programming to meet all stakeholders' needs (1.C.1, 1.C.2)

Systematic

At Seward County Community College, the needs of the stakeholder are the primary driver for providing and improving programs and related activities designed to meet stakeholder needs. The College utilizes advisory groups, industry connections and certification organizations to keep all career programs relevant. It was not clear from the description provided as to how proposals are developed and referrals made and more importantly, how alignment is determined.

- Selecting the tools, methods and instruments used to assess the currency and effectiveness of academic programs

Systematic

Seward County Community College's program review process includes college-wide reporting and periodic review of the effectiveness of the process. The College uses a process for selecting the methods and instruments that determine the currency and effectiveness of academic programs. The processes could be more aligned with greater integration of the program improvement process and the process to evaluate program viability. The College attempts to find data sets that can be used across all programs and considers state level core indicators and reporting requirements.

- Reviewing the viability of courses and programs and changing or discontinuing when necessary (4.A.1)

Aligned

Seward County Community College's previous Administrative Review process that has become the Program Feasibility and Potential Review (PFPR) is an aligned, annual process for reviewing the viability of programs. PFPR involves faculty, administration and ultimately the Board in making decisions about long-term program viability and resource allocation. The process allows the College to identify programs that are at-risk and, based on careful analysis of data, a decision is made about whether the program will be recommended for continuance, revitalization, discontinuance, or suspension. Board minutes indicate efforts to revitalize programs have been successful in some cases.

1R3 What are the results for determining if programs are current and meet the needs of the institution's diverse stakeholders? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 1P3. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of assessments (include tables and figures when possible)

Systematic

Seward County Community College provided results around the PFPR process described above. Results may improve in maturity by developing additional processes around how results are disseminated and used for decision-making. No processes appears in place to aggregate its Program Review data.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Reacting

Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks is an area that offers an opportunity for improvement for Seward County Community College.

- Interpretation of results and insights gained

Reacting

An opportunity exists for Seward County Community College to analyze and interpret program review and action project data.

1I3 Based on 1R3, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?

Of particular concern to Seward County Community College is a process to aggregate program outcomes data, conduct a review and analysis in order to generate action project improvements, which are intended for future development. The Bendflex model is contemplated for expansion across career and technical education programs. A restructuring of business and industry partnerships, training, and apprenticeships now is under the responsibility of the Business & Industry Director in the hopes of improved communication and service to the customer.

1.4: ACADEMIC PROGRAM QUALITY

Academic Program Quality focuses on ensuring quality across all programs, modalities and locations. The institution should provide evidence for Core Components 3.A. and 4.A. in this section.

1P4   Describe the processes for ensuring quality academic programming. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Determining and communicating the preparation required of students for the specific curricula, programs, courses and learning they will pursue (4.A.4)

Aligned

Seward County Community College faculty determine course and program preparation requirements through placement tests or high school grades in math and English classes. The appropriateness of the placement scores are reviewed on a three year cycle. These requirements are communicated to the public through the recruitment process, college website, college catalog, program webpages, syllabi, application materials, and during advising.

Systematic

Concern is raised as to the lack of evidence regarding employing these processes across the institution and ensuring that the tools are correct for the application.

- Evaluating and ensuring program rigor for all modalities, locations, consortia and dual-credit programs (3.A.1, 3.A.3, 4.A.4)

Systematic

Information is gathered, tracked, and communicated (as needed) in the processes for evaluating and ensuring program rigor for all modalities, locations, and dual-credit programs. Seward County Community College faculty have established and published expectations for effective teaching and students have defined expectations for being a College student. In addition, classroom observations tools, student feedback (through IDEA), course review rubrics, and other tools ensure consistent rigor and routine evaluation. Adjuncts and dual credit faculty are expected to use common final exams to ensure consistency across multiple sections. Faculty's use of tools such as the required course map (that documents course instructional activities, assignments, and assessments as well as credit hour compliance) and the Edukan consortium's online course audit help lead to improvement initiatives. Finally, the annual review of dual credit required by policy ensures an additional, thorough level of review of dual credit courses. The process may be raised to the next level of maturity through

evaluation and addressing challenges with the new blend/flex model.

- Awarding prior learning and transfer credits (4.A.2, 4.A.3)

Systematic

Seward County Community College follows Kansas Board of Regents guidelines, and provides CPL for CLEP, AP, DANTES/DSST, proficiency exams, articulation agreements with the army, and independent review of International transcripts. The Registrar is responsible for ensuring appropriate assignment of credit, including transfer credit. Faculty and Deans review out of state credit and the Registrar follows their recommendation. The process may be raised to the next level of maturity by indicating how transfers are evaluated from institutions outside of Kansas.

- Selecting, implementing and maintaining specialized accreditation(s) (4.A.5)

Systematic

Seward County Community College maintains specialized accreditations in career and technical education (CTE) programs with the following agencies: National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS), Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN), Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (COARC), Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP), and Kansas Board of Cosmetology (KBC). An opportunity exists for the College to strengthen its reputation and indeed student employment benefit by considering additional optional secondary accreditation programs such as ACBSP for business.

Reacting

Seward County Community College indicates that the selection of the specialized accreditation is based on whether accreditation is required for offering a degree. The College may find it beneficial to determine programmatic accreditation based upon the needs of the students in regard to licensure or credentialing or obtaining employment.

- Assessing the level of outcomes attainment by graduates at all levels (3.A.2, 4.A.6)

Systematic

Seward County Community College assessment of graduate outcomes are performed through multiple medium. Institutional level graduate assessment occurs annually in the spring and 95% of graduates participate in the Graduate Assessment Day event. The results then are shared with faculty in August to refine the learning outcomes. The College may raise the level of maturity by including Fall graduates in the data. Also by a more thorough understanding of the data and what it is depicting.

- Selecting the tools, methods and instruments used to assess program rigor across all modalities

Systematic

Seward County Community College's Academic Affairs Council is the organizational body ultimately charged with the evaluation of instructional program rigor, deploying multiple measures,

including externally developed assessment tools, such as WorkKeys and CAAP proficiency assessment. While board and industrial certification exams provide yet another measure of instructional rigor in select programs, an opportunity exists to gather performance data of peer institutions on these examinations so as to give additional context to the College's student pass rates. Also the College may find it beneficial to develop a process to determine the effectiveness of the selection process.

1R4   What are the results for determining the quality of academic programs? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 1P4. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of assessments (include tables and figures when possible)

Reacting

Seward County Community College has produced tables with disaggregated data showing assessment results with summary data from CAAP, ETS, and faculty-developed rubrics as well as pre- and post-measures. Given staffing changes in the past few years, collection of student artifacts for scoring has not occurred but will resume in the fall. It should also be noted that this is indirect data. No direct data of assessments has been provided.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Reacting

At Seward County Community College, normative assessments provide comparative data for consideration by faculty. The College has undertaken an analysis of student performance to stated benchmarks. Target/Benchmark levels were not achieved in every case. However, the College did note the need to consider instrumentation used so as to ensure data accuracy for underrepresented groups. There was mention of growth in CLEP testing award, and tabular data was provided for concurrent enrollment, however it remains unclear as to what goals or benchmarks the College was seeking to achieve. SAILS was mentioned but not explained and results were not apparent in the Information Literacy document provided.

- Interpretation of results and insights gained

Systematic

Seward County Community College's interpretation of results and insights gained are most evident in the analysis of more specific outcomes measures (as opposed to nationally-normed instruments such as CAAP or ETS). Analysis of results in some program areas that have not met expectations required for credentials and/or that show achievement gaps have led to specific changes or efforts to ameliorate these differences.

1I4   Based on 1R4, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?

To be sure, Seward County Community College has made notable progress since their last system portfolio. The expansion of multiple measures, the creation of a new process for prior learning

assessment, as well as the redesign of their rubrics, not to mention the incorporation of technological solutions (e.g., ewalk, and the MS BI tool, help the College to advance its work in instructional program design. Bearing down on weaknesses revealed in the current data analysis, in terms of missed targets, as well as ensuring a consistent application of the available instruments and methodologies could help to strengthen their work in this area.

1.5: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic Integrity focuses on ethical practices while pursuing knowledge. The institution should provide evidence for Core Components 2.D. and 2.E. in this section.

1P5 Describe the processes for supporting ethical scholarly practices by students and faculty. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Ensuring freedom of expression and the integrity of research and scholarly practice (2.D., 2.E.1, 2.E.3)

Systematic

Seward County Community College provided evidence of board policies regarding creative expression and integrity of instructional practice. Though employees and students are "expected to support" the college's mission documents and policies, it is unclear if or how that support is evaluated.

- Ensuring ethical learning and research practices of students (2.E.2, 2.E.3)

Systematic

Seward County Community College has an Institutional Review Board (IRB) if research involves human subject research. Students participating in research enroll in a training course around responsible research. It is unclear how long the described processes have been in place due to comments regarding funding for the course made in the portfolio.

- Ensuring ethical teaching and research practices of faculty (2.E.2, 2.E.3)

Reacting

The College's Assessment Committee has provided the faculty with appropriate training and professional development regarding ethical teaching practices, as well as training on the instructional honor code and the means/tools by which to examine student work for instances of cheating or plagiarism, as well as the documentation and processes for filing notification of same.
An opportunity exists for the College to clarify the means by which faculty work is examined for breaches in ethics and practice.

- Selecting the tools, methods and instruments used to evaluate the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of supporting academic integrity

Reacting

Seward County Community College's selection of tools, methods and instruments used to evaluate the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of supporting academic integrity is primarily focused on

detecting plagiarism and cheating, reacting to initial or immediate concerns with academic integrity. A more comprehensive approach for evaluating student development of skills and knowledge related to academic integrity would more likely lead to specific enhancements to strategies that support these outcomes.

1R5 What are the results for determining the quality of academic integrity? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 1P5. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of measures (include tables and figures where appropriate)

Reacting

Seward County Community College documents instances of student academic violations and the relative nature of the instance. No evidence was provided regarding ethical or other conduct violations of faculty, yet training was increased for faculty. May want to address root cause by students.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Reacting

Comparison of results with internal and external targets is an area that offers an opportunity for improvement.

- Interpretation of results and insights gained

Reacting

Seward County Community College identified a notable increase in instances of student violations of instructional integrity over the past few years. This increase is stated to be the result of increased faculty training on the subject. The College may find it beneficial to conduct root cause analysis to determine if the assumption is correct.

1I5 Based on 1R6, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?

The College has engaged in the creation and implementation of policy and professional development in support of academic integrity, though there appears to be a stronger institutional focus on student violations than the potential for employee violation, as evidenced by the lack of tools for the identification of same. The level of discussion and tools presented suggest a reacting level of institutional maturity.

CATEGORY SUMMARY

Category One – Helping Students Learn, Seward County Community College processes are at a Systematic Level of Maturity, with results at the Reacting Level of Maturity. The College attends to the unique and diverse needs of the students it serves. Course, program and co-curricular levels of assessment merit additional institutional and faculty attention with consistent effort and focus which

may ultimately lead to improved levels of institutional quality and student outcomes. In regard to assessment data, the College relies heavily on nationally normed instruments and not enough on the collection and analysis of student artifacts.

CATEGORY STRATEGIC ISSUES

None

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

II - Meeting Student and Other Key Stakeholder Needs

Focuses on determining, understanding and meeting needs of current and prospective students and other key stakeholders, such as alumni and community partners.

Instructions for Systems Appraisal Team

In this section, the team should provide a consensus narrative that focuses on the processes, results and improvements for Current and Prospective Student Needs, Retention, Persistence and Completion, Key Stakeholder Needs, Complaint Processes, and Building Collaborations and Partnerships.

Independent Category Feedback for each AQIP Category from each team member should be synthesized into an in-depth narrative that includes an analysis of the institution's processes, results and quality improvement efforts for each category. Wording from the Stages in Systems Maturity tables for both processes and results should be incorporated into the narrative to help the institution understand how the maturity of processes and results have been rated. The narrative should also include recommendations to assist the institution in improving its processes and/or results. It is from this work that the team will develop a consensus on the Strategic Challenges analysis, noting three to five strategic issues that are crucial for the future of the institution. Please see additional directions in the Systems Appraisal procedural document provided by HLC.

Evidence

CATEGORY 2: MEETING STUDENT AND OTHER KEY STAKEHOLDER NEEDS

Category 2 focuses on determining, understanding and meeting needs of current and prospective students and other key stakeholders, such as alumni and community partners.

2.1: CURRENT AND PROSPECTIVE STUDENT NEED

Current and Prospective Student Need focuses on determining, understanding and meeting the non-academic needs of current and prospective students. The institution should provide evidence for Core Components 3.C. and 3.D in this section.

2P1 Describe the processes for serving the academic and non-academic needs of current and prospective students. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Identifying underprepared and at-risk students, and determining their academic support needs (3.D.1)

Systematic

Seward County Community College monitors students' needs (academically and personally) continuously during their enrollment. A variety of tools and methods are used for making this determination. SCCC's counselors, academic advisors, and faculty work with individual students to

identify underprepared and at-risk students through admissions, advising, course placement, student-self reporting, at-risk reporting, and early alert. Of particular note, the College's at-risk reporting process can be used by any College employee to alert the College's At-Risk Team (which includes a mental health counselor) to a student having difficulty. An opportunity exists to have the academic early alert process reported before the 4th of the semester, as research has demonstrated that this is often too late to be of help to the student.

Reacting

SCCC states that in 2009 it became a HSI but it is unclear how the college came to consider Hispanic students as underprepared or what type of academic support the SCCC is providing other than having bilingual support in the student services and student success center.

- Deploying academic support services to help students select and successfully complete courses and programs (3.D.2)

Systematic

Seward County Community College provides an adequate variety of academic support services to students, particularly as it relates the under-represented student, which is notable given the HSI status of SCCC. Successful implementation of developmental education courses is the focus of SCCC's action projects since 2006. Additionally, the College has included co-requisite courses in English composition and college algebra as well as a dual language team-taught for transitioning adult education students, who speak Spanish as their primary language. The College may raise this process to the next level of maturity by considering online learning and how their academic selection and success needs are addressed.

