

AQIP Category Eight Planning Continuous Improvement
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Context for Analysis (C)

8C1 Institutional Vision

As Terra advances towards 2010, the College's vision is to become the center of educational, training, and cultural experiences for the service district. The vision statement, *Terra Community College: Your Center for Education, Training, and Culture* was developed as part of the College's strategic planning process during "Visioning Day," held on July 22, 2004. (See (<http://www.terra.edu/about/mission.asp>.) Approximately 70 people attended "Visioning Day," including governmental officials, community members, business and industry, transfer institutions, K-12 school systems, media, faculty, adjunct faculty, staff, administrators, and members of the Board of Trustees. During Visioning Day, the key internal and external stakeholders reviewed the data the College had acquired from environmental scanning, surveys, focus groups, and interviews (see 8P1), and discussed what was most important to the College in terms of its mission, vision, and initiatives.

This vision represents that the College will broaden its commitment to the communities it serves by developing new and/or strengthening technical and transfer programs, expanding its noncredit programming and community education, and improving services to students and other stakeholders (both internal and external). Other components include addressing financial and enrollment issues through external collaborations, innovative thinking, and strategic planning. The College believes that enrollment growth may be realized through newly implemented strategies in marketing, recruitment and retention efforts, while fiscal increases may result through grant opportunities, increased enrollment, and collaborative efforts.

The vision statement is reviewed by the Board of Trustees during their annual approval process of the strategic plan. At that time, modifications to the vision, mission, and ends policies may be initiated and/or approved by the Board. During the next comprehensive strategic planning process, the vision will again be reviewed by the College stakeholders, to provide them the opportunity to be involved in providing direction to the College.

8C2 Short- and long-term strategies and alignment with mission and vision

Key short and long-term initiatives are influenced by environmental scanning data, shaped by the College's mission and values, and driven by the vision and strategic ends for the College. (See <http://www.terra.edu/about/mission.asp> for the link to the strategic plan, which includes the mission, values, vision, strategic ends, and strategic initiatives.)

During FY2004, College employees, using input from surveys, interviews, and ideas presented by community members during Visioning Day, created a new set of values and helped determine the new mission statement, *Terra Community College is committed to excellence in teaching, training, and lifelong learning*. The values and mission statement were approved by the Terra Board of Trustees, which consists of nine community members appointed by the Governor of Ohio. The Strategic Ends Policies, developed by the Board of Trustees to define the overall goals

of the College and support the mission, were used to shape the 26 Strategic Initiatives, which were agreed upon by representatives of internal and external stakeholders (See Appendix B, Strategic Plan or <http://www.terra.edu/about/mission.asp>). The Administrative Council and the President refer to the mission, vision, values, and Strategic Ends when reviewing and revising their annual Strategic Initiatives and Implementation (Action) Plans (See Table 8.1 or <http://www.terra.edu/about/helpfulinks/mission/strategic.asp>). The Administrative Council determines which initiatives will be addressed each year, keeping in mind the availability of resources, as well as the Initiatives to be added or closed. AQIP action projects are included as initiatives in the strategic plan to ensure their alignment with the College's mission. Two of the current AQIP action projects are reflected in the Strategic Initiatives and Implementation Plans, while the third current AQIP action project deals with the strategic planning process.

Each of these initiatives has specific quantifiable key targets and milestones established as outcomes; progress is reported semi-annually in January and June, until completion.

The key challenges for Terra, as mentioned in the *Overview*, include enrollment development, financial support for the programs and services, internal employee relationships, and reduced dependence upon state subsidy. These challenges are addressed through the *Strategic Ends of Access & Opportunity, Student Success, and Lifelong Learning* (enrollment development); *Stewardship and Community Relationships* (financial support and reduced dependence upon state subsidy); and *Institutional Vitality* (internal employee relationships).

