

AQIP Category Five
Leading and Communicating

Context for Analysis (C)

5C1 Leadership and communication systems

Over the past dozen years, the College has evolved from a traditional top down management model, to a people driven, team oriented decision-making system, to the current system that seeks to combine the strengths of each model. The organizational chart (Appendix A) includes five levels: from top down, the Board of Trustees, the President, the Vice Presidents, the Deans and Directors, and the rest of the College employees working for and with the Vice Presidents and Deans and Directors (faculty, staff and administration).

While Terra has had several changes to the formal leadership of the College over the past few years, the commitment to, and the implementation of the leading and communicating process, has remained intact. The leadership and communication styles of the College would best be described as open and team focused, including the communication that takes place with the Board of Trustees. College leadership believes that the College's mission to educate future leaders requires maintenance of a climate that nurtures leadership through discussion and involvement.

Much of the decision-making is accomplished within the President's Cabinet, Council and team structure. Empowerment of faculty, students and staff occurs in multiple venues based on an assumption that any employee/student of the College has the capacity to function in a leadership role, and that leadership skills can be enhanced by providing increasing opportunities for leading. Primary is the empowerment of the employees to participate in key decisions through the three institutional councils: CASA, Administrative, and Enrollment Management. Secondary forms of empowerment occur through the regular use of teams; the involvement of students in Student Government and Phi Theta Kappa; and the planning, conducting and evaluation of the ElderCollege by its participants.

The local leadership governing body of the College is the Terra Board of Trustees; a nine member board selected and appointed by the Governor of Ohio. That leadership group has a relationship with the Ohio Board of Regents. The Ohio Board of Regents is a nine-member coordinating board with two ex-officio representatives from the State Legislature created in 1963 by the General Assembly to:

- provide higher education policy advice to the Governor and General Assembly;
- develop a strategy involving Ohio's public and independent colleges and universities;
- advocate for and manage state funds for public colleges; and
- coordinate and implement state higher education policies.

The Regents have a direct, non-governing relationship with all of Ohio's colleges and universities.

5C2 Leadership system alignment with the Board of Trustees, Board of Regents and senior leaders

The Board of Trustees leads the organization through the creation and monitoring (assessment) of the College Mission Statement and the Board's Ends Policies (Appendix B). Together, the Mission Statement and Ends Policies reflect what Terra Community College stands for, what (and how) it values, and the work that it pursues.

In order to make the mission a reality, the Board has established six Ends Policies, which define the major priorities for the institution. These policies, and the descriptor of what is valued within each, guide the leadership team in both the planning and the assessment of all its programs and services.

The Ends Policies provide the focus and framework for all institutional planning, both short- and long-term. It is through this funneling of planning and development that the senior leadership team strives to achieve focus and direction, both short- and long-term, for the College.

5C3 Ethics, equity, social responsibilities, community service and involvement

The promotion of ethical values begins with the Board of Trustees. Board Governance Policy #9 (Board Members' Code of Conduct) addresses the ethical values of the Board: "The board expects of itself as a whole and of its members ethical and professional conduct. This commitment includes proper use of authority and appropriate decorum in group and individual behavior when acting as board members. Board members must one—represent un-conflicted loyalty to the interests of the ownership, and two—Board members must avoid any conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility. ..."

Board Executive Limitations Policy #1 (General Executive Constraint) addresses the expectations of the President: "The president shall neither cause nor allow any practice, activity, decision or organizational circumstance which is imprudent, in violation of commonly accepted business and professional ethics nor in violation of any applicable state or federal law." This is continued in Executive Limitations Policy #2 (Staff Treatment): "With respect to treatment of paid and volunteer staff, the president may not cause or allow conditions which are unfair or undignified. ..."

This commitment and the resulting expectation of ethical and equitable behavior/treatment are further defined within the institution through the expression of its operating policies. These are clearly defined in the Employee Handbook and the *Agreement Between the Board of Trustees, Terra Community College and The Terra Faculty Association* (TFA). For Board members, the College has adopted a Code of Conduct and a Code of Ethics (Governance 9.5 See Appendix E). The College looks for opportunities to educate and increase awareness regarding ethical and legal issues. For instance, during the past year, attorneys from the state Attorney General's office have addressed issues related to sexual harassment at meetings for faculty and staff, and FERPA training was presented at faculty and staff sessions in August 2006. For students, ethical and equitable behavior/treatment issues are expressed through the policies in the Student Handbook, which is included in the Catalog.