- Ensuring faculty are available for student inquiry (3.C.5)

Reacting

Seward County Community College faculty are contractually required to hold five office hours/week. It is unclear how this is monitored or how students who are in off-site locations or entirely online are served, which may move the College forward in maturity. Also it is not evident that student's satisfaction with faculty accessibility is evaluated.

- Determining and addressing the learning support needs (tutoring, advising, library, laboratories, research, etc.) of students and faculty (3.D.1, 3.D.3, 3.D.4, 3.D.5)

Reacting

While the College provides the means for determining students' learning support needs, they tend to be after the fact (i.e., satisfaction surveys, end of course evaluations, etc.). An opportunity exists to make these determinations (i.e., of student support needs) when they actually need them, through formative assessments. An opportunity also exists for the College to incorporate into its 19-phase facilities plan, plans for budgeting deferred maintenance of existing facilities that could be addressed.

- Determining new student groups to target for educational offerings and services

Reacting

The Seward County Community College's Instructional Team has the responsibility for exploring new student groups and their educational needs. The team recently added the position of Dean of Students, which has led to more collaboration and improvements in strategic processes. This team works with the Data Governance Team, which provides data around enrollment, both current and projected. There was no evidence to support the processes being described as being repeatable or documented.

- Meeting changing student needs

Systematic

Seward County Community College uses advising as a process to know students and help identify their goals and needs. Additionally, the College uses student satisfaction surveys and Community College Surveys of Student Engagement (CCSSE) to determine changing needs of students, and then address them.

Reacting

Seward County Community College identifies activities (CCSSE, advising, program review) but not an organized process by which changing student needs are identified and services are designed to meet those needs. The College may find it beneficial to develop such a process.

- Identifying and supporting student subgroups with distinctive needs (e.g., seniors, commuters, distance learners, military veterans) (3.D.1)

Reacting

Seward County Community College states that it uses data from the admissions process, placement scores, high school transcripts, ACT demographic reports, and advising interviews to identify student subgroups. To this end, the College has identified 30 different subgroups. However it is unclear how all 30 of these subgroups are receiving appropriate level of support. It is unclear how, once identified, the identified needs are prioritized and operationalized, and by whom. Additional clarity around processes may move the College forward in maturity.

- Deploying non-academic support services to help students be successful (3.D.2)

Systematic

The College does a solid job in providing non-academic support services based upon four areas of focus (the engagement of students; student development; career/academic goal definition; and overcoming life challenges), which is based on CCRC national recommendations. The non-academic support services that address the four key components are All Saints Days, Student Life activities, student organizations, advising and career counseling, Student Success Center, student success courses, and personal support services. The College may advance this process in maturity by evaluating the success of the services in meeting the needs of students and achieving success.

- Ensuring staff members who provide non-academic student support services are qualified, trained and supported (3.C.6)

Systematic

Based on student services staff credentials presented in the portfolio, SCCC ensures that its staff, who provide academic and non-academic support services are qualified. The College assigns a screening committee for each vacant position to implement and manage a hiring process. A professional development grant review committee is charged with determining priorities for employee professional development. An opportunity exists to determine the relative currency of job skills for all employees so as to help in the deployment of professional development funds to all employees.

- Communicating the availability of non-academic support services (3.D.2)

Systematic

SCCC's non-academic support service availability appears to be communicated principally through passive means (i.e., print and electronic material). Resident Assistants in student housing are made aware of available services as part of their training and information is also shared during All Saints Days, student housing orientation, Welcome Day, and First Year Seminar. An opportunity exists to more aggressively and personally communicate these services, particularly in light of students' increasing use of technology for active/push communications versus print material. In addition, the College might benefit from developing a process for determining the best communication methods for various student subgroups.

- Selecting the tools, methods and instruments to assess student needs

Reacting

The College uses the Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) and Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) on a three-year rotation as comparative tools to assess students' needs. Additionally, surveys, focus groups, and personal interactions with students are other methods, which SCCC uses to assess students' needs. Faculty also use program review to determine the needs of students and make informed decisions. The College has an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the various instruments/methods and clarify the process for how they are chosen.

- Assessing the degree to which student needs are met

Systematic

The College uses student satisfaction data, program review, online tutoring, success rates in developmental and gateway courses, early alert data and usage statistics to determine student access to services. Yet, the College does not correlate the service to the outcome – indicating the success of the intervention in attaining positive outcomes for students. The College may find it beneficial to conduct such tracking to determine which of the services are actually meeting student needs.

2R1 What are the results for determining if current and prospective students' needs are being met? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 2P1. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)

Reacting

The College reports that the data for meeting student needs has been consistent and at or above national results, and the gap analysis is lower. However, the College frequently reported using the SSI and CCSSE, but provided no results for either of these surveys, nor were results provided for other methods such as the student focus groups. In addition, the College uses indirect survey data to determine satisfaction with the services provided but does not address the actual student success due to the intervention taken. The College may find it beneficial to conduct such tracking to determine student success.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Reacting

Seward County Community College has provided indirect comparative data yet internal targets were not provided. The College may wish to develop comparisons of direct data on student success as well as internal targets.

- Interpretation of results and insights gained

Reacting

Student satisfaction is an area that offers an opportunity for improvement at SCCC. Spring 2018 data shows a drop in overall satisfaction with the college experience, which SCCC is investigating at this time. SCCC also reports some issues with the timeliness of awarding scholarships and tuition grants. In addition, while satisfaction may be an aspect of student success, it is not the entire measure. The College may find it beneficial to develop more direct measures of student success.

2I1 Based on 2R1, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?

The College is committed to attending to both current and prospective student needs as evidenced by the use of tools, processes, and follow-up on identified needs. The College has also been proactive in modifying or adding other services as need arises. SCCC may want to consider evaluating the current effectiveness of the student support services and re-examine how to best serve current and prospective student needs.

2.2: RETENTION, PERSISTENCE AND COMPLETION

Retention, Persistence and Completion focuses on the approach to collecting, analyzing and distributing data on retention, persistence and completion to stakeholders for decision making. The institution should provide evidence for Core Component 4.C. in this section.

2P2 Describe the processes for collecting, analyzing and distributing data on retention, persistence and completion. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Collecting student retention, persistence and completion data (4.C.2, 4.C.4)

Systematic

Seward County Community College documents a process for the collection and dissemination of

retention, persistence, and completion data. The process may rise to the next level of maturity by including an evaluation process to determine the effectiveness of the process in collecting the most current data, tabulating it in the most effective manner and disseminating it to the correct groups on campus.

- Determining targets for student retention, persistence and completion (4.C.1, 4.C.4)

Aligned

Targets are set by the Retention Committee using threshold methodology to select peer institutions for comparison of fall to fall retention, completion, and graduation rates using IPEDS data. The College also uses the NCCBP cohort for comparison of persistence data. Creating methods for defining and disseminating such targets may help the College advance in maturity.

- Analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion

Systematic

The College's has a retention and analysis plan for student data that includes demographic disaggregation. If negative variances are noted, the retention committee undertakes additional research to determine the cause, as evidenced in College documentation, though the timing of the proposed interventions is not provided. The College could benefit from developing a process to analyze information on persistence and completion.

- Meeting targets for retention, persistence and completion (4.C.1)

Systematic

The College establishes retention and completion goals with actual values being reported. For some years noted in the report, it was unclear what action specifically took place as a result of the findings beyond simply sharing the information with others. While the Retention Committee and Enrollment Management Committee's annual goals address improvements in services and strategies that make up the retention plan, the College may find it beneficial to develop a process for determining what strategies will be implemented to meet targets for retention, persistence and completion.

- Selecting the tools, methods and instruments to assess retention, persistence and completion (4.C.4)

Systematic

Seward County Community College's tools and methods to assess retention, persistence, and completion are selected based on the availability of common data sets for peer comparison. The core data sets for student retention, persistence, and completion are IPEDS, the National Community College Benchmark Project, National Student Clearinghouse, and the Kansas Higher Education Data System. The College has an opportunity to clarify if it is the retention committee who decides on the selection of tools, how often the process is reviewed, and how the tools are evaluated for effectiveness.

2R2 What are the results for student retention, persistence and completion? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 2P2. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how

often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)

Systematic

Seward County Community College provided results from KHEDS, IPEDS peers, and NCCBP. The College noted a steady decline in institutional retention rates and suggested that this may be caused by the implementation of a 2014-initiated 'financial hold' policy, though this determination remains unclear and bears further evaluation. Data from the indirect measures (CCSSE, SSI) and data from focus groups referenced in the narrative were not provided.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Systematic

The College reports recently declining retention rates that are still higher than peers, with graduation rates higher than regional peers and all community colleges in KS. They also have graduation rates for Hispanic students 6% higher than peers and 13% higher than comparable sized CCs in KS. Although stated in the narrative that the college sets internal targets, those targets were not provided, nor was there analysis of whether those targets were met.

- Interpretation of results and insights gained

Systematic

Seward County Community College does interpret the data on retention and completion rates. Yet, the drop in retention appears to be explained by a new policy in handling past due accounts. The College may wish to investigate this further doing root cause analysis to ensure that the conclusions drawn are reliable and valid.

2I2 Based on 2R2, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years? (4.C.3)

The College incorporates planning and goal setting through the Retention Committee and Enrollment Management Committee, which noted additional strategies for improvement, including the need for process improvements relative to the awarding of financial aid, as a means to stem the declining retention tide. It may be beneficial for the College to look closely at retention to make sure that the root cause in a decline in retention is due to finances. The College has strengthened a number of relationships and student communication efforts with the addition of advising and financial aid staff, particularly to address first generation and bilingual students.

2.3: KEY STAKEHOLDER NEEDS

Key Stakeholder Needs focuses on determining, understanding and meeting needs of key stakeholder groups, including alumni and community partners.

2P3 Describe the processes for serving the needs of key external stakeholder groups. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

Determining key external stakeholder groups (e.g., alumni, employers, community)

Reacting

SCCC determines its key external stakeholders based on its mission and has defined/provided criteria as to identify key external stakeholder groups. Yet, they have not provided a process by which the criteria are applied to the community. This section can be further enhanced by describing the process of how stakeholder groups are selected.

Determining new stakeholders to target for services or partnership

Systematic

Determining new stakeholders to target for services or partnership at SCCC is similar to the processes of stakeholder identification used by enrollment management, instruction, counseling and advising, and data governance. Additionally, such determination is also obtained from advisory board meetings, business and industry representatives, College alumni, baccalaureate-granting institutions, as well as participation in various community activities. An opportunity exists to adopt a less reactionary approach to considering future partnerships.

Meeting the changing needs of key stakeholders

Reacting

Seward County Community College did not provide a process by which the changing needs of key stakeholders are identified and met. Anecdotal information was provided but not a process. The College may find it beneficial to establish such a process.

Selecting the tools, methods and instruments to assess key stakeholder needs

Reacting The College uses regular personal contact with key stakeholders, as well as occasional surveys as the basis for determining tools and methods to serve their needs. An opportunity exists to benchmark other higher education institutions to consider other tools and methods for use.

Assessing the degree to which key stakeholder needs are met

Reacting Seward County Community College does not have a process to assess the degree to which key stakeholder needs are met. Personal contact is used which may be indirect and may not assess all areas for effectiveness. Furthermore, this approach appears to be episodic and ill-defined. An opportunity exists to undertake a clarified, planned and intentional approach to assess if stakeholder needs are, in fact, being met.

2R3 What are the results for determining if key stakeholder needs are being met? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 2P3. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)

Reacting

Seward County Community College has identified the collection, comparison, and analysis of data to determine if and how stakeholder needs are met are areas for improvement. Beyond end of course surveys used for business and industry classes, market penetration and descriptive data of high school graduates who enroll in college, there exists no other data collection.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Reacting

Seven years of NCCBP comparative data for high school graduate enrollment and market penetration are presented, though there is no relationship to institutional goals. Seward County Community College has identified this as an area for improvement.

- Interpretation of results and insights gained

Reacting

Beyond brief mention of consistent levels of market penetration and high school graduate enrollments, it is impossible for the College to present any other interpretations regarding the satisfaction of stakeholder needs. The College acknowledges this as an opportunity for improvement.

2I3 Based on 2R3, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?

The College's approach to the assessment of and attention to key stakeholder needs is at the Reacting level of maturity. While the College does note its intention to expand and improve efforts in this area, historical data suggests that little has been done to date to address this area. Considerable work is needed to advance to the next level of institutional maturity, which can be facilitated through benchmarking with peer institutions, intentional design and implementation, as well as the use of secondary data.

2.4: COMPLAINT PROCESSES

Complaint Processes focuses on collecting, analyzing and responding to complaints from students or key stakeholder groups.

2P4 Describe the processes for collecting, analyzing and responding to complaints from students and stakeholder groups. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Collecting complaint information from students

Reacting

By Board policy, the College employs multiple strategies and tools used to collect information regarding student complaints. Key aspects involve focus groups, student advisory dinners with the Board, as well as online filing of concerns. While the Board policy is in place, it is important to evaluate the effectiveness of the process to determine that all student complaints are being collected, analyzed and resolved. The team noted many issues with accessing and submitting the online complaint form. The College may find an evaluation process beneficial.

- Collecting complaint information from other key stakeholders

Reacting

Seward County Community College has a number of ways in which other key stakeholders can raise complaints but yet a generalized collection, analysis and resolution process was not presented. The College may find it beneficial to develop a more transparent and less passive process. In addition, the process for submitting the online form that is referenced is unclear.

- Learning from complaint information and determining actions

Reacting

Seward County Community College is required under Federal Compliance to log all complaints and then analyze them for trends. The College does not present a process whereby complaints are logged and analyzed. Developing a more formal process for complaint submission, as well as addressing and documenting outcomes, will enhance the ability of college leaders to identify trends, the number of concerns registered in a year, and take actions accordingly.