Strategic Initiatives

Table 8.1

Strategic End	Strategic Initiatives	Timeframe
Access & Opportunity	Enrollment Growth	Ongoing
	Targeted Marketing	Ongoing
	Expand/Improve On-line Instruction (AQIP)	Ongoing
	Expand Partnerships with High Schools	Fall 2008
	Revise Course Scheduling	Completed
	Increase Availability for Childcare	Tabled
Student Success	Improve Advising Processes	Fall 2007
	Improve Academic Quality & Flexibility	Fall 2007
	Develop New Programs	Ongoing
	Semester Conversion	Completed
	Facilitate Transfer	Future initiative *
Lifelong Learning	Expand Student Activities	Future initiative *
	Respond to Changes in Population	Future initiative *
Community Relationships	Serve as Arts and Culture Center	Future initiative *
	Reach Out to Meet Educational & Economic Needs in Service District	Ongoing
Institutional Vitality	Serve as Arts & Culture Center	Future initiative *
	Support Manufacturing Base	Fall 2007
	Expand Work Experiences	Completed
Stewardship	Increase Certificate & Credentialing	Future initiative *
	Expand Fundraising Strategies	Fall 2008
	Energy Conservation Plan	Fall 2007
	Implement Integrated Technology Plan	Fall 2007
	Prepare Feasibility Study - Renovation	Fall 2007

	Upgrade Telecommunications System	Completed
	Create Job Classification System	Completed
	Redesign the Staff Performance Evaluation System	Completed
	Prepare Campus Master Plan	Completed
	Enhance Employee Recognition & Reward Programs	Future initiative *
	Improve Faculty Hiring & Prof. Development	Future initiative *

* A timeline and action plan will be determined for this initiative when it is activated.

Processes (P)

8P1 Planning Process

All planning processes use the PDCA cycle (Plan-Do-Check-Act), included in training for employees during their initial quality (professional development) training. During the “Plan” portion, data and relevant information is gathered and analyzed by the team / group / Council /Board. Either a planning document, such as the College Strategic Plan, or an action project is identified for implementation. During the “Do” portion, the plan or project is implemented. The results are gathered and analyzed during the “Check” portion. Then, further action or planning is determined during the “Act” portion, including determination of “next steps.” This process is then repeated with new data for greater improvement in that initiative/project, or for a new initiative/project.

Terra's current Strategic Plan was developed after the analysis of all internal and external data and information had been presented to the Strategic Planning Design Team and later to the Board of Trustees. (Terra's strategic planning process prior to FY04 is included in the “History of the Strategic Planning Process at Terra Community College (1993-2003), located on the website at <http://www.terra.edu/about/mission/strategic/updates.asp>). Primary data for the current plan included the results, by stakeholder category and in total, for over 1000 surveys, focus groups, and interviews from community members, business and industry representatives, students, and employees. Reports presented included the environmental scanning trend report, specific employment data and projections for the service district, and marketing analyses. Other reports and data used in the planning process included feedback reports from assessment processes, student surveys, employee surveys, employer surveys, the Ohio Board of Regents reports and information (such as the annual Performance Report and the Articulation and Transfer Policy Assessment Report), information from transfer institutions, information from feeder high schools and Tech Prep, Advisory Board recommendations, and comments/recommendations from external community groups. All of the above information is simply categorized as “environmental scanning” in the planning process. The former planning models also included environmental scanning information, such as that used in the current process.

The Terra Board of Trustees annually reviews the College Mission, Vision, Values, Strategic Ends and Initiatives. At that time, modifications to the vision, mission, and ends policies may be initiated and/or approved by the Board. Additional strategic gaps, which constitute critical opportunities for the College to meet the challenges of the changing environment, may be identified and used to formulate new strategic directions. These gaps may be found in

environmental scanning reports presented to the College and the Board of Trustees, or through other means, such as input from internal or external stakeholders. For example, input may come from Advisory Boards for each technology, which include many members from business and industry, as well as four-year colleges. The Strategic Initiatives are reviewed/revised annually by the Administrative Council during the monitoring report updates. At that time, initiatives may be closed or added, upon approval by the Administrative Council. The monitoring report is compiled indicating annual results for each strategic initiative, as well as an overall view of the planning process and its timeline for completion. When approximately sixty percent of the initiatives have been completed, the strategic planning cycle will begin again for development of a new strategic plan.