Terra Community College employees are governed by the Ohio ethics law for public officials and employees (Chapter 102. and Section 2921.42 of the Ohio Revised Code). The College must provide each employee with a copy of the legislation and obtain a written acknowledgement of receipt. The legislation is also available for viewing in the Public Folders in Outlook on the College email system.

Employee Participation in Community Organizations Table 5.1

Type of Community Organizations	Number of Participating Employees
Agricultural/county fair	4
Business organizations	3
Chamber of Commerce (inc. 8 boards)	7
Economic Development	3
Health care related organizations	10
Miscellaneous civic organizations	10
Miscellaneous community groups	16
Miscellaneous organizations specializing in hobbies	2
Multicultural/Diversity	2
Religious organizations	23
School and youth organizations	19
Scouting	4
Service organizations	4
Social organizations	2
United Way	3
Veteran organizations	1
Wildlife and conservation	4

Eighty-seven percent of the full-time employees either were actively involved in community organizations or participated in community activities during the year, but did not belong to the organization or group sponsoring the project. These events included holiday events, such as the toy drive and volunteering at the Homeless Shelter, March of Dimes, the river clean-up, the Soup Kitchen, etc

Attendant to the Strategic Planning Process, a values inventory was developed by a campus-wide team and circulated to faculty, staff, and administration for additions, omissions, and clarifications. Table 5-2 reflects the College’s commitment to students, staff, and the communities served:

Values Table 5-2

<p>WE VALUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each learner’s success as our highest priority. • Diversity. • Input from all stakeholders. • Academic excellence inside and outside of the classroom. • The potential of each person to learn. • Learning from our students and from each other. • Teamwork. • A caring and professional relationship among student learners, college employees, and the communities we serve. • Accountability for our actions. • Partnerships with business and industry, government, and educational institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative technology that enhances learning and job performance. • Academic, professional, and personal integrity. • A campus that is accessible, clean, safe, and provides an ideal environment in which to learn. • Quality in our work. • Commitment to the community to enhance the quality of life. • Teaching learners to communicate, solve problems, value others, work together, and act responsibly. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An environment that encourages independent thinking, acting creatively, and being resourceful. • Lifelong learning. • Fun.
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Process (P)

5P1 Setting directions

The Strategic Planning Process (See 8P1) has provided the direction the campus will take for the next few years. The initiatives and the direction for the future growth of the College that came from the strategic planning process reflected input from over 1000 surveys, hundreds of interviews, focus groups representing students, staff, faculty, business and industry representatives, government and elected officials, and healthcare providers. In response to the suggestions and concerns from these key stakeholders, the College has charted its future as reflected in the new initiatives that were cultivated from the process. These initiatives have a direct correlation to the College’s mission, vision, and strategic ends policies (Appendix C).

The monitoring process is on-going with semi-annual review of progress related to strategic initiatives. The Board is apprised of progress through these semi-annual reports.

The needs and expectations of students and key stakeholder groups were well represented in the planning process as explained above. In addition, the process accounts for the needs of students and key stakeholder groups through the focus of the Ends Policies. Access and Opportunity, Lifelong Learning and Student Success focus primarily on students, both credit and non-credit. Community Relationships

focuses primarily on external stakeholders from within the community. Institutional Vitality and Stewardship, while providing a support for all of the other Ends Policies, focus on internal customers or stakeholders.

5P2 Seeking future opportunities and building and sustaining a learning environment

Determining future opportunities that sustain a learning environment is accomplished through the environmental scanning process provided by the College's Institutional Research office, satisfaction surveys, ends policy performance reviews, external monitoring reports, focus groups, and feedback from advisory boards. The appropriate decision-making body uses data received from these sources and, when required, legal counsel to address the impact(s) on society and/or the College's operations.