- Communicating actions to students and other key stakeholders

Reacting

Seward County Community College reports that a form is used to track complaint resolution and that an investigation will be conducted within 10 working days with the outcome communicated to the student in no more than 30 working days of complaint receipt. An opportunity exists for the College to be more transparent (when possible) regarding registered concerns and the actions taken in response to complaints. Specifically, notable trends can be shared with employees as well as any new processes or action the College intends to take in order to abate future instances of concern.

- Selecting the tools, methods and instruments to evaluate complaint resolution

Reacting

Seward County Community College does not document a process for the selection of tools, methods and instruments to evaluate complaint resolution. The College may find it beneficial to develop such a process for the collection, analysis and resolution of formal and informal complaints.

2R4 What are the results for student and key stakeholder complaints? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 2P4. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)

Reacting

Seward County Community College only tracks formal complaints and provided a log with five complaints 2012 through 2018. No data was provided from the SSI or CCSSE, both mentioned in the narrative as data sources.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Reacting

Beyond the listing of formal complaints over the past 6 years, no comparative analysis, nor linkage to targets or benchmarks is offered by the institution.

- Interpretation of results and insights gained

Reacting

SCCC does not analyze the results of student complaints, so the College is losing an opportunity to gain insights.

2I4 Based on 2R4, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?

The College has noted that few 'formal complaints' are offered by students, which is to the College's credit. It should be noted that this is likely the situation at most higher education institutions, with the bulk of concerns and complaints advancing through informal means. Thus, it is in the College's best interest to formalize the informal process, as well as gather and analyze resultant information to monitor trends and consider possible action so as to reduce the number of overall complaints. Furthermore, having a complaint process and a process whereby the College learns from the complaints, both formal and informal, is required as part of the Federal Compliance standards for Title IV Financial Aid. Finally, the College may wish to reconsider the practice of Board/student dinners to gather feedback or complaints from students, as this could create an unnecessary liability for them, or other potential conflicts, and it is more properly the role of the college administration.

2.5: BUILDING COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Building Collaborations and Partnerships focuses on aligning, building and determining the effectiveness of collaborations and partnerships to further the mission of the institution.

2P5 Describe the processes for managing collaborations and partnerships to further the mission of the institution. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Selecting partners for collaboration (e.g., other educational institutions, civic organizations, businesses)

Reacting

Seward County Community College has defined criteria for the various partner groups for collaboration. Yet, similar to identifying and serving stakeholder needs, collaboration partners are determined based upon the College's mission. An opportunity exists to more forcefully consider and pursue viable partnerships through visioning or by environmental scanning, benchmarking, etc.

- Building and maintaining relationships with partners

Systematic

SCCC creates and prioritizes relationships with organizations in the college service area in accord

with the Strategic Plan, Strategic Goals, existing performance and accreditation expectations, and the needs of area students. SCCC describes numerous examples of the partnerships that it engages in, but it is unclear from the evidence provided whether this is a coordinated, aligned effort and if there are processes to maintain those relationships. The College may find it beneficial to develop such a process.

- Selecting the tools, methods and instruments to assess partnership effectiveness

Reacting

Seward County Community College uses few formalized evaluation tools. CTE programs use the Kansas Board of Regents Employer Engagement Initiative, which provides criteria for evaluating partnership effectiveness. Other partnerships are evaluated informally and not documented. It is unclear as to the tools and methods that are used to assess their efficacy relative to the College's mission.

- Evaluating the degree to which collaborations and partnerships are effective

Systematic

Seward County Community College evaluates partnerships through the evaluation of high school enrollment data and advisory board surveys. The College may find it beneficial to evaluate these methods for effectiveness.   A more mature process would provide a means for evaluation of other kinds of collaboration and allow for broader determinations as to the effectiveness of the many aspects of college partnerships.

2R5 What are the results for determining the effectiveness of aligning and building collaborations and partnerships? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 2P5. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)

Reacting

SCCC reports high school headcount and credit hours for AY 2008-2018. Business and Industry satisfaction results were also provided. However, the CTE program goal for 5 champion-level partnerships does not appear to be tied to specific processes in this category. And while tables provided show various organizational memberships, it remains unclear as to how these documents speak to any of the previous and aforementioned efforts related to building relationships with organizations that provide students to the College, let alone provide summary results.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Reacting

Seward County Community College does not provide external comparisons but internal targets have been set and met.

- Interpretation of results and insights gained

Reacting

Seward County Community College states that the satisfaction results show that training partnerships have been effective. An opportunity exists for the College to determine if the data collection is adequately comprehensive, if sufficient information is available about the variety of partnerships, and if the data provide a valid representation of the effectiveness of partnerships.

2I5 Based on 2R5, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?

Provided evidence suggests that a number of relationships exists with a number of organizations external to the College. Some of these relationships lead to the enrollment of students, while others lead to the job placement of students, and still others involve student interaction with community groups for various service projects. It remains unclear as to the means by which these collaborations are deemed effective and support the College's mission. Planned improvements for partnerships include developing Industry Recognized Apprenticeship Programs and improving the level of support for CTE programs. SCCC also plans to improve its collection of data.

CATEGORY SUMMARY

Most processes and results in Category 2 are in the reactive level of maturity. The prospect of emerging student need is monitored through a variety of means, though most tend to be post-hoc in nature. The College makes use of peer comparison data and has witnessed a continuing drop in retention rates, which, they note, remains higher than their peers. With the exception of retention, persistence, and completion rates, the general use and interpretation of data can be improved in this category as well. The College's approach for the identification, tracking and resolution of informal student complaints, as well as the goals, objectives and strategies for engaging in external partnerships are not as fully developed. SCCC may wish to develop a coordinated approach to identifying and addressing stakeholder and community needs and then evaluating the effectiveness of these efforts. Finally, the College will want to address the issue of complaints and the collection, analysis and resolution of complaints.

CATEGORY STRATEGIC ISSUES

Seward County Community College appears to collect complaints through an online reporting process. It is in the best interest of the College to formalize this process for the collection, analysis and resolution of key stakeholder complaints. Consistent with Federal Compliance standards for Title IV Financial Aid both formal and informal complaints must be collected, analyzed, resolved and monitored for trends so as to reduce the number of overall complaints.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

III - Valuing Employees

Explores the institution's commitment to the hiring, development, and evaluation of faculty, staff and administrators.

Instructions for Systems Appraisal Team

In this section, the team should provide a consensus narrative that focuses on the processes, results and improvements for Hiring, Evaluation and Recognition and Development.

Independent Category Feedback for each AQIP Category from each team member should be synthesized into an in-depth narrative that includes an analysis of the institution's processes, results and quality improvement efforts for each category. Wording from the Stages in Systems Maturity tables for both processes and results should be incorporated into the narrative to help the institution understand how the maturity of processes and results have been rated. The narrative should also include recommendations to assist the institution in improving its processes and/or results. It is from this work that the team will develop a consensus on the Strategic Challenges analysis, noting three to five strategic issues that are crucial for the future of the institution. Please see additional directions in the Systems Appraisal procedural document provided by HLC.

Evidence

CATEGORY 3: VALUING EMPLOYEES

Category 3 explores the institution's commitment to the hiring, development and evaluation of faculty, staff and administrators.

3.1: HIRING

Hiring focuses on the acquisition of appropriately qualified/credentialed faculty, staff and administrators to ensure that effective, high-quality programs and student support services are provided. The institution should provide evidence for Core Component 3.C. in this section.

3P1 Describe the process for hiring faculty, staff and administrators. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Recruiting, hiring and orienting processes that result in staff and administrators who possess the required qualification, skills and values (3.C.6)

Systematic

Seward County Community College's processes for recruiting, hiring, and orienting staff and administrators follows Board, state, and federal guidelines. The College has an extensive, well-aligned, documented process for the recruitment, hiring, and onboarding/ orientation of all new employees, with some variation noted for the type of position being filled. An opportunity exists for the search committee to include representation of persons of color or diverse backgrounds to mitigate bias during the recruiting process. It is also unclear as to whether the search committee receives

professional development regarding all legal considerations of the hiring process, such as the vetting of interview questions through legal and HR to ensure no illegal questions are asked of candidates, or the use of consistency in the hiring process and in questioning. The College may find it beneficial to develop a structured narrative of the process as well as a process for evaluating effectiveness.

- Developing and meeting academic credentialing standards for faculty, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortia programs (3.C.1, 3.C.2)

Systematic

Seward County Community College uses a position analysis prior to posting any position. For faculty, the specific credentials, skills, and values are based also on the updated job description, which includes the faculty-identified characteristics of effective teaching. In 2017-2018, the College reviewed all full- and part-time faculty to ensure they were in compliance with HLC's Assumed Practice B.2. It appears that some of these processes are relatively new, as the process and form were recently revised. As this process becomes repeatable and has a process for evaluation, it may move forward in maturity. Furthermore, it is unclear how this process applies to dual enrollment, contractual, and consortia programs. An opportunity exists to further clarify the qualifications and processes for these remaining faculty classifications.

- Ensuring the institution has sufficient numbers of faculty to carry out both classroom and non-classroom programs and activities (3.C.1)

Systematic

Seward County Community College ensures the institution has sufficient numbers of full-time faculty. It does so through a consistent review of full-time to part-time faculty ratios and student to faculty ratios. The College also conducts a student satisfaction survey on a three-year rotation to confirm that students are satisfied with their experience. Faculty teach over 80 percent of both the total credit hours and of the sections offered. Seward County Community College's faculty-to-student ratio is 13:1, and the College reports high levels of student satisfaction.The institution states that a majority of faculty serve on institutional committees or otherwise participate in service of the College. Yet, the process used to calculate the appropriate staffing ratio and allocation/dissemination of full-time faculty was not provided. The College may find it beneficial to develop a process for ensuring sufficient numbers of faculty, so the positive results currently attained can continue.

- Ensuring the acquisition of sufficient numbers of staff to provide student support services

Reacting

Seward County Community College utilizes the Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) on a three-year rotation as comparative tools to assess students' needs. However, CCSSE and SSI are implemented on a three-year alternate basis. This is an indirect and lagging measure to determine if staffing is sufficient, and any results would be using satisfaction as a proxy variable as this question is not directly asked on either survey. Direct assessment of need may come from numbers of referrals made by faculty, results of assessment of student learning, and wait times for students to be seen by a financial aid adviser, to name a few. The College may find it beneficial to collect such data and develop a more structured process.

- Tracking outcomes/measures utilizing appropriate tools

Reacting

Seward County Community College relies primarily on results and comparisons in the National Community College Benchmark Project, which provides information on faculty and staff ratios, faculty load, and employee turnover rates. While staffing ratios, faculty load, and employee turnover are outcome measures, the College may find it beneficial to correlate faculty and staff employment with student success in specific areas.The College may also consider increasing the frequency with which the CCSSE/Ruffalo surveys are conducted.

3R1 What are the results for determining if recruitment, hiring and orienting practices ensure effective provision for programs and services? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 3P1. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)

Reacting

Seward County Community College reports that the National Community College Benchmark Project data indicates that the College has the human resources to meet student and operational needs. At the same time, the College also stated that employee turnover rate is up, but no statistics were provided. Much of the data provided in this section is indirect measures. The data also does not reflect the correlation of staffing levels and student success. The College may find these metrics beneficial.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Reacting

Seward County Community College noted a decline in overall student satisfaction, which is under investigation. However, in 2012 the majority of data points were absent in the NCCBP survey report, which precluded comparison. The external benchmarks provided by the National Community College Benchmark Project show the College ranks in the top 96th percentile for full-time faculty teaching courses. The College might benefit from considering its overall staffing levels to evaluate progress, particularly with the addition of many new positions in Student Services. Setting specific internal targets could lead to improvement initiatives and help the College prepare for staffing fluctuations.

- Interpretation of results and insights gained

Reacting

Seward County Community College has indicated decreases, stability, and improved performance in various areas, but has not taken this analysis to the next step to provide insights gained. Although an internal graduate survey has shown satisfaction with their overall experience, it does not appear that the College is systematically gathering information that can be used for improvement or to guide future action.

3I1 Based on 3R1, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the

next one to three years?

Seward County Community College has noted that continued efforts are underway to improve the efficiency of the human resources screening and hiring processes. Building ongoing evaluation of these new processes may serve Seward County Community College well. In addition, there were elements identified in the data such as a reduction in student satisfaction that were not mentioned in the improvements section. Investigating the root causes may indicate a change in staffing is necessary.

3.2: EVALUATION AND RECOGNITION

Evaluation and Recognition focuses on the assessment and recognition of faculty, staff and administrators' contributions to the institution. The institution should provide evidence for Core Component 3.C. within this section.

3P2 Describe the processes that assess and recognize faculty, staff and administrators' contributions to the institution. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Designing performance evaluation systems for all employees

Systematic

Seward County Community College has designed a systematic performance evaluation process for all employees. The four-step process involves communication and coordination with representatives from across the College. These processes have been undergoing changes since 2013. After full implementation in 2016 they were found to be unsatisfactory, and the performance evaluation process was redesigned.

- Soliciting input from and communicating expectations to faculty, staff and administrators

Systematic

Seward County Community College has gathered feedback from and communicated expectations to employees, as evidenced by the revision and evaluation of the performance evaluation process. After a revised process was implemented in 2016, a cross-functional team redesigned the process, focusing on information gathered through the position analysis process and more clearly defining employee goals and measures. This process could be further strengthened by evaluating its effectiveness.

- Aligning the evaluation system with institutional objectives for both instructional and non-instructional programs and services

Systematic

Seward County Community College states that it has a process in place for matching the evaluation system with institutional objectives for both instructional and non-instructional programs. Yet, how these goals are included in the evaluation system was not described or evident from the narrative provided.

- Utilizing established institutional policies and procedures to regularly evaluate all faculty, staff and administrators (3.C.3)

Systematic

Seward County Community College has established institutional policies, procedures, and timelines to regularly evaluate all faculty, staff, and administrators. The process includes a self-evaluation, an identification of professional development needs, a determination of annual goal accomplishments, and a review of the job description. The College may find it beneficial to develop a process to determine the effectiveness of the evaluation time frames. Furthermore, creating processes for ensuring all reviews are completed in a timely manner could move the College forward in its maturity.

