Indiana University Northwest
Quality Highlights [http://www.iun.edu/~aqip/]
Submitted to AQIP
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The report below chronicles progress IU Northwest has made on various quality improvement initiatives and processes during the four-month period subsequent to our Quality Checkup (March 26-27, 2008). For an outline of substantive changes between the original Portfolio and our "Living" Portfolio (https://www.iun.edu/~aqip/portfolio/ AQIP_Januaryr2008_Living_Systems_Portfolio.pdf), see the last page of our Quality Program Summary (http://www.iun.edu/~aqip/pdfs/Final_Quality_Program_Summary.pdf).

Review of specific accreditation issues identified by the institution's last Systems Appraisal: In terms of both of the issues (ongoing assessment and succession planning) that were originally noted as potential accreditation issues in the last Systems Appraisal, the Quality Checkup reviewers stated, "In our opinion, this [assessment] is no longer an accreditation issue given the amount of work IU Northwest has committed to general education redeployment" (3) and "The review team feels that this identified issue [succession planning] does not rise to the level of "accreditation issue," but will still have a significant impact on the future of the institution and should be monitored as a "strategic issue" (http://www.iun.edu/~aqip/pdfs/IU_Northwest_2008_AQIP_Quality_Check-Up_Report.pdf). Because the campus has addressed both of these issues as part of the overall response to the Systems Appraisal and as major components of building a culture of continuous improvement and because the reviewers directly stated that they were no longer potential accreditation issues, we address them more fully below as part of our capitalizing on the recommendations of the last System's Appraisal and as strategic issues.

Capitalizing on recommendations identified by IU Northwest's last Systems Appraisal in the *Strategic Issues Analysis*: The Quality Checkup Report and Subsequent Action: The Quality Checkup reviewers asserted, **"**In the team's judgment, the institution presented satisfactory evidence that it met this goal of the Quality Checkup. The institution's approach to the issue, documentation, and performance were acceptable and comply with Commission and AQIP's expectations" (8). While this evaluation positively assesses the campus's progress in relation to its continuous improvement efforts, the reviewers did note areas where special focus would be productive. We delineate those areas below, noting our progress since the Quality Checkup on March 26-28, 2008.

Learning Assessment Model: Noting the progress IU Northwest has made in General Education reform and student learning outcome assessment, the reviewers assert, "There are "pockets" of assessment/student centered learning, but these tend to be associated with departments engaging in specialized accreditation. IU Northwest should continue to leverage their experience and best practices in those departments and share the information broadly to build greater campus involvement" (6).
   A. **General Education Reform**: The General Education/Assessment Committee (http://www.iun.edu/~genednw/) of the Faculty Organization has completed its development of five principles of General Education and the related student learning outcomes. The Faculty Organization has approved all of the principles and the related outcomes for the first three principles. The outcomes for the last two principles are scheduled as an approval item on the agenda for the September 2008 meeting of the Faculty Organization. Finally, the co-chairs of the General Education/Assessment Committee collaborated on the overall campus "Assessment Plan," providing a General Education Assessment Plan that includes a timeline, recommendations for methods of assessment, and a matrix of classroom-based and institution-wide assessment of General Education principles. These principles and outcomes are to appear in the 2010 IU Northwest Bulletin whereupon they take effect in terms of student requirements.
   B. **Student Learning Outcome Assessment (http://www.iun.edu/~caslo)** : IU Northwest's approach to centralizing student learning outcome assessment in response to the Systems Appraisal feedback has always had three foundational principles: a) retain the necessary and successful assessment practices

that exist in units with advanced systems of assessment (like Nursing, Education, and Business), b) learn from those practices, using them as a model as we develop more centralized assessment processes, and c) develop additional assessments that cut across shared student learning outcomes (communication, critical thinking, and ethical behavior, etc.). This is actually in agreement with the comments from the Quality Checkup reviewers. While we are still in the preliminary stages of developing a culture of assessment, significant progress includes the development of the "Campus Plan for Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes," the first wave of coordinated data collection, the development of a reporting template, and the temporary placement of a faculty member in the position of Assessment Coordinator (with a course release) until the campus can permanently fill this full-time position. The first wave of data will be reported broadly in the Fall of 2008 with the expectation that necessary targets for improvement be identified based on the results.