Specifically, College implementation teams develop the strategic initiatives (action plans). These teams represent a large percentage of College personnel within faculty, staff, and administrative groups; students and community members may also be members of the teams. The implementation teams determine the action items, goals, target values, and timelines for each initiative. These action plan forms are housed in the Office of Institutional Research and reported to/approved by the Administrative Council. The annual action plan updates are also submitted to the Office of Institutional Research to be used in the strategic planning update, which assists the Administrative Council, the Board of Trustees, and the college community in ascertaining the progress made on the strategic plan. Results are communicated both internally and externally to key stakeholders through the media, as postings on the College Website (See <http://www.terra.edu/about/mission/strategic/updates.asp> and <http://www.terra.edu/about/mission/strategic/actionupdates.asp>), and presentations during specific Board of Trustees meetings.

8P2 Selection of Strategies

The initial strategic initiatives were determined through a data analysis process with the Strategic Planning Design Team (using data from surveys, interviews, and focus groups and other environmental scanning data), and were voted on during the Visioning Day activities by the participants. The Administrative Council then determined the priority of the strategic initiatives, using this input from external and internal stakeholders gathered during “Visioning Day.” Criteria to determine the priority included availability of resources (financial as well as others) and impact on the College. The Board of Trustees, who monitors their completion and effectiveness, then approved these initiatives.

The Administrative Council determines which initiatives will be addressed each year, keeping in mind the availability of resources, as well as the Initiatives to be added or closed. See <http://www.terra.edu/about/helpfulinks/mission/strategic.asp> for the current initiatives.

8P3 Action Plans

Action plans are developed for each of the strategic initiatives by one of the implementation teams (Table 8.2). Action plans include action items, goals, measures (both qualitative and quantitative), and due dates. As much as possible, quantitative measures include benchmark data provided through the Office of Institutional Research. Updates and final results are discussed at Administrative Council and Board of Trustees’ meetings. They are then disseminated to the appropriate stakeholder groups by members of the council, at all-college meetings, through the

media, and in public folders, the Intranet, the Internet, or via email or mailings (as appropriate). After implementation of new or revised processes, follow-up results are monitored and reported to verify improvement. (See <http://www.terra.edu/about/mission/strategic/updates.asp> and <http://www.terra.edu/about/mission/strategic/actionupdates.asp>).

Implementation Teams**Table 8.2**

(Bolded Names = Team leader who will write annual report)

Enrollment Growth Reach to Meet Educational & Economic Needs in Service District Targeted Marketing	Mary McCue , Enrollment Management Council
Semester Conversion Revise Course Scheduling Improve Advising Process Expanding Work Experiences Communication Sub-committee	Kathy McCabe , Tonya Breidenbach, Mary Fatica, Regina Hyldahl, Tom Kissell, Mary Jo Jay, Mary McCue, Steve Mohr, Nancy Sattler, Bill Taylor, Denny Setzler, Bryan Smith, Dale Stearns, Lyn Sullivan, Jim Willey, Lyn Sullivan, Jim Willey, Mary McCue, Margie Bixler-Foster, Jill Fick
Developing New Programs	Kathy McCabe , Margo Capucini, Bob Biddinger, Cathy Chudzinski, Mary Fatica, Bill Hotz, Tom Kissell, Jim Laremore, Sheldon Lovejoy, Nancy Sattler, Bill Taylor, Cathy Willoughby, Lyn Sullivan
Supporting the Manufacturing Base	Tom Kissell , Marsha Bordner, Amy Below, Bob Biddinger, Tonya Breidenbach, Tim Gocke, Jim Laremore, Bill Lutz, Kris Perry, Dale Stearns
Improving Academic Quality and Flexibility AQIP—Assessment of Student Learning	Kathy McCabe , Jim Laremore, Kelly Alba, Steve Mohr, Jamie Przybylski, Brad Smith, Bryan Smith, Cory Stine, Carol Strebar, Jim Willey
AQIP—Expand / Improve Online Learning	Nancy Sattler , Kelly Alba, Michelle Younker, Josie Windau, Tonya Breidenbach, Ed Harrington, Theresa Eishen
Grade inflation / Academic rigor	Steve Mohr , Tom Bowes, Shannon O'Connor-Bowes, Joy Ferkel, Ed Harrington, Jamie Przybylski, Kelly Lowry, Elaine Denman, Sherry Lenhart, Sharla Shine, Bryan Smith, Michelle Younker
Expanding fundraising strategies	Sue Babione , Foundation Board
Preparing a campus master plan	Regina Hyldahl , Tim Kincaid, Marsha Bordner, Cathy Chudzinski, John Foster, Red Haslinger, Bill Hotz, Kathy McKown, Steve Mohr, Elaine Rosengarten, Bryan Smith, Phil Weiker
Implement an integrated technology plan	Tim Kincaid , Regina Hyldahl, Marsha Bordner, Tom Bowes, Elaine Rosengarten, Nancy Sattler, Lyn Sullivan, Jim Swint, Jon Smith, Vern Van Fleet