- Establishing employee recognition, compensation and benefit systems to promote retention and high performance

Systematic

Seward County Community College has a processes in place to develop, evaluate, and update compensation and benefit systems through an annual budget development process, faculty negotiations, and comparative salary and wage gaps analysis through Compease. The College also has a number of ways in which employees are recognized, including years of service, an outstanding student recognition, and faculty recognition. The College states that two faculty and two staff are selected as Excellence Award Recipients and encouraged to attend NISOD, though it is unclear how the selection is actually achieved. Additionally, an outstanding faculty member is selected by students each year. An opportunity exists, so as to avoid a popularity contest, to allow input from deans and peer faculty regarding the faculty award recipient. Furthermore, the College may find it beneficial to determine the effectiveness of the system in regard to promoting employee retention and performance.

- Promoting employee satisfaction and engagement

Systematic

Seward County Community College has processes in place for promoting employee satisfaction and engagement. College's three-year run (2015, 2016, 2017) as one of the "Most Promising Places to Work in Community Colleges" by Diverse: Issues in Higher Education Magazine is an indication that the College is intentional about integrating diversity and inclusion in the workplace and enhancing employee satisfaction and engagement. The College may find it beneficial to correlate the processes to promote employee satisfaction and engagement with employee retention and other metrics demonstrating the effectiveness of the processes within the College population.

- Tracking outcomes/measures utilizing appropriate tools

Reacting

Seward County Community College uses the "Great Colleges to Work For" survey. How this tool was chosen and how the tool is considered appropriate was not provided. The College may find it beneficial to develop a process for determining the effectiveness of the tool and elaborating on any of the other data collected that was described in the narrative.

3R2 What are the results for determining if evaluation processes assess employees' contributions to the institution? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 3P2. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include

a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)

Reacting

Seward County Community College's rating overall for employee satisfaction was good to very good. Faculty rated communication fair, and exempt staff rated policy and efficiency as fair. Although as noted in the College's notation, the participation in the survey has been down in 2018, with staff having a 26% response rate and faculty having a 40% response rate. Results were provided only around employee satisfaction. No results were provided around evaluation, communicating expectations, recognition, compensation, or benefits

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Reacting

While Seward County Community College's satisfaction survey provided comparison with other associate degree institutions, it does not appear that internal targets were set. Determining goals for both response rates and aspirational levels/scores (in comparison with external benchmarks and against internal targets) will help the College act on the results it gathers.

- Interpretation of results and insights gained

Reacting

While Seward County Community College reported on results, no insights gained were offered. The College would benefit from exploring further why certain categories were rated "fair" by some employee groups and by using this closer analysis to plan improvements.

3I2 Based on 3R2, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?

Seward County Community College identifies a number of improvements tied to employee compensation and performance review. For example, the College has worked to ensure that salary targets are set at 80% of the median wage for the region, and faculty are being transitioned to a new salary schedule. The College also plans to work toward improving the response rate on the satisfaction survey.

3.3: DEVELOPMENT

Development focuses on processes for continually training, educating and supporting employees to remain current in their methods and to contribute fully and effectively throughout their careers at the institution. The institution should provide evidence for Core Components 3.C. and 5.A. in this section.

3P3 Describe the processes for training, educating and supporting the professional development of employees. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Providing and supporting regular professional development for all employees (3.C.4, 5.A.4)

Systematic

The Seward County Community College system for training, educating, and supporting the professional development of employees is decentralized and has three tiers. Specific teams, committees, and work units are responsible for the professional development process within their scope and purpose. The process for providing and supporting training and professional development for all employees involves five steps. Seward County Community College may find it beneficial to develop a system that evaluates the process to ensure that professional development is appropriate to the needs of employees and that, once implemented, professional development is effective in advancing the knowledge and skills of the employees.

- Ensuring that instructors are current in instructional content in their disciplines and pedagogical processes (3.C.4)

Systematic

Seward County Community College has policies to ensure that instructors are current in the instructional content in their disciplines and decentralized practices to help them accomplish this goal. Both the Program Review process and the annual data analysis conducted by the Assessment Committee contribute to development of a professional development plan designed to support the achievement of student learning goals and to address the requests from the needs analysis. Coordination and communication across units create an aligned set of processes that address not only full-time but also adjunct professional development needs. Professional development grants have assisted full-time and part-time faculty achieve advanced degrees, and for staff to achieve degrees pertinent to their work at the College. The faculty learning communities are another mechanism to advance professional development within the College. A professional development day specifically for adjunct faculty takes place each August. Finally, career and technical education faculty have additional training and resources through the Kansas Council for Workforce Education and the Kansas Center for Career and Technical Education, Pittsburg State University. This process can be further improved by tying intentionality to professional development activities and evaluating the effectiveness of the process.

- Supporting student support staff members to increase their skills and knowledge in their areas of expertise (e.g. advising, financial aid, etc.) (3.C.6)

Systematic

Seward County Community College has a three-tiered process to support student support staff members in increasing their skills and knowledge. Support staff have access to professional development grants for training, attainment of graduate hours, and advanced degrees. Seward County Community College provides Title IX training, staff development in-service, and supervisor training. The College may find it beneficial to develop a process to evaluate the effectiveness of the process to increase the knowledge and skills of support staff.

- Aligning employee professional development activities with institutional objectives

Systematic

Seward County Community College uses a needs assessment to align professional development activities with institutional objectives. Various teams from across the College coordinate efforts to

identify professional development needs. However, it is unclear from the description provided whether the process is objective and repeatable.

- Tracking outcomes/measures utilizing appropriate tools

Reacting

A process for how/why the Great Colleges to Work For survey results are tracked or how this is an appropriate tool for doing so was not provided by Seward County Community College. Beyond the tracking of employees who attend professional development activities, individual professional development participation, dollars spent on professional development, organizational satisfaction with professional development, and a few anecdotal references, it is difficult to discern what goals or outcome measures are in place at the College.

3R3 What are the results for determining if employees are assisted and supported in their professional development? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 3P3. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)

Reacting

Seward County Community College provides summary results of the survey, noting that employees rate professional development support as very good to excellent. Most recently, however, response rates were poor for most groups. Finally, although the College also examines use of the Board-supported professional development grants, there is no determination as to whether the amounts offered and the number of grants awarded are meeting the need. Since the grants are one of the key strategies for supporting faculty and staff staying current and expert in their fields, and an identified goal is to support employees' achievement of advanced degrees, there is an opportunity to track the numbers of faculty and staff served through the grants and the actual outcomes.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Reacting

Seward County Community College results from the Chronicle survey indicate a generally high level of satisfaction toward professional development. However no comparison to internal targets (beyond comparative data from the same survey administered 4 years prior), or external benchmarks is possible.

- Interpretation of results and insights gained

Reacting

Seward County Community College provided survey results but did not provide insights or root cause analysis. The low response rate may be an area in need of exploration.

3I3 Based on 3R3, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?

Seward County Community College discussed improvements in employee professional development including increasing the grant award cap for adjunct faculty. Yet, the improvements indicated are not tied to the results provided. The College may find it beneficial to link the results to the improvements.

CATEGORY SUMMARY

Most of Seward County Community College's processes for valuing employees are systematic. The hiring, onboarding, performance evaluation, and professional development processes are well-defined. In particular a lot of activities appear to be happening in the area of professional development. However they also appear to be highly compartmentalized. The College is to be commended with respect to the percentage of credit hours being delivered by full-time faculty, though consideration could be given to conducting annual performance reviews to further advance instructional quality and outcomes. The results section for this category are largely reacting. While information is gathered and shared, there is little to no interpretation of the results and thus the data do not inform future action.

CATEGORY STRATEGIC ISSUES

None

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

IV - Planning and Leading

Focuses on how the institution achieves its mission and lives its vision through direction setting, goal development, strategic actions, threat mitigation, and capitalizing on opportunities.

Instructions for Systems Appraisal Team

In this section, the team should provide a consensus narrative that focuses on the processes, results and improvements for Mission and Vision, Strategic Planning, Leadership and Integrity.

Independent Category Feedback for each AQIP Category from each team member should be synthesized into an in-depth narrative that includes an analysis of the institution's processes, results and quality improvement efforts for each category. Wording from the Stages in Systems Maturity tables for both processes and results should be incorporated into the narrative to help the institution understand how the maturity of processes and results have been rated. The narrative should also include recommendations to assist the institution in improving its processes and/or results. It is from this work that the team will develop a consensus on the Strategic Challenges analysis, noting three to five strategic issues that are crucial for the future of the institution. Please see additional directions in the Systems Appraisal procedural document provided by HLC.

Evidence

CATEGORY 4: PLANNING AND LEADING

Category 4 focuses on how the institution achieves its mission and vision through direction setting, goal development, strategic actions, threat mitigation and capitalizing on opportunities.

4.1: MISSION AND VISION

Mission and Vision focuses on how the institution develops, communicates and reviews its mission and vision. The institution should provide evidence for Core Components 1.A., 1.B. and 1.D. within this section.

4P1 Describe the processes for developing, communicating and reviewing the institution's mission, vision and values, and identify who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Developing, deploying, and reviewing the institution's mission, vision and values (1.A.1, 1.D.2, 1.D.3)

Reacting

Seward County Community College developed its mission, vision, and values through stakeholder engagement and presented it to the Board for approval. However, there is no evidence about the timeline, nor processes which recently (i.e., 2016) resulted in changing both the name and the mission of the College, save the adoption of both by the Board. The College may find it beneficial to develop such a process.

- Ensuring that institutional actions reflect a commitment to its values

Systematic

Seward County Community College's board policy ensures that employees and student actions reflect a commitment to the values of trust, integrity, value others, student success, and quality. The College cited processes, but from the evidence provided, it was unclear how academic divisions tie their program/annual goals to core values or how performance evaluations do so as stated in the narrative. Clarification of the processes, and support of more direct links between the College values and the institutional actions, could help to advance the organization.

- Communicating the mission, vision and values (1.B.1, 1.B.2, 1.B.3)

Systematic

Seward County Community College's marketing department bears responsibility for the communication of mission, vision, and values through digital media, print resources, website, and mounted posters in campus buildings. However, it remains unclear as to how the associated processes were created, utilized and evaluated.

- Ensuring that academic programs and services are consistent with the institution's mission (1.A.2)

Systematic

Seward County Community College noted that its academic programs and services are consistent with the institution's mission, as demonstrated through the strategic planning process, as well as the program development process, program review process, and the annual program feasibility reviews. However, the New Program Request Form and the Program Review document, does not query the writer as to the mission alignment. Attending to this alignment and articulation of these processes could move the College forward in maturity.

- Allocating resources to advance the institution's mission and vision, while upholding the institution's values (1.D.1, 1.A.3)

Systematic

Seward County Community College's Executive Team collaborates with deans and directors who, in turn, work with faculty and staff to ensure budget allocations are linked to the College's Five Key Directions and Strategic Goals in accordance to a budget development timeline. There was no evidence of a process as to how the College developed and aligned budget with the mission/vision, or how the process is evaluated for effectiveness.

- Tracking outcomes/measures utilizing appropriate tools (e.g. brand studies, focus groups, community forums/studies and employee satisfaction surveys)

Reacting

Seward County Community College noted that it does not currently have processes in place for tracking outcomes/measures utilizing appropriate tools. Further, it is unclear how the College uses data to evaluate its mission and vision. The College does acknowledge that this is an area needing

attention. Developing methods to ensure the mission and vision are both embraced and understood by internal and external stakeholders will help the College advance in maturity

4R1 What are the results for developing, communicating and reviewing the institution's mission, vision and values? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 4P1. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)

Reacting

Seward County Community College utilizes student profile data, enrollment trends, and market penetration leading to student achievement, as evidence the College is meeting its mission. However, these data do not directly answer how, or to what extent, the College is helping students achieve their educational goals. The College may find it beneficial to define processes, their outcomes and then collect metrics to determine outcome achievement.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Systematic

While Seward County Community College has set a target graduation rate of 40%, it is unclear if the College has other related achievement targets, or even how the National Community College Benchmark Project data provided is being used. The College could thus benefit from identifying and establishing additional achievement measures and goals to guide institutional action toward improvement.

- Interpretation of results and insights gained

Reacting

Seward County Community College has provided some information regarding graduation rates, retention rates, student profile/demographic data, and enrollment distribution (one with inconsistent data regarding graduation rates among white and Hispanic students). However, the College has not indicated how these metrics demonstrate outcomes for processes in Category Four. The College may find it beneficial to connect these two aspects, and then proceed to define the proper metrics that demonstrate outcome attainment.

4I1 Based on 4R1, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?

Seward County Community College recognizes that additional work is needed to improve effectiveness indicators, especially as it relates to a more formal way to determine the extent to which the College is "living" and reaching its mission. The College may wish to define the processes associated with Category Four, as well as the outcome metrics. In this way, the correlation between the outcome and the metric could be better defined and afford the ability for improved interpretation. The College acknowledges issues with data collection and reporting, which may call the quality of all the National Community College Benchmark Project data being used as evidence into question.

4.2: STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategic Planning focuses on how the institution achieves its mission and vision. The institution should provide evidence for Core Components 5.B. and 5.C. in this section.

4P2 Describe the processes for communicating, planning, implementing and reviewing the institution's plans and identify who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Engaging internal and external stakeholders in strategic planning (5.C.3)

Systematic

Seward County Community College has a new and systematic strategic planning process that was approved by the Board of Trustees in October, 2017. Included are numerous internal stakeholders including students, the Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, as well as external stakeholders that is based upon the six AQIP categories. Insofar as there does not appear to be a documented, repeatable processes, nor an associated methodology for evaluation of this new planning process, the establishment of both may help the College to advance in its level of maturity.