Strategic Alignment: In the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report, the reviewers wrote, "IU Northwest might well consider their process of alignment of strategic goals of various units through a more fully articulated strategic alignment process." The Quality Checkup reviewers state, "IU Northwest has had limited progress toward accomplishing any meaningful outcome related to this issue" and "there are individual units that have embraced the institutional goals and cascaded them to the department level, but that is limited" (6). In a special meeting of the Strategic Planning Team in April 2008, the Strategic Planning Team examined its Strategic Outcomes in terms of meeting its time goals and the number of outcomes as related to the campus's ability to meet the completion goals as well as the units' ability to align their goals and outcomes with those larger Strategic Outcomes. Based on this analysis, the Strategic Planning Team has determined that sufficient progress has been made on some of the Strategic Outcomes, thereby making them viable in the daily operations of the campus without having them be a specific strategic focus. At the same time, the Strategic Planning Team determined that the activities/processes involved in the remaining Strategic Outcomes could successfully be folded into four larger focus areas (much like AQIP 'campaigns'), providing the campus with greater focus and the ability to better align unit goals and outcomes with the larger strategic foci. The four focus areas are: Continuous Improvement, Budgeting, Enrollment, and Emergency Preparedness.

A. Continuous Improvement: According to the Strategic Planning Team, "continuous improvement" (including measuring effectiveness and "assessment" broadly defined to include both student learning outcome assessment and the general assessment of other institutional areas and processes) at the strategic-planning level means targeting campus-level continuous improvement initiatives, determining performance measures, monitoring progress, and ensuring relevant change responsive to data. Key activities (or concrete outcomes) that fall within the category of continuous improvement include but are not limited to: 1) AQIP accreditation, including maintenance of the four (4) Action Projects,[1] 2) General Education reform,[2] 3) Human Capital and succession planning,[3] 4) Student learning outcome assessment planning,[4] and 5)Key performance measures.[5] Rather than having specific Strategic Planning Committees responsible for the Strategic Outcomes, the Strategic Planning Team has operationalized the efforts necessary to

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[1] For an explanation of the relationship between the processes of the Strategic Planning Team and those of the campus AQIP Steering Group and Category Working Group, see "Quality Program Summary"
[http://www.iun.edu/~aqip/pdfs/Final_Quality_Program_Summary.pdf]. Full descriptions of the four Action Projects are available on the campus AQIP website [http://www.iun.edu/~aqip/action_projects/].

[2] The documents related to the General Education program that have been approved are available at the General Education/Assessment Committee website [http://www.iun.edu/~genednw/].

[3] The guidelines for Human Capital planning have been archived on the Strategic Planning website
[http://www.iun.edu/~spcnw/archive/2006/pdf/Human_Capital_Planning_Preamble_Principles_Priorities_6-06.pdf]. For discussion of succession planning related to continuous improvement, see the recommendations of the Category 5 Working Group (page 4 ff.)
[http://www.iun.edu/~aqip/pdfs/Final_Quality_Program_Summary.pdf].

[4] See the "Campus Plan for the Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes" [http://www.iun.edu/~caslo], which was approved by the Faculty Organization on February 15, 2008.

[5] For a discussion of the processes related to designating performance indicators, see "Quality Program Summary" (page 9)
[http://www.iun.edu/~aqip/pdfs/Final_Quality_Program_Summary.pdf].

achieving each of the Strategic Outcomes, thereby placing the responsibility for the completion within the respective units/constituent populations. This approach will be maintained:

- The AQIP co-coordinators will facilitate the necessary work related to accreditation, working with the members of the Category Working groups, collaborating with other groups as necessary;
- The co-chairs of the General Education/Assessment committee will continue to lead the faculty work on the revision of the General Education components, working with the faculty committee, the larger Faculty Organization, the Deans' Council, and the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs;
- The Director of Human Resources will coordinate the campus efforts to produce a Human Capital Plan, and the Category 5 Working Group will continue its work on succession planning;
- The Assessment Coordinator will work with individuals in each academic unit to realize the various aspects of student learning outcome assessment as detailed in the Campus Assessment Plan; and
- The Director of Institutional Research will lead the campus efforts related to implementing key performance measures.

Each of these individuals will report progress to the Strategic Planning Team (in either the form of a report or an oral presentation at the regular meetings), gaining feedback from the Strategic Planning Team and acting in an advisory role to the Strategic Planning Team on matters related to the respective work.