The recent Strategic Planning Process provided the opportunity to incorporate the communities served by the College in setting learning and growth priorities. The process was guided by the results of a series of focus groups, surveys, and interviews conducted with students, staff, faculty, and community members. The focus was to gather information on programs and services in order to determine the future direction for the College.

The College has been successful in developing new programs (allied health, music, non-credit courses, certificate programs, etc). Some are at or near completion, while others are in the beginning stages. These new degree or certificate offerings are the result of direct feedback from members of the communities the College serves. In addition, classes are being scheduled more conveniently for students and the number of distance learning and summer term offerings has been increased.

5P3 Making decisions

Decision-making at Terra is a governance issue. Within the parameters set by board policy, decisions are made primarily through the three institutional councils and the President's Cabinet. Each of these councils has the authority and responsibility to study, take action and develop operating policy within its respective domain. With the exception of the President's Cabinet and Administrative Council, membership is cross-functional including faculty, staff, students, and administration. Section 6P2 Table 6.3 provides the participation in councils by employment level. Meetings are open, minutes are available to all employees electronically, and the councils use cross-functional teams to accomplish the majority of their work. The President's Cabinet and the three institutional councils meet on a monthly and/or weekly basis.

The Administrative Council is charged with making the bulk of the decisions on campus. This council is composed of individuals representing every part of the College. Decision outcomes are based on the greater good of the institution utilizing big picture thinking, not self interest for individuals or individual departments within the College. The process for decision-making process, which is interactive and deliberate,

1. Engages all factions of the institution;
2. Always considers the greater good of the institution;
3. Reflects the mission and vision of the College;
4. Utilizes data and information germane to the situation or issue;
5. Is timely; and
6. Engages parties affected by the decision.

Open forums offer an opportunity to interested parties affected by the decision to provide feedback on a proposal with the possibility of modifying a decision prior to its implementation. The forums may also be used to communicate decisions. Open forums are scheduled at various times and days to provide ample time for all employees to participate and respond to the issue. The open forum method of communication provides credibility to the decision making process; however, it has not resulted in an improvement of overall morale. (See 5R1)

5P4 Using information and results

The planning, improving and monitoring process is focused around the Board's six Ends Policies. Strategic Initiatives with key performance indicators are identified and monitored for continuous improvement for each of the Ends Policies. Consequently, on-going monitoring of performance within this institutional framework of planning, improving and monitoring includes the following information (Trend line Data and Comparative Data are noted in parenthesis):

Access and Opportunity – Annual Headcount (10 yrs.), Annual F.T.E. (10 yrs.), Fall Term Transfer and Technical Unduplicated Headcount (7 yrs.), Student Race/Ethnicity, Unduplicated Headcount: High School Students (7 yrs.), V-Tel Duplicated Headcount (7 yrs.), Distance Learning Headcount (7 yrs.), Percent of Students using Computer Technology in Class (11 qtrs.), Tuition & Fees (10 yrs.), Annualized Tuition & Fees as Compared to Other Ohio Community Colleges, Financial Aid Recipients (7 yrs.), Financial Aid Awarded (7 yrs.), and Credit Students Served through JTPA/WIA (7 yrs.)

Lifelong Learning – ElderCollege Memberships and Duplicated Headcount (5 yrs.), KidsCollege Enrollment (4 yrs.), Organizations Served by the Kern Center for Community & Economic Development (8 yrs.), Business and Industry Employees Served (8 yrs.), Kern Center Revenue (6 yrs.), Non-Credit Open Enrollment (4 yrs.), Fall Quarter Average Age (10 yrs.), Unduplicated Headcount for PSEO Students (8 yrs.), Unduplicated Headcount of Tech Prep Students (7 yrs.), Tech Prep Students Enrolled in College after High School (4 yrs.)

Student Success - Students with Disabilities, Identified students with EDPs, Students Identified Needing Developmental Coursework (2 Yrs.), Success in College Level Course After Completing Developmental Math & English (Compared to Peer Ohio Community Colleges), Graduate Employment and Schooling Outcomes (Compared to Ohio Community Colleges), Persistence for First-Time, Full-Time Degree-Seeking Students (Compared to Ohio Community Colleges), Distance Learning Retention Rate (7 yrs.), Within Term Retention Rate (6 yrs.), Cohort Group Retention Rate for Fall to Winter (7 yrs.), Headcount in Phi Theta Kappa Inductees (5 yrs.), Student Senate Class Participants (5 yrs.), Co-Op Work Experience Participants (4 yrs.), Daily Student Activity Usage, Duplicated Headcount in Intramural Sports, and Number of Co-Curricular Opportunities.