- Aligning operations with the institution's mission, vision and values (5.C.2)

Aligned

Seward County Community College's new approach to operational planning is aligned with the three-year strategic goals, by specific measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-based goals. The College used the concept "Future Perfect Thinking" to gather ideas from internal and external stakeholders. Plans for their vision can be realized by aligning budget and resource allocation to its goals. Evaluation of the alignment process takes place monthly and quarterly through Mover Groups and Executive Team planning sessions respectively.

- Aligning efforts across departments, divisions and colleges for optimum effectiveness and efficiency (5.B.3)

Systematic

Seward County Community College appears to do some goal-setting and alignment through the work for Standing Committees. However, the processes, as mentioned previously, are not all articulated. Additionally, the strategic plan does not flow down to operational plans for each department. Further articulation of processes, as well as methods of evaluation of their effectiveness, may move the College forward in maturity.

- Capitalizing on opportunities and institutional strengths and countering the impact of institutional weaknesses and potential threats (5.C.4, 5.C.5)

Systematic

Seward County Community College utilizes a three-step process for capitalizing on opportunities and institutional strengths while also countering the impact of institutional weaknesses and potential threats. By more clearly describing the processes around the three-steps, the cycle in which they will occur in the future, and how they will be evaluated for effectiveness, the College may move forward

in maturity.

- Creating and implementing strategies and action plans that maximize current resources and meet future needs (5.C.1, 5.C.4)

Systematic

Seward County Community College has been relatively successful in creating and implementing strategies and action plans that maximize current resources and meet future needs. The College considers resources, external and internal constraints, timelines, specific outcomes, and the responsible party during the development of Its strategic plan. While the College notes that its action plans are developed associated with the strategic goals, it does not indicate, at what level, or how those action plans are implemented and monitored.

- Tracking outcomes/measures utilizing appropriate tools (e.g. achievement of goals and/or satisfaction with process)

Reacting

Although Seward County Community College stated it measures effectiveness of planning processes and systems through analysis of strategic goals, mover group updates, and institutional effectiveness, it does not provide a process for the tracking of outcomes/measures utilizing appropriate tools. The College may find it beneficial to develop such a process.

4R2 What are the results for communicating, planning, implementing and reviewing the institution's operational plans? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 4P2. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)

Reacting

Seward County Community College acknowledges that, in the past, goals have not included concrete metrics. Indeed, previous portfolios indicated that institutional level goals in the past have lacked quantitative measures. However, more recent reports to the Board include measures and targets. The College may find it helpful to formalize metrics/outcomes associated to the strategic goals in a way that goes beyond simply providing board updates.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Reacting

Seward County Community College failed to provide internal targets or comparative results for benchmark comparison. An opportunity exists for the College to compare results with internal targets and external benchmarks.

- Interpretation of results and insights gained

Reacting

Seward County Community College failed to provide interpretation of results.

4I2 Based on 4R2, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?

Seward County Community College did not provide outcome metrics for each of the strategic goals. A plan is in place to provide more assistance for data gathering and technology in the future, utilizing Nuventive Improve, with the 2017-2020 strategic goals, measures, and results. This may help them move their new process for strategic planning going forward.

4.3: LEADERSHIP

Leadership focuses on governance and leadership of the institution. The institution should provide evidence for Core Components 2.C. and 5.B. in this section.

4P3 Describe the processes for ensuring sound and effective leadership of the institution, and identify who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Establishing appropriate relationship between the institution and its governing board to support leadership and governance (2.C.4)

Systematic

Seward County Community College's six-member Board of Trustees have an established relationship between the institution, the President and Governing Board defined through statutes. The practice is supported through training and orientation for Trustees and the College President, quarterly meetings of the Kansas Association of Community College Trustees (KACCT), and ongoing communication between the college President and Board members. Still, the College may find it beneficial to develop a method to determine the effectiveness of the process.

- Establishing oversight responsibilities and policies of the governing board (2.C.3, 5.B.1, 5.B.2)

Systematic

Kansas State statute K.S.A. 71-201 and Board By-Laws 203 outlines roles and responsibilities of the Board. The roles of the Board include hiring and termination of the College President, approving all employee hires, participation in strategic planning and strategic goal processes, and has oversight of the Colleges financial and academic policies and practices. The President is charged with the everyday operations of the institution and the faculty are charged with the quality of instruction. Still, the College may wish to consider benchmarking against peer intuitions with best-governance practices to help streamline, and better align work within their particular roles. They may likewise find it beneficial to develop a method to determine the effectiveness in executing these policies.

- Maintaining board oversight, while delegating management responsibilities to administrators and academic matters to faculty (2.C.4)

Systematic

The Kansas Board of Regents and Seward County Community College policy establishes Board oversight, while delegating management responsibilities to the Ppresident and academic matters to

faculty. The President oversees day-to-day operations of the College. The President delegates management responsibilities to the Executive Team that has oversight of various different within the organization. The College may find it useful to consider the realignment of particular duties more in keeping with offices of the President and the fiduciary duties of the Board.

- Ensuring open communication between and among all colleges, divisions and departments

Reacting

Seward County Community College has a number of activities designed to facilitate communication and the sharing of information across the institution. Of particular note are professional development activities, Conversation Days, meetings, including meetings with external stakeholders. Also mentioned are board/student dinners, wherein feedback is collected for decision-making. However, there is scant evidence of a structured, optimal, repeatable process focused on ensuring open communication in these various activities. The College could benefit from attending to a process given to an intentional communications strategy and related process.

- Collaborating across all units to ensure the maintenance of high academic standards (5.B.3)

Systematic

Seward County Community College has a number of policies and activities involved in the development, approval and review of academics and student learning, with the Academic Affairs Council having oversight of academic policy and processes. The Council consists of representatives from faculty, administration, staff, and athletic department. However, it appears that there is not a structured, organized, repeatable process with collaboration across all units to ensure the maintenance of high academic standards. The College may find it beneficial to develop such a process.

- Providing effective leadership to all institutional stakeholders (2.C.1, 2.C.2)

Reacting

Seward County Community College noted the use of Key Directions and Strategic Goals as providing effective leadership to all institutional stakeholders. However, much of the evidence provided related to hiring, supervision, and delegation is short of clarity on what constitutes effective leadership. More particularly, the College provided no processes for how the Executive Team or other leaders provide effective leadership nor how this leadership is assessed.

- Developing leaders at all levels within the institution

Systematic

Seward County Community College provides opportunities for employees to lead in teams, work groups, process improvement, action project development and implementation, and peer review of program and courses. Admittedly, most of the opportunities discussed are informal opportunities and training. The College has an opportunity to consider aligning performance evaluations with leadership development and making succession planning part of their long-term planning.

- Ensuring the institution's ability to act in accordance with its mission and vision (2.C.3)

Reacting

While the Seward County Community College Board abides by the Kansas State statues (K.S.A. 71-201) and Board polices, these are not describe the process used by the institution to act in accordance with its mission and vision. An opportunity exists for the College to develop such a process.

- Tracking outcomes/measures utilizing appropriate tools

Reacting

Seward County Community College uses indirect measures of leadership, such as the "Great Colleges to Work For" survey to determine workplace quality and stakeholder engagement. These are indirect measures with limited capacity to assess organizational leadership. The College may find it beneficial to utilize a more legitimate leadership assessment instrument, develop processes with established outcome metrics, and direct measures to assess actual performance. The College's reliance on indirect measures precludes them from gathering meaningful results that can lead to further improvements or enhancements.

4R3 What are the results for ensuring long-term effective leadership of the institution? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 4P3. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)

Reacting

As previously noted, Seward County Community College utilizes the Chronicle of Higher Education's Great Colleges to work for" survey and Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) to evaluate leadership and work experience. However, the employee response rate, for some sub-populations, was very low, possibly leading to inaccurate conclusions. The College may wish to develop more direct measures with equal participation from all subgroups.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Reacting

Seward County Community College failed to provide comparison of results with internal goals and external benchmarks.

- Interpretation of results and insights gained

Reacting

Seward County Community College, in attempting to interpret the data provided, is challenged by threats to validity of the data. The data is indirect in nature and some sub-populations are poorly represented, which could skew the data. The interpretation of results and insights gained is an area in need of improvement.

4I3 Based on 4R3, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the

next one to three years?

Seward County Community College has taken action to modify the administrative structure of the institution, included efforts such as rotating department chair positions, and added staff. Yet, the College has not provided justification through the results provided for the action undertaken. The College has an opportunity to engage in more purposeful leadership development and align it with performance evaluation, as well as addressing succession planning for the College.

4.4: INTEGRITY

Integrity focuses on how the institution ensures legal and ethical behavior and fulfills its societal responsibilities. The institution should provide evidence for Core Components 2.A. and 2.B. in this section.

4P4 Describe the processes for developing and communicating legal and ethical standards and monitoring behavior to ensure standards are met. In addition, identify who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Developing and communicating standards

Systematic

Seward County Community College utilizes a three-step process for developing standards. These standards are then communicated to students, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders via handbooks and policies. Additional delineation of associated processes, as to how sub-committees are selected, the processes/tools used in review, the clarification of timelines and how the processes are evaluated for effectiveness could move the College forward in maturity.

- Training employees and modeling for ethical and legal behavior across all levels of the institution

Systematic

Seward County Community College provides specific training sessions on expectations for ethical and legal behavior, including Title IX, with all employees required to sign a document acknowledging they have read the Employee Handbook and will abide by College policy. The Student Handbook and Code of Conduct provides guidance on ethical behavior for students. The College may benefit from developing regularly scheduled professional development programming around ethical/legal behaviors for all employees, given that only new employees currently review this material.

- Operating financial, academic, personnel and auxiliary functions with integrity, including following fair and ethical policies and adhering to processes for the governing board, administration, faculty and staff (2.A.)

Reacting

Seward County Community College noted a number of Board policies, as well as content in the Employee Handbook regarding how the College functions with integrity, fairness and ethics. Yet, these do not indicate a process by which it is ensured that the policies are effective or are being followed, across the institution. The College may find it beneficial to develop such a process.

- Making information about programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships readily and clearly available to all constituents (2.B.)

Systematic

Seward County Community College noted a number of activities whereby information is made available to all stakeholders regarding costs, control, and accreditation relationships of the institution through its website, program information cards, press releases, social media, accreditation website, and catalog. Yet, the College does not provide a process whereby making the information available is assured. An opportunity exists for the College to develop such a process.

4R4 What are the results for ensuring institutional integrity? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 4P4. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)

Reacting

Multiple audits provide a level of ethical practices and operational integrity regarding Seward County Community College's financial operations. Additional evidence regarding employee professional development noted the frequency of access to training, but did not indicate the effectiveness of the training, or how the training impacted the performance of the employee. The College has an opportunity to track both employee participation and the effectiveness of training related to integrity and ethics.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Reacting

Seward County Community College failed to provide comparisons of results with internal and external targets.

- Interpretation of results and insights gained

Reacting

Seward County Community College failed to provide an interpretation of results.

4I4 Based on 4R4, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?

Seward County Community College's Human Resources Department provides training for ethical issues, which is placed online and assessed. The College recognized the opportunity to improve its professional development data collection and assessment practices.

CATEGORY SUMMARY

Seward County Community College described processes for planning and leading, though it remains unclear as to how the College analyzes, interprets data, and uses insights gained from results to make

improvements. While possessing strong policies at the board and state level, established by state statutes, the College has an opportunity to review the role the College Board of Trustees plays in its operation of the college. The institutional strategic planning process is followed, but it is questionable as to how the process is consistently applied to all levels and across the institution. Overall, the College's maturity levels for processes are largely at systematic, with results at the reactive level. Results, when they are provided, focus on a single process vs. the wide range of processes described in the Category.

CATEGORY STRATEGIC ISSUES

None

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

V - Knowledge Management and Resource Stewardship

Addresses management of the fiscal, physical, technological, and information infrastructures designed to provide an environment in which learning can thrive.

Instructions for Systems Appraisal Team

In this section, the team should provide a consensus narrative that focuses on the processes, results and improvements for Knowledge Management, Resource Management and Operational Effectiveness.

Independent Category Feedback for each AQIP Category from each team member should be synthesized into an in-depth narrative that includes an analysis of the institution's processes, results and quality improvement efforts for each category. Wording from the Stages in Systems Maturity tables for both processes and results should be incorporated into the narrative to help the institution understand how the maturity of processes and results have been rated. The narrative should also include recommendations to assist the institution in improving its processes and/or results. It is from this work that the team will develop a consensus on the Strategic Challenges analysis, noting three to five strategic issues that are crucial for the future of the institution. Please see additional directions in the Systems Appraisal procedural document provided by HLC.

Evidence

CATEGORY 5: KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP

Category 5 addresses management of the fiscal, physical, technological and information infrastructures designed to provide an environment in which learning can thrive.

5.1: KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Knowledge Management focuses on how data, information and performance results are used in decision-making processes at all levels and in all parts of the institution.

5P1 Describe the processes for knowledge management, and identify who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Selecting, organizing, analyzing and sharing data and performance information to support planning, process improvement and decision making

Reacting

With only one staff person in the Office or Assessment and Research (OAR), Seward County Community College selects and collects data largely around compliance, rather than on the data needed to support planning, process improvement, and decision making. While Seward County Community College hopes that a new business intelligence tool (Power BI) will make data more accessible to decision-makers, there is still an opportunity to develop processes to ensure employees across the college have the necessary information and training to support continuous improvement

efforts, analysis and decision-making. The College acknowledges that this was an area of opportunity identified in the last Systems Appraisal and remains a challenge today. The College should be commended for their frank and honest description in this area.

- Determining data, information and performance results that units and departments need to plan and manage effectively.

Reacting

Since Seward County Community College acknowledges that, while its data gathering and reporting is based on compliance requirements, it does not appear that clear, repeatable processes have been developed to determine data, information, and performance results that units and departments need to plan and manage effectively. Rather, College teams determine which data collections are needed beyond those required by external organizations. An example of this is when the instructional team and faculty developed a program review template, with defined data requirements that was subsequently produced in Excel. However, it's unclear, given the information around lack of capacity, how non-compliance reporting requests are prioritized and completed.