B. Enrollment: At the strategic planning level, the purpose of focusing on enrollment is to ensure that the enrollment priorities are integrated into the institutional strategic plan and to assure the strategic alignment of the Chancellor's Working Group on Enrollment (http://www.iun.edu/~chan/enrollment/) with the work of campus units. Addressing enrollment concerns whether they pertain to recruitment, retention or marketing is the work of the entire campus community and as such must remain a high priority, if the campus is to reach and maintain enrollment goals. The Chancellor's Working Group has been working throughout the summer and expects to deliver its recommended plan in late August or early September.

Principles and priorities are being developed to parallel those developed previously for the Information Technology Plan, the Facilities Plan, and the Human Capital Plan (For all of the documents related to these areas, please visit the Strategic Planning webpage).

C. Emergency Planning (http://www.iun.edu/~preparen/): The role of the Emergency Planning Team is to develop, annually review, and implement a plan that includes policies, procedures and an organizational structure to quickly respond to emergency situations. Such an infrastructure will allow IU Northwest to maximize human safety and survival, minimize damage to property, meet the human service needs of students/employees, restore normal activities of the campus, communicate openly, honestly and proactively with the university community and its various publics and to coordinate efforts with local emergency authorities. The team is finalizing an Emergency Preparedness Manual; emergency preparedness informational tips have been placed on the website.

As the team moves forward the focus will be on ensuring continuous updates to the manual and website information, working with faculty to develop ways that each classroom will be aware of actions to take in the event of an emergency, the installation of a digital, notification sign board and ensuring that information is submitted to IU Notify so that information can be provided in a prompt manner in the event of an emergency.

D. Budgeting: The strategic focus on budgeting will begin with the evaluation of various forms of budgeting in order to implement a revised budgeting system with the objectives of producing operating budgets that allow units to better meet their goals and objectives within the context of the resources available; providing for accountability and flexibility both in the current and long range managing of resources; allocating resources in alignment with the strategic plan of the campus; rewarding those units that exceed their goals; and offering stability so that unforeseen circumstances do not unduly disrupt the

operation of the campus. Workshops and information sessions have been held to familiarize the campus community with the current budgeting process and the pros and cons of other budgeting systems.

Process Documentation: The Quality Checkup reviewers noted the process mapping that has occurred related to the hiring process and recommended that we process map other key processes (7). The Director of Financial Aid has led his office in mapping the financial aid processes for students, resulting in streamlining the process and allowing students to receive their aid in a more timely manner. In addition, the AQIP Category 5 Working Group has designated processes in the following areas as those to be mapped next and assigning particular individuals to ensure the completion of that mapping: Event Planning/Scheduling, Budget Planning, Student Services, Physical Plant Process for Repairs, and Publicizing Events.

Additionally, members of the Task Force on Key Performance Measures have drafted a process for setting targets for key performance measures (See A in the above section entitled "Strategic Alignment."). This process will be integral to the campus efforts to measure effectiveness as well as the more particular concerns of developing a culture of continuous improvement in particular. The draft of this process will be presented for approval to the SPT at its meeting on August 20, 2008.

Results: According to the Quality Checkup reviewers, "Speaking to the issue of results presentation, IU Northwest is making satisfactory progress in this area" (7), and "IU Northwest is at the beginning stages of using data to drive decisions" (8). In addition to the dashboard categories that had been selected and approved at the time of the Quality Checkup, the performance measures within those categories now have been selected and approved. The next step is to begin identifying a process to set initial targets or goals for each measure. The Strategic Planning Team agreed that input should be sought from faculty, staff and the AQIP steering committee. The committee's goals are to establish a process for setting targets by September 2008.

Human Capital Planning: A summary of the two proposals received in response to our RFP for a Human Capital Plan was given to the Strategic Planning Team at its May meeting; each consisted of a detailed method for collecting, analyzing and benchmarking data necessary to compose a Human Capital Plan for the campus. In examining these proposals, the team discussed components of them that a) could be accomplished using expertise from the campus, b) would need external expertise, and c) would constitute essential pieces of a human capital plan for an academic institution versus a corporation.
A sub-committee has been formed to review the data, consult with key personnel at academic institutions who have enacted human capital plans, and bring back information to the Strategic Planning Team. This work is to be completed during Summer 2008 so that the components of a human capital plan can be implemented as soon as possible.