Community Relationships – Community Events and Participants (4 yrs.), Kern Center Events and Participants (4 yrs.), Student Life Events and Participants (4 yrs.), Service Learning Participation, DACUM Processes (6 yrs.)

Institutional Vitality – Professional Development (4 yrs.), Tuition Reimbursement and Waivers (4 yrs.)

Stewardship – Percent Class Count to Capacity (21 qtrs.), Utilities Usage and Rate (3 yrs.), Revenue Sources by Type (10 yrs.), and Computer Availability (5 yrs.).

In addition, results from the Ohio Board of Regents' Annual Performance Report (comparative to all Ohio Community Colleges), the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey, and the Campus Quality Survey are used to determine opportunities for success and to monitor progress to goals. This information, when combined with input from advisory boards, focus groups and community forums, provides the information used in the decision-making processes of the College.

5P5 Communicating between and among institutional levels

Communication from senior leadership to the College is accomplished in a variety of ways. The President's Cabinet, consisting of the President, Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, and Vice President of Finance and Administration meet frequently to discuss issues from various departments within the College. One of the primary functions of the Administrative Council is the development and monitoring of College communication, professional development and employee satisfaction. Consequently, the Council and its improvement teams are constantly monitoring feedback to determine satisfaction and opportunities for improvement. The Administrative Council is charged with primary oversight for quality on Terra's campus.

Information is distributed to the college community via 1) an electronic newsletter distributed every three weeks that communicates updates and upcoming news within each administrative branch, academic divisions, and College departments; 2) open forum meetings, including a monthly deans meeting to apprise campus constituents about program changes and academic updates; 3) all campus meetings including an annual convocation held at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters; 4) focus groups; and 5) one-on-one communication.

The Council structure is also a critical component of the communication system of the College. Given the cross-functional nature of this structure, each council brings to the decision-making and communicating processes individuals from multiple areas of the College including students, faculty, staff, and administration.

5P6 Communicating institutional expectations

The communication of the mission, vision, values and performance expectations is achieved primarily through the planning, improvement and monitoring processes and the communication processes described above.

5P7 Encouraging, developing and strengthening leadership abilities; communicating best practices

The development of leadership ability is encouraged through the use of teams as a primary vehicle for continuous improvement and decision-making. This process has allowed and encouraged faculty and staff to take a leadership role in areas of interest or concern. Although funding for professional development is severely restricted, employees are strongly encouraged to attend in-state conferences and seminars that directly impact their ability to provide superior service and that also provide methods for modeling leadership skills. Younger members of the faculty, staff, and administration are encouraged to take advantage of professional development opportunities in an effort to cultivate leadership potential.

The College also encourages participation in leadership institutes and coursework. Those attended in the last two years include Phi Theta Kappa Leadership Institute, Disney Institute, Ohio Chair Academy for Leadership and Development, Business Ethics Leadership Institute, and Ohio Association of Financial Aid Administrators. In addition, several members of the staff are graduates of the year-long Leadership Sandusky County program and others are enrolled in leadership courses at area universities.

5P8 Planning succession

The Board requires the President to have an Emergency Executive Succession Plan (Executive Limitations Policy 5) in case of sudden loss of executive leadership. This plan is developed by the President and submitted to the Board in January of each year. It is believed that this formal process of succession planning, in addition to the development of institutional outcomes as board policy and the subsequent planning, improving and monitoring processes of the College, will serve to maintain the integrity of the mission, vision and values of the organization given a change in executive leadership. The College policy indicates that in the event that the President is unable to perform his/her duties, the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs and then the Vice President of Finance and Administration, would assume the responsibilities. In terms of retirement, faculty and staff leaders are promoted to positions of leadership.