- Making data, information and performance results readily and reliably available to the units and departments that depend upon this information for operational effectiveness, planning and improvements

Reacting

Seward County's Community College's current processes are limited and not fully developed or communicated in order to make data, information, and performance results readily and reliably available to the units that depend upon this information for operational effectiveness, planning and improvements. While the planned-for Power BI dashboards have drill-down capability that will make data more readily available and consumable to employees, there continues to be a reliance on one office and one staff member. Training on the new tools (Office 365, SharePoint, Power BI, etc.) will undoubtedly provide more access to data, beyond the technology supports and enhancements, Seward County's Community College would benefit from a more systematic set of processes that formalize and ensure analysis and effective use of data and information across the College identified by the recent audit as the implementation of the new ERP progresses.

- Ensuring the timeliness, accuracy, reliability and security of the institution's knowledge management system(s) and related processes

Reacting

Seward County Community College's processes for ensuring the timeliness, accuracy, reliability and security of the institution's knowledge management system(s) include tracking duplicate student IDs in the student information system and comparing annual report information with previous years to detect any anomalies. An additional opportunity exists for the college to conduct random audits of student records and other reporting data as a way to validate reporting accuracy. Also, the College would benefit from developing more robust and codified processes to ensure the security of the institution's knowledge management system. It is not clear to what extent the College has responded to the recommendations of the Knowledge Management System Audit, namely that, "measures should be established to ensure the integrity of the data in each data owner's area." And, finally, including the use of the data governance team to monitor the level of data security.

- Tracking outcomes/measures utilizing appropriate tools (including software platforms and/or contracted services)

Reacting

It is not clear how Seward County Community College tracks outcomes/measures utilizing appropriate tools (including software platforms and/or contracted services) except through a knowledge management system audit and the Site Improve software that tracks accessibility issues on the website. While some challenges (such as the need for increased training) have been uncovered, the College would benefit from a more systematic process for determining how tools are selected and develop processes by which outcomes/measures are tracked.

5R1 What are the results for determining how data, information and performance results are used in decision-making processes at all levels and in all parts of the institution? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 5P1. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)

Reacting

Seward County Community College acknowledges a number of vulnerabilities with its knowledge management system. Two external audits confirmed additional work needed to improve reporting. The 2015 report pointed out the problems Seward County Community College has with data management and the need for a data warehouse, and acknowledges that staff feel a poor job is done distributing information to the people that need to have it, and a lack of ability to drill down into data. The 2017 report mentions the dependence Seward County Community College has on paper forms and manual processes and the difficulty in improving processes and migrating away from paper. These speak to the need for greater oversight, management, and security measures across the institution. The opportunity exists to incorporate these recommendations into future organizational plans and share information across the campus.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Reacting

Seward County Community College has an opportunity to develop comparison results with internal targets and external benchmarks for this segment of the category.

- Interpretation of results and insights gained

Reacting

Aside from recognizing the need to shore up or develop processes and coordination across units, Seward County Community College provided little in the way of interpretation of results and insights gained. Seward County Community College has the opportunity to interpret results and gain insights for this segment of the category.

5I1 Based on 5R1, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the

next one to three years?

Seward County Community College is planning upgrades to their information management system in 2019. Some recent and planned future improvements include new technologies such as SharePoint and Power BI tools, and the integration of Nuventive Improve with SharePoint. It is important to the management of The College to have reliable and valid data reflecting current performance to project future trends. The current focus appears to be on expanding both the extent of data available as well as leaders' access to it, without the necessary plans or processes for ensuring that the data gathered are meaningful, analyzed, and used to inform decision-making and improvement strategies. The College is unlikely to improve its capabilities without also allocating resources towards using the data effectively on campus.

5.2: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Resource Management focuses on how the resource base of an institution supports and improves its educational programs and operations. The institution should provide evidence for Core Component 5.A. in this section.

5P2 Describe the processes for managing resources, and identify who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Maintaining fiscal, physical and technological infrastructures sufficient to support operations (5.A.1)

Systematic

The process for maintaining fiscal, physical, and technological infrastructures is based on an evaluation of the functionality and condition of the current infrastructure. The annual budgeting process, the Program Feasibility and Potential process and Academic Program Review processes also evaluate human resource needs. However, Seward County Community College considers the maintenance of the fiscal, physical and technological infrastructure very informally, using issue and maintenance logs and reporting by employees. New classrooms and labs have been built but the process by which it was determined the needs for those classrooms was not provided. The College may find it beneficial to have a process for maintaining the infrastructure and for determining future needs – such as to undertake a facilities deferred maintenance study so as to financially and operationally prepare for significant infrastructure maintenance, repair and replacement at the conclusion of the useful life of equipment and facility.

- Setting goals aligned with the institutional mission, resources, opportunities and emerging needs (5.A.3)

Systematic

Goals are established and widely communicated through the strategic planning process, which also ensures alignment with Seward County Community College's mission, vision, and values. The budget process and oversight by the Executive Team and Board of Trustees ensures budget allocation is tied to strategic goals, operations, and educational services to students. The resource allocations of the college are tied to a values-based approach to the College's strategic planning process and development of key institutional directions. The goal setting within the budget is based upon a number of assumptions including state aid, local tax revenues, enrollment, etc., though the process

for goal-setting is not clearly delineated for all goals, and not all goals are objective.

- Allocating and assigning resources to achieve organizational goals, while ensuring that educational purposes are not adversely affected (5.A.2)

Systematic

The Executive Team of Seward County Community College and the Board of Trustees ensure that budget allocation aligns with the College's strategic goals, day-to-day operations, and educational needs of the students. In the case of an emergency, Seward County Community College has a reserve fund, which can be accessed immediately. The process for determining the means for allocating resources to avoid negative impact upon educational purposes is not clearly defined and seems to default to the judgments of the College's executive team and the board. An opportunity exists to clarify the process together with not-to-exceed limits and goals, as well as defining what would constitute a basis for accessing institutional reserve funds. Currently, the College has a very good CFI of 5.1, which is above the minimum of 1.25. The College is financially in good shape.

- Tracking outcomes/measures utilizing appropriate tools

Reacting

While documents were provided showing that the College is tracking where and how much money is spent, Seward County Community College does not appear to have processes for tracking outcomes/measures and whether the tools they are utilizing are providing useful information about resource management. Seward County Community College has an opportunity to develop process metrics and then track them in relation to this segment of the category.

5R2 What are the results for resource management? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 5P2. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)

Reacting

Seward County Community College provides financial CFI data and budget data along with audit results, which have been clear. While these indicate a positive financial situation, they do not provide outcome metrics for all elements of this segment of the category. The College has the opportunity to develop outcome metrics for this segment of the category.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Reacting

The relationship of the institutional results provided to processes around internal targets or peer institutions is unclear. An opportunity exists to have the annual listing of facilities investments exclude items that are custodial, consumable or otherwise non-facility items, which would provide a stronger basis of financial comparison. Comparison of these results with internal targets and external

benchmarks would be beneficial to the College.

- Interpretation results and insights gained

Reacting

While Seward County Community College noted that their financial index has improved, the College has not provided an interpretation of results and insights gained. Seward County Community College has an opportunity to provide interpretation of results and insights gained for this segment of the category.

5I2 Based on 5R2, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?

Seward County Community College has increased its cash reserves. They have improved the Enrollment Management process, which helps with improved predictability of tuition and fee revenues. Additional investments have been made in personnel and facility designed to improve the student experience. While physical plant improvements and increased staff in some areas suggest improved service or experiences for students, there do not appear to be formal processes for evaluating the degree to which these investments have led to increased student satisfaction or success. The institution can also improve its performance by making the budget allocation to strategic goals more explicit and intentional.

5.3: OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Operational Effectiveness focuses on how an institution ensures effective management of its operations in the present and plans for continuity of operations into the future. The institution should provide evidence for Core Component 5.A. in this section.

5P3 Describe the processes for operational effectiveness, and identify who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Building budgets to accomplish institutional goals

Systematic

The Executive Team at Seward County Community College prioritizes the budget requests gathered from all cost centers and develops a draft budget for the Board of Trustees Finance Committee and eventual formal approval of the budget by the Board of Trustees. This budget process takes into account projected state appropriations and goes through an approval process along with a public comment period and public hearings. It is unclear as to the process used to conduct said prioritization, as well as alignment with institutional goals and objectives. An opportunity exists to further define this process, which could include the institutional declaration of particular priorities, which could also have the concomitant impact of reducing staff time developing budget requests that have no hope of being considered.

- Monitoring financial position and adjusting budgets (5.A.5)

Systematic

Seward County Community College's Vice President of Finance & Operations monitors actual

financial experience of the College relative to the budget plan. Although the College now builds into the budget an expected decline in state aid, it appears there is no process other than reacting with adjustments to the budget when and if a budget shortfall occurs. The College might benefit from considering more targeted responses to a budget shortfall to avoid having to make a budget adjustment for all cost centers. While budgets are reviewed on a monthly basis, relevant administrators and staff can also monitor their own departmental or unit budgets throughout the year. An opportunity exists to require all budget managers to monitor budgets regularly notifying senior administrators immediately of any unfavorability of budget to actual experiences. It is unclear why the Board of Trustees review expenditures and why bills are submitted for approval on a monthly basis. It may be more appropriate for the Board of Trustees to review expenditures above a certain limit instead. The College also may find it beneficial to develop a method to evaluate their processes for effectiveness.

- Maintaining a technological infrastructure that is reliable, secure and user-friendly

Reacting

Seward County Community College's Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Information Technology (I.T.) department utilize different methods to maintain Technological infrastructure. College employees complete an IT services survey to gauge and make improvements in user satisfaction, and actions have been taken based on results. The College uses a ticketing system, eSupport, providing an accessible method for employees and students to submit service request tickets. The College has also been engaged in an evaluation of its Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system and is reviewing proposals. Both cost and functionality are being considered. However, these activities have not been intertwined into a process, which is repeatable and can be measured for effectiveness. The College may find it beneficial to develop such a process.

Seward County Community College's processes for maintaining a technological infrastructure that is secure appear incomplete with the data center being protected by limited employee access and locked doors. Cisco SmartNet is used to monitor network routers and switches. Still, Seward County Community College points to budgetary constraints and the lack of a catastrophic failure in the past five years to explain this minimal approach. Given the potential security risks, there is an opportunity to develop more robust processes to secure technology infrastructure. The fact that Seward County Community College has not experienced a catastrophic failure in the past five years may be due to chance rather than its capabilities.

- Maintaining a physical infrastructure that is reliable, secure and user-friendly

Reacting

Seward County Community College's Director of Facilities is primarily responsible for assessing the condition of facilities and evaluating the mechanical components to prioritize needs during the budgeting process. Seward County Community College's processes for maintaining a physical infrastructure that is reliable, secure and user-friendly appear based primarily on a facilities plan that is dated 2011. Seward County Community College details a number of facilities enhancements since the last Systems Portfolio, but it is not clear whether new facilities and or renovations are based on this longer-range plan, emerging needs, or the availability of new funding (as through donations). The College might benefit from more clearly defined processes that make transparent how facilities upgrades or new buildings and equipment are prioritized and how the timelines are set, having a Master Facilities Plan that helps facilitate the physical infrastructure upgrade process, and giving

consideration to accessibility—a key factor in determining whether the physical infrastructure is user-friendly.

- Managing risks to ensure operational stability, including emergency preparedness

Systematic

Seward County Community College risk assessment encompasses budget, facility, and human resource evaluation, annual audits, and insurance coverage. In 2017 Seward County Community College updated its emergency preparedness manual. The updated Emergency Preparedness Manual is extensive and the College has provided active shooter training for employees, and provided crisis management training for the Executive Team. The college also states that it has increased security camera coverage and is upgrading its doors in high priority areas. A RAVE alert system now notifies all employees and students about emergencies and weather-related issues. The Digital Transformation mover group focuses on improving cybersecurity, but the College acknowledges a cybersecurity awareness calendar would help to organize training and awareness initiatives across campus. This section can be further strengthened by developing processes to determine the effectiveness of the activities described above.

- Tracking outcomes/measures utilizing appropriate tools

Reacting

Seward County Community College stated that it uses an external audit as the basis to evaluate the effectiveness of financial management, but not processes around this approach or how this particular tool was selected. The College declares a goal to increase investment in facilities and equipment by 20% by 2020 and increase external funding by 10% per year through 2020, but it is unclear how or why these targets were set. Seward County Community College has the opportunity to develop outcome/measures to track process performance using appropriate tools.

5R3 What are the results for ensuring effective management of operations on an ongoing basis and for the future? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 5P3. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared. These results might include:

- Summary results of measures (include tables and figures when possible)

Reacting

Seward County Community College would benefit from summarizing results of additional and meaningful measures of organizational effectiveness. The College has the opportunity to develop metrics to determine the effectiveness of processes in attaining outcomes.

- Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks

Reacting

Seward County Community College provided two years of data around IT satisfaction from a small pool of employees (N=30 in 2018, no N provided for 2017). No benchmarks or targets were provided. Seward County Community College has the opportunity to develop internal targets and

external benchmarks for this section of the category

- Interpretation of results and insights gained

Reacting

It is unclear as to the interpretations or insights made by the College beyond the general notations of results. Seward County Community College has the opportunity to interpret results and communicate insights gained.

5I3 Based on 5R3, what process improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?

Seward County Community College has taken on a number of improvement efforts in this section of the category, particularly in the areas of risk assessment and security, where Mover Groups have helped to focus attention on Emergency Preparedness and Digital Transformation, leading to evaluation and some improvements in safety/security and IT. The college may also benefit from enhancing its IT infrastructure and creating a systematic approach to ensuring that the facility management is handled with long-term planning in mind. Seward County Community College may benefit from considering conducting an all campus safety training or active shooter training (including students), further enhancing its efforts to create a safe and healthy campus. The College may find it beneficial to develop processes that are repeatable and measurable for which effectiveness can be evaluated.