Updating telecommunications system	Tim Kincaid , Regina Hyldahl, Micki Durbin, Vern Van Fleet, Elaine Rosengarten, Jim Swint
Redesign the Staff Performance Evaluation System	Regina Hyldahl , Marsha Bordner, Laura Stull, Jolene Meyers, Kathy McCabe
Energy Conservation Plan	Elaine Rosengarten , Red Haslinger, Dennis Szymanowski, Steve Bender, Dennis Burkin, Tim Kincaid, Tom Kissell, Jim Laremore, Kathy McKown, Tim Roth, Nancy Sattler, Lyn Sullivan
Expand Partnerships with High Schools	TBA

8P4 Alignment of planning and people

The Administrative Council, which is comprised of the President, Vice Presidents, Deans, and Directors, monitors the alignment of implementation teams, councils, divisions, and departments within the planning process. This alignment is coordinated during Administrative Council meetings, where members report on the activities of other councils and teams. However, each of the internal governing councils has the authority and responsibility to study, take action and recommend operating policy and/or make changes needed to accomplish strategic objectives within its respective domain. As such, they are responsible for aligning the proper personnel and planning under their control.

8P5 Selecting measures and setting performance projections

Measures, target values, and timelines are set during the initial development of initiatives and action plans by those involved in the process (the implementation teams). The Administrative Council then reviews the measures and performance projections, provides input, and recommends acceptance of the measures. The majority of the performance projections are determined through baseline data or benchmarks using data from other colleges (e.g., data from other two-year Ohio community colleges available through HEI). However, measures and performance projections may be adjusted or changed over time due to the conditions or nature of the action. If this occurs, the changes and reasons for the changes are noted during reporting.

8P6 Appropriate resource needs

Part of any action project or strategy planning process involves determining necessary resources. The implementation teams address resource needs of a non-financial nature. The Administrative Council must approve needs of a financial nature. (One exception is when financial needs may be embodied in a specific departmental budget; then that budget manager may approve funding.)

As shown by the inclusion of stewardship as one of the College's strategic ends, the College emphasizes a high level of resource management within its planning. Two of the members of the Administrative Council work in financial services, and another member is responsible for the College Foundation, assisting in finding grants. All members are budget managers, thus having the necessary practical experience and knowledge to determine the required allocations. However, if the budgetary needs are substantial, then the approval process must be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for discussion and approval.

8P7 Ensuring employee development

The College values professional development activities and has stressed their importance. Professional development is included as strategic initiative under the Ends Policy, *Institutional Vitality*. It was also included as one of the College's first AQIP Action Plans. Professional development has extended to continuous quality improvement through on-campus training for all employees, specific training for front-line supervisors, and training in the development of goal statements for AQIP. As part of the development of action plans, implementation teams determine any necessary training/education that may be required of faculty, staff, and/or students.

Results (R)**8R1 Results for Planning Strategies and Action Plans**

During FY04, considerable time was spent on training and development of the new planning process. In addition, Terra continued to work on the AQIP action projects and monitor results. Retired action projects as well as current AQIP action projects and their updates are available at <http://www.terra.edu/academics/aqip/homepage.asp>. Results for the Strategic Initiatives/Action Plans are indicated at <http://www.terra.edu/about/mission/strategic/actionupdates.asp>.

During FY03 a different planning process was used. Projections, comparative data, and results are available for prior years in the Office of Institutional Research.

8R2 Performance Projections