5P9 Measuring leadership and communication and analyzing results

The primary measures of leading and communicating that are collected and analyzed are taken from the Campus Quality Survey, an instrument developed by the Horizons Consulting Group in collaboration with Noel-Levitz, Inc. This nationally normed instrument was first used in the spring of 2000. Prior to that date an internal, non-normed instrument was used. The Campus Quality Survey was used again in the springs of 2004 and 2006 and will continue to be administered every other year as a means of creating trendline data by which opportunities for improvement will be identified.

Results (R)**5R1 Results for leading and communicating**

Terra Community College has made changes to our organizational climate in 2007 that have so far favorably influenced our ability to lead (as differentiated from manage) and communicate. We have a new Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs who requires a balance of both reward and accountability among the academic divisions, and a new dean who is less paternal and more collaborative than his predecessor. We also have a new Vice President of Finance and Administration who is deliberately open in his communication regarding policies and budgets. We're also making it known institutionally that higher education, Terra specifically, is moving into a new era that is student-centered, data-driven, and intolerant of the sit-and-sulk practices of the past.

5R2 Results comparisons--Comparative data regarding leadership

The College administration has extensively utilized electronic newsletters and open forums to communicate financial, human resource, and academic decisions over the past three years. The Campus Quality Survey results from 2006 for items related to leadership, communication, and teamwork show appreciable weakening from 2002-2004 (See Table 5.3). Several years of financial strain, enrollment stagnation, and the announcement of retirements and resignations among staff, faculty, and administration has created an unsettled workplace climate. Other sources of frustration for the staff has been the implementation of a new administrative software system, conversion to semesters from quarters, a new phone system, and the announcement of retirements and resignations of faculty, staff, and administrators.

The staff's dissatisfaction with the direction of the College provoked a movement to organize a bargaining unit. The Terra Community College Board of Trustees approved the first negotiated contract at the August 2007 monthly meeting. The staff is now represented by the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

Improvement (I)

5I1 Improvement of current processes and systems

The improvement of current processes and systems for leading and communicating is accomplished through the chartering of one or more teams by a Council(s) with a focus on improvement of identified opportunities for improvement. This process resulted in the design and implementation of a comprehensive system for professional development activities that improve faculty learning and teaching (AQIP Action Project – Helping Students Learn), which exceeded the qualitative and quantitative targets set for the program.

Campus Quality Survey Table 5.3

Category	How It Is Now	Performance Gap	How It Was 2004	Change 2004-2006
Top Management Leadership and Support	2.904	1.533	3.207	-9.45%
Administrators treat students as their top priority	3.148	1.284	3.494	-9.91%
Administrators are committed to providing quality services	3.131	1.357	3.650	-14.22%
Administrators set examples of quality services in their day-to-day performance	2.942	1.500	3.494	-15.80%
Administrators pay attention to what I have to say	2.682	1.835	3.173	-15.46%
My supervisor helps me improve my job performance	3.471	0.929	3.420	1.48%
Administrators have confidence and trust in me	3.302	1.128	3.852	-14.27%
Administrators share information regularly with faculty and staff	3.149	1.299	3.388	-7.04%
This institution analyzes all relevant data before making decisions	2.256	2.070	2.620	-13.90%
Empowerment and Teamwork	2.975	1.382	3.189	-6.71%

Team efforts are effective in this institution.	2.576	1.847	2..888	-10.80%
This institution involves its employees in planning for the future.	2.701	1.805	2.988	-9.61%
My immediate supervisor places a high degree of confidence and trust in the job I do.	4.048	NA	4.256	-4.89%
This institution uses teams to solve problems.	3.129	1.153	3.333	-6.12%
Quality improvement tools and methods are used regularly to solve problems.	2.729	1.424	2.924	-6.67%
Employees are empowered to resolve problems quickly.	2.727	1.568	3.085	-11.60%
There are effective lines of communication between departments	2.471	1.989	2.638	-6.330%

5I2 Targets, improvement priorities, communications

The Administrative Council, with input from the other councils and feedback from faculty and staff, develops the current targets for institutional improvement. The Campus Quality Survey will serve as the tool used to define how improvements can be made. Open forums will continue to be an important component of conveying information to the staff. The recent addition of a monthly open forum with the academic deans will also provide additional lines of communication within the College.