CATEGORY SUMMARY

Seward County Community College processes and results are primarily at the reactive level of maturity within this category. The College has processes in place for budget development, with some of these processes at the systematic level. Yet, in the areas of IT, fiscal and physical infrastructure the College has activities but not processes which are repeatable and measurable. The College is encouraged to develop such processes and to develop a data structure which can inform the administration and functioning of the institution. The lack of comparative data, data analysis, and interpretation of results that have been consistently noted throughout the portfolio may have a root cause in lack of capacity in the collection and analysis of data.

CATEGORY STRATEGIC ISSUES

None.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

VI - Quality Overview

Focuses on the Continuous Quality Improvement culture and infrastructure of the institution. This category gives the institution a chance to reflect on all its quality improvement initiatives, how they are integrated, and how they contribute to improvement of the institution.

Instructions for Systems Appraisal Team

In this section, the team should provide a consensus narrative that focuses on the processes, results and improvements for Quality Improvement Initiatives and Culture of Quality.

Independent Category Feedback for each AQIP Category from each team member should be synthesized into an in-depth narrative that includes an analysis of the institution's processes, results and quality improvement efforts for each category. Wording from the Stages in Systems Maturity tables for both processes and results should be incorporated into the narrative to help the institution understand how the maturity of processes and results have been rated. The narrative should also include recommendations to assist the institution in improving its processes and/or results. It is from this work that the team will develop a consensus on the Strategic Challenges analysis, noting three to five strategic issues that are crucial for the future of the institution. Please see additional directions in the Systems Appraisal procedural document provided by HLC.

Evidence

CATEGORY 6: QUALITY OVERVIEW

Category 6 focuses on the Continuous Quality Improvement culture and infrastructure of the institution. This category gives the institution a chance to reflect on all its quality improvement initiatives, how they are integrated and how they contribute to improvement of the institution.

6.1: QUALITY IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

Quality Improvement Initiatives focuses on the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) initiatives the institution is engaged in and how they work together within the institution.

6P1 Describe the processes for determining and integrating CQI initiatives, and identify who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Selecting, deploying and evaluating quality improvement initiatives

Systematic

Seward County Community College has a systematic process by which it selects and deploys quality improvement initiatives. The process includes the use of the strategic goals and the systems appraisal feedback. A "Conversation Day" is the basis by which the College identifies 'big steps' and 'small steps' as strategies and goals to address. The College has undertaken a few Action Projects each year. The monitoring and evaluation of this work, from Mover Groups, is formally achieved through

presentation at board meetings. The College may find it beneficial to develop outcome metrics associated with the process as well as a method of evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the process.

- Aligning the Systems Portfolio, Action Projects, Comprehensive Quality Review and Strategy Forums

Reacting

Seward County Community College's processes for aligning various components of its participation in AQIP seem limited. The college has produced a chart showing connections among various AQIP processes, but it is unclear how the College teams, after their review of the systems portfolio and systems appraisal feedback, have input beyond submitting recommendations to the AQIP Steering Committee. The College would find beneficial to formalize a process to consider the peer reviewer feedback (whether through Systems Appraisals, AQIP Action Projects, etc.) to ensure the most essential areas for improvement are acted on. Going forward, the Assurance Reviewers will undoubtedly offer recommendations for improvement, so it might prove useful to have a more formal, and broad-based structure in place to act on those recommendations.

6R1 What are the results for continuous quality improvement initiatives? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 6P1. All data presented should include the population studied, response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared.

Systematic

From 2012 to 2017, Seward County Community College has completed sixteen (16) action projects, and it has documented 125 processes. Executive Team revised budget process, tuition and fees process, and strategic planning process for the current "Knowledge Capture Action Project." In addition, Instructional Team has a project called "1000 Improvements in 1000 days, and it documented 700 improvements in 1000 days. The College may find it beneficial to document improvements through performance data and comparison of those results before and after improvement efforts are undertaken. Only then can improvement be ensured.

6I1 Based on 6R1, what quality improvement initiatives have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years?

Seward County Community College will continue to work on the Knowledge Capture Action Project. The College's revised "All Saints Days" to improve enrollment for high schools. The Mover Groups will link improvement projects to the College's strategic goals and key directions. Additionally, Retention Committee and Office of Assessment and Research (OAR)work with Seward County Community College Foundation and Financial Aid Office to improve processes for award of scholarships. It may be beneficial to the College to evaluate changes made for "All Saints Days" to determine if the changes are producing intended results. Seward County Community College appears to be creating Action Projects and continues to work on existing quality initiatives and plan to continue to do so. More clarification around existing processes and how future initiatives will be identified post-Action Projects could be helpful.

6.2: CULTURE OF QUALITY

Culture of Quality focuses on how the institution integrates continuous quality improvement into its culture. The institution should provide evidence for Core Component 5.D. in this section.

6P2 Describe how a culture of quality is ensured within the institution. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for the following:

- Developing an infrastructure and providing resources to support a culture of quality

Systematic

From 2013 to date, the Seward County Community College has continued to develop and support the culture of quality through the following initiatives: Conservation Day; revised strategic planning process; improved data access through Power BI; revised enrollment management plan; program feasibility and potential process; external audits and information management processes; improved data security, capture and retention of institutional knowledge; "All Saints Day" enrollment process improvement; and revised performance evaluation process. The College could seize an opportunity to define how it creates and sustains a culture of quality, as projects alone do not define a culture.

- Ensuring continuous quality improvement is making an evident and widely understood impact on institutional culture and operations (5.D.1)

Reacting

Mover Groups record activities on projects and results. Other survey tools, including comparative/normative data sets and program reviews are used for goal setting and evaluation. Assessment of student learning is made available on the Seward County Community College's website. Still, it is unclear as to how these processes and data make an impact upon the College's culture. The College has a challenge with data analysis, which impacts its culture and operations.

- Ensuring the institution learns from its experiences with CQI initiatives (5.D.2)

Reacting

The extent to which Seward County Community College learns from its experiences with CQI initiatives is unclear, since in many cases comparative results are not reported, targets and metrics are not developed, and/or analyses of what those comparisons and results mean with respect to the College performance is not provided. Thus, while the College identifies a set of questions that guide CQI, there is an opportunity to extend and broaden both the depth and breadth of the analysis.

- Reviewing, reaffirming and understanding the role and vitality of the AQIP Pathway within the institution

Reacting

The College has noted that the formal Action Projects process has been transitioned to organizational Mover Groups that are used to select and undertake initiatives that support institution's strategic goals. The College acknowledges areas that have fallen short of goal. Insofar as the AQIP pathway being discontinued, the College remains focused on continuous improvement. The College thus has an opportunity to define the process by which it embraces continuous quality improvement in the new Open Pathway.

6R2 What are the results for continuous quality improvement to evidence a culture of quality? The results presented should be for the processes identified in 6P2. All data presented should include the population studied, the response rate and sample size. All results should also include a brief explanation of how often the data is collected, who is involved in collecting the data and how the results are shared.

Reacting

Mover Groups annually report on goals and results. Key Directions on the College's long-term goals and Aspirations are also annually updated. The College has also documented a wide variety of changes and improvements at the College, though not all of these provide evidence of an impact upon a culture of quality at the College. Seward County Community College may find it beneficial to collect and analyze data on institutional performance to ensure that the quality process is impacting the culture of the institution and resulting in improved action.

6I2 Based on 6R2, what process improvements to the quality culture have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three year?

Seward County Community College is relying on the business intelligence tool to improve the culture of data usage on campus. However, it is important to note that having access to data and using data effectively to drive improvement are two different things and requires an investment in experts, who can help others use data effectively. With the expansion of BI across the campus Seward County Community College may consider expanding its staff's expertise on analyzing and using data effectively.

CATEGORY SUMMARY

In recent years, Seward County Community College has more fully integrated the strategic planning process and has made use of Mover Groups to review progress and provide reports to the Board. The College has also accomplished goals tied to sixteen AQIP Action Projects since 2012. Documentation of improved or new processes and achievements has helped Seward Community College employees see the connections between their work, the strategic plan, and the institutional purposes and mission. Seward County Community College has mechanisms in place to improve the quality of institutional performance. The processes and data in this category are mostly reactive. An infrastructure is in place to identify and carry out improvement efforts, but the infrastructure for defining, collecting, and analyzing direct data measures of performance is an opportunity for improvement. The College may find it beneficial to obtain direct measures to identify if the improvement efforts are really resulting in improvements in process outcomes.

CATEGORY STRATEGIC ISSUES

None

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1 - Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.
2. The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission. (This sub-component may be addressed by reference to the response to Criterion 5.C.1.)

Rating

Clear

Evidence

Seward County Community College provides evidence that its mission statement is developed through a process suited to the institution and is adopted by the governing board. The mission and supporting documents are developed and reviewed by all internal constituents, including the Board of Trustees, and external audiences.

Seward County Community College's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission. The degree programs and enrollment data show alignment with the college mission as a comprehensive community college. With designation as a Hispanic-Serving Institution, the College provides evidence of academic programs and student services in line with serving a diverse population in the College's region.

The College's annual budget process reveals planning and budgeting priorities are aligned with and support the mission. Specifically, The Executive Team works with the deans and directors who, in turn, work with faculty and staff in their areas to ensure budget allocations are linked to the College's Five Key Directions.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.B - Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.
2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

Rating

Clear

Evidence

Seward County Community College clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, including statements of vision, values, goals, plans, "key directions," and institutional priorities. Evidence provided reveals that the mission, vision and values are communicated through both print and electronic means to internal and external stakeholders. In addition, other embedded and routine processes such as performance evaluation, the new employee and new student orientation processes, and the development of annual and strategic goals serve to communicate the mission and values.

The Seward County Community College mission documents are current and explain the extent of the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission. The mission and vision's focus on educational priorities is realized not only through academic programming and student services but also through engagement with the community (such as programs with K-16 partners and partnerships with local employers).

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.
2. The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Rating

Clear

Evidence

As a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), Seward County College demonstrates a high level of attention and service to its diverse student populations. Notable evidences include cross-curricular inclusion, adapting course content, and adjusting instructional methodologies to address diverse student needs; ensuring co-curricular activities acknowledge cultural differences; adjusting student support services directed to unique student needs; and changes in instructional delivery methodologies to meet student needs.

Seward Count Community College philosophy in its mission statement contains its commitment towards creating an inclusive educational experience. Through general education courses and programs of study, students consider different points of view, analyze arguments, and explore the impact of decisions on different groups and where they live.

Seward County Community College faculty attend to diverse learners by adapting course content and instructional methodology so that their teaching practice are culturally responsive.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.D - Core Component 1.D

The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Rating

Clear

Evidence

One of Seward County Community College's five key directions includes a broaden community education and business and industry collaboration. The college also encourages its employees to participate in local organizations and engage with the community.

Seward County Community College's educational responsibilities are the central purpose of the institutional mission, vision, values, and philosophy. The College's purpose is to provide higher education options that meet a students' point of need to accomplish its mission.

Seward County Community College engages with members of the community and responds to their needs by hosting events open to the public, providing facilities for community organizations and business events, and providing community service.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

Rating

Clear

Evidence

Seward County Community College operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions as evidenced by audit reports, bond ratings, descriptions of hiring and performance evaluation practices, and documentation regarding established academic standards.

The College establishes and follows fair and ethical policies and processes for its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff primarily through Board policies. Board policies establish guidelines for Board of Trustees governance, administrative functions, student services, business functions, agreements and contracts. An Employee Handbook outlines expectations of ethical and fair behavior.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

Rating

Adequate

Evidence

Seward County Community College's website is used to communicate programs, faculty/staff information, accreditation relationships, control, and cost. With that being said, information regarding institutional accreditation was found but programmatic accreditation was not addressed.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

1. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
2. The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
3. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.
4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

Rating

Adequate

Evidence

The Seward County Community College Board of Trustees, in the integrity policy, is responsible for the institution and to the taxpayers who elected them. It is not clear as to the level of involvement of the taxpayers in the college's business and the influence that has on the Board members.

Based upon state statute, the Board of Trustees is responsible for the operation, management and control of the College.

The College may also consider providing as evidence for this core component a Conflict of Interest Policy applicable to the Board membership.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.D - Core Component 2.D

The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

Rating

Adequate

Evidence

Seward County Community College's Policy 415 currently states "rights to free speech and peaceful assembly are to be afforded and protected by the College. The College acknowledges the right of students and others to assemble in groups on the College campus for peaceful rallies, demonstrations, and gatherings."

Seward County Community College has an Institutional Integrity Policy which was last revised in 2013. The Board policy 415 speaks to free speech and the peaceful assembly. However from review of these two policies, it is unclear whether freedom of expression in scholarly practice is covered. The College may wish to include in the policy classroom practice. Also while policies exist, evidence was not provided showing execution of the policy.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.E - Core Component 2.E

The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, students and staff.

1. The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.
2. Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.
3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Rating

Clear

Evidence

Seward County Community College's IRB assists faculty and staff in protecting individuals who participate in human subject research. All research projects involving human subjects must be submitted to the IRB for review. Minutes of meeting were not provided, yet if included may support the evidence for the core component.

Students involved in undergraduate research are enrolled in a course that provides training on responsible conduct of research

Faculty that mentor undergraduate research students or are involved with grants requiring the reporting of student data receive certification in Responsible Conduct of Research-Basic and Human Subjects Research through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program).

First Year Seminar students participate in a training session led by library personnel that covers resources, search techniques, and ethical use.

Faculty provide class policies as well as examples of ethical information use and incorporate the Information Literacy student learning outcome rubric to communicate ethical use expectations.

The College's Honor Code and Cheating Policy identifies examples of unethical use of information resources.

The Board policy for institutional integrity states "Among those involved in the art and science of teaching, it is imperative that both teachers and leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to democratic principles, ethical behavior, and all activities being governed by these rules, regulations and policies of the institution. Employees acting in violation of the rules, regulations, and policies of the institution are subject to disciplinary action or termination through due process as set forth in K.S.A. 72-5439."

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.
3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

Rating

Clear

Evidence

Seward County Community College's program and course design processes have multiple levels of oversight and approval to ensure quality and appropriate levels of performance.

Seward County Community College's learning goals for associate degrees and certificates are specified in syllabi, program assessment documents, the college website, and the college catalog. The goals are evaluated during the program and course development processes, the program review process and by the Assessment Committee.

Seward County Community College follows a process to ensure program quality and learning goals across all modes of delivery. However it is unclear from the evidence provided that dual credit classroom receives the same level of evaluation as other courses offered. Also it appears from the evidence that much of the responsibility for the quality of online programming is given the Edukan rather than remaining with the College.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.
2. The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.
4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.
5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission.

Rating

Clear

Evidence

Seward County Community College demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs as evidenced by the intentional alignment of the general education outcomes (rooted in the college's General Education Philosophy), degree requirements, and institutional goals and learning outcomes. The general education outcomes are also aligned with the Kansas Board of Regents Transfer and Articulation general education framework and articulation agreements.

The educational programming Seward County Community College offers recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work. As a Hispanic-Serving Institution that also includes international students, the College has embraced the opportunity to highlight and celebrate the benefits of this rich diversity at the college and beyond. In addition to designing programming that seeks to better serve specific populations, the College has devoted particular attention to employees professional development and student development related to diversity.

Through a curriculum mapping process, Seward County Community College faculty ensure that every degree program engages students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments. Required program outcomes reports include information about the common institutional outcomes and curriculum mapping requires faculty to reflect on where outcomes are introduced, reinforced, and assessed in each program course.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.C - Core Component 3.C

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

1. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.
2. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.
3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
4. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.
5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
6. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

Rating

Adequate

Evidence

The specific credentials, skills, and values for faculty at Seward County Community College are based on the position analysis and job description. The College's full-time faculty teach 83.72% of the total credit hours. Faculty to student ratio is 13:1.

Seventy-seven percent of full-time faculty serve on committees, sponsor student organizations, participate in mover groups and/or are a part of learning communities. Full-time instructors also work with adjuncts on assessment of student learning and curriculum alignment.

Faculty post their office hours by putting a sign on their door with office hours listed and list office hours in a course syllabus. No evidence of how online or remote students access faculty, how the current process is monitored, and how it is assessed for effectiveness.

Screening committee is initially responsible for assuring that new hires meet the qualifications spelled out in the position analysis. Policies provide for professional development but no evidence was provided to indicate it was occurring and to what degree.

Seward County Community College uses results from student satisfaction surveys administered every six years to determine if student needs for services are being met. A more timely process may do a more effective job of determining this for the College to be more proactive around staffing.

Faculty members are evaluated regularly based on the established timetable. During the first two years of employment they are evaluated by the 60th day of each semester. During the third and fourth year they are evaluated annually and after that they are put on a three-year cycle.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).
5. The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

Rating

Adequate

Evidence

Seward County Community College provided a schedule around technology replacement and referenced an annual plan for infrastructure and software upgrades. Labs are upgraded using capital improvement funds from the annual budget, Perkins funding, and grants. A facilities plan is used to guide this.

Seward County Community College has an Institutional Review Board (IRB) to protect human subjects. Students take training before conducting research, faculty who mentor students doing research also receive training. There are processes to provide students with information around information literacy and what constitutes unethical use of information.

Seward County Community College uses ACT and SAT scores and Accuplacer to identify the level of student preparedness. Additional evidence around how the College identifies under-prepared and academically at-risk students supported by data is needed. In addition, the College can improve its evidence by providing processes around how students are placed into appropriate courses, supported by data.

Documentation around advising was provided; however it was unclear what processes are formalized by contractual agreement or College policy, and which are assumed, particularly around faculty and athletic advising. Data to support this was missing.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.E - Core Component 3.E

The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.
2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

Rating

Adequate

Evidence

Seward County Community College fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment by providing degrees, certificates, workforce training, community education, dual credit, and Adult Education consistent with the college's mission and purpose. Through a number of processes, the College evaluates the effectiveness of its programming to meet stakeholder needs.

While Seward County Community College's co-curricular programming is suited to its mission, more evidence could be provided to show how this programming enriches the learning environment and meets the intended goals of supporting students' personal growth through leadership development, community service, self-advocacy, working in teams, and understanding others.

Seward County Community College demonstrates claims it makes about students' educational experience primarily through assessment results that are gathered through both indirect (student surveys for course evaluation, employer feedback, and employment indicators) and direct methods (industry credential exams and faculty-developed tools). The college collects student feedback on their perceptions of their educational experience through a number of tools.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

Rating

Adequate

Evidence

At Seward County Community College, all instructional programs are on a five-year comprehensive review cycle that also considers program viability in the long term. Faculty are tasked with ensuring currency with their course and programs as well as likewise ensuring competitiveness with other colleges. The College maintains five secondary accreditation standings required by related program accreditors. Graduate performance is evaluated through a variety of means including board licensing pass rates, industry test scoring, and employer feedback.

The Seward County Community College Registrar evaluates all student academic records to ensure appropriate documentation in the Student Information System and grants transfer credit according

to the College and Kansas Board of Regents policy. The dean and faculty from the discipline of the course under consideration evaluate transfer credit from outside of Kansas, and the Registrar uses their decision and justification to award credit. This appears to be a subjective process.

Seward County Community College Academic Affairs Council policy and processes direct the awarding of credit through Prior Learning Assessment, following guidelines established by the Kansas Board of Regents. Statewide articulation agreements cover general education and technical courses from Kansas institutions.

Seward County Community College faculty define rigor and expectations for effective teaching. Rigor is verified during faculty evaluation.

Faculty qualifications are set by the Board of Regents and are aligned with HLC. Seward County Community College is in the concurrent faculty extension through 2022. Concurrent faculty credentials are tracked by the Director of Outreach. Seward County Community College faculty credentials are under the VP of Academic Affairs.

Seward County Community College's graduate assessment model comprises assessment of institutional student learning outcomes (see also 1P1.8), certification exam pass rates, graduate/employer follow-up surveys, program assessments, industry credential exams, and transfer success reports.

Employer satisfaction and graduate follow-up surveys are used as indirect measures of graduate success in the program review process.

While Graduate follow up data was reported to the Kansas Board of Regents through 2016 and is no longer required, the College may want to consider continuing the practice as it pertains to meeting this subcomponent.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.B - Core Component 4.B

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.
2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.
3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

Rating

Adequate

Evidence

Seward County Community College clearly states its goals for student learning outcome on its website and posts the aggregate results.

Seward County Community College's assessment of learning outcomes for curricular activity is led through its assessment committee. The assessment of institutional learning outcome in curricular setting follows a well-documented continuous quality improvement process. A complete plan of co-curricular assessment was not completed until 2018 and data will not be analyzed until spring of 2019.

Data collected has primarily been from student surveys. Faculty are involved in the annual Assessment day and jointly analyze data and make recommendations for improvements to be addressed in the next academic year. In addition, faculty identify the professional development and other support needed to accomplish this target.

Program faculty assess program learning outcomes, including those aligned with institutional outcomes, but this process is not fully developed at this time, according to Seward County Community College.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

Rating

Clear

Evidence

Seward County Community College uses peer comparison data and a three-year baseline to set goals for retention, persistence, completion and graduation. These goals are set annually and review of data leads to formulation of strategies.

Office of Assessment and Research collects retention, persistence, and completion data and makes it available to the Retention Committee and academic programs for review.

Tools and methods to assess retention, persistence, and completion are selected based on a scheduled data collection timeline. Analysis of retention, persistence, and completion reflects good practice.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

5.A - Core Component 5.A

The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The institution's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.
3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.
4. The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.
5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

Rating

Adequate

Evidence

The College's budget has had consistent clean audits, with no materials findings, for the past 6 years.

The College's eSupport work-ticket system provides evidence of ongoing maintenance and repair to facilities, IT and related infrastructures. From the documentation provided it was questioned about deferred maintenance and how well the institution is being maintained.

Security for IT is a concern, in that the reference was made for security that the IT department resides behind locked doors. In these days of cyber attacks, locked doors will not suffice to keep institutional and student data safe.

Budget documents reflect the distribution of revenues to support essential operational areas of the College. Budgets indicate the increase of cash reserves to provide for a less constrained budgets through predicted revenues alone. Yet, it is also a concern that the area of institutional research has only one staff member whose time is also spent on coordinating assessment of student learning.

Evidence was presented demonstrating that Board Members monitor college finances through monthly board meetings, which they access through an online board docs governance software system. It is questionable as to how employees are held accountable to their budgets.

The College uses a 3-tier system for the training and support of their employees which is monitored at the individual employee level with software. Individual development is supported through department and division budgets from two funds, 1111 and 1112. It's unclear what the criteria are for each fund, as they both include academic units. What percentage of the annual budget is generally allocated to professional development and if that has changed across time was not provided.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.B - Core Component 5.B

The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight of the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies— including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution's governance.
3. Administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

Rating

Clear

Evidence

Seward County Community College has policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies —including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution's governance as evidenced by the creation of Mover Groups, new faculty chair positions, and other structures that allow for campus wide engagement in governance.

Seward County Community College's Board of Trustees meeting minutes and Board policies reveal the Board is knowledgeable about the institution and provides oversight for the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities. In addition to Board policies and bylaws, the College establishes oversight responsibilities of the board through state policy. Specifically, the Board has responsibility for hiring and evaluating the college president and has oversight of the financial and academic policies. The Board is also involved in strategic planning and improving college services.

Seward County Community College enables the involvement of its administration, faculty, staff, and students in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort. A collaborative strategic planning process involves constituents across the college and helps to ensure that Seward County Community College has coordinated processes across departments and divisions for optimum effectiveness and efficiency. Since each area or unit has plans tied to the College's Strategic Goals and Key Directions, those areas are also linking with other departments to ensure efficiencies and alignment in budget allocation and coordination of efforts. The Academic Affairs Council (that includes faculty, deans, and other staff and administrators) has responsibility for overseeing academic matters.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.
5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

Rating

Adequate

Evidence

Seward County Community College has recently moved from a seven-year strategic planning cycle to a values-based three-year plan to develop Strategic Goals that tie to the Key Directions of the Strategic Plan.

Budgeting takes into consideration assumed state/local tax revenues, legislation around appropriations, credit hours, and other factors to manage risk. 42% of the budget is allocated to instruction, 16% to student services, 3% to Seward County resident tuition waivers, and 8% to facilities. It is assumed, and the College may want to provide evidence to this, that results of assessment of student learning and operations drive the budgetary resource allocations.

Seward County Community College has taken globalization into account as it has evolved from being primarily white to a Hispanic-serving institution.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.D - Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.
2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

Rating

Adequate

Evidence

The review team struggled throughout the portfolio with the lack of processes and the lack of data provided by Seward County Community College. It is unclear how widely continuous quality improvement is understood across the College. The lack of data and analysis of data due to lack of capacity is a serious issue, and merely providing access to a software tool will not move the campus forward in understanding data.

Seward County Community College provides some evidence that it learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its effectiveness. Specifically, the College has developed a revised Strategic Planning process, a revised Enrollment Management Plan, a revised Performance Evaluation Process, and a Program Feasibility process. Still, while institutional data are available on the website and while Seward County Community College reports on improvement initiatives through updates to the Board and through committee structures, more evidence could be provided to show how the organization learns from these reports and how follow-up is determined.

Seward County Community College provides some examples—such as the work of the Mover Groups, the current revision of the enrollment and payment processes, the IT survey results—to demonstrate that the institution uses evaluations and feedback to improve institutional effectiveness. More evidence could be provided to show how the College applies its learning to ensure improvement efforts are supported and sustained throughout the organization.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

Review Dashboard

Number	Title	Rating
1	Reflective Overview	
2	Strategic Challenges Analysis	
3	Accreditation Evidence Screening Summary	
4	Quality of Systems Portfolio	
5	AQIP Category Feedback	
I	Helping Students Learn	
II	Meeting Student and Other Key Stakeholder Needs	
III	Valuing Employees	
IV	Planning and Leading	
V	Knowledge Management and Resource Stewardship	
VI	Quality Overview	
1	Mission	
1.A	Core Component 1.A	Clear
1.B	Core Component 1.B	Clear
1.C	Core Component 1.C	Clear
1.D	Core Component 1.D	Clear
2	Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct	
2.A	Core Component 2.A	Clear
2.B	Core Component 2.B	Adequate
2.C	Core Component 2.C	Adequate
2.D	Core Component 2.D	Adequate
2.E	Core Component 2.E	Clear
3	Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support	
3.A	Core Component 3.A	Clear
3.B	Core Component 3.B	Clear
3.C	Core Component 3.C	Adequate
3.D	Core Component 3.D	Adequate
3.E	Core Component 3.E	Adequate
4	Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement	
4.A	Core Component 4.A	Adequate
4.B	Core Component 4.B	Adequate
4.C	Core Component 4.C	Clear
5	Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness	
5.A	Core Component 5.A	Adequate

5.B	Core Component 5.B	Clear
5.C	Core Component 5.C	Adequate
5.D	Core Component 5.D	Adequate

Review Summary

Conclusion

The review team in conducting this systems appraisal was focused on providing Seward County Community College with the most accurate and actionable feedback. We were aware that this is a year 7 appraisal for the institution and as such we focused on the criteria evidence and attempted to provide guidance on areas where the evidence could be strengthened. In particular, the review team struggled throughout the portfolio with the lack of processes and the lack of direct data provided. As a result, questions arose as to how widely continuous quality improvement is understood across the College. This needs to be addressed by the institution before the Comprehensive Quality Review visit. The team wishes Seward County Community College all the best as they move forward in their quality journey.

Overall Recommendations

Criteria For Accreditation
Adequate

Sanctions Recommendation
Not Set

Pathways Recommendation
Not Set

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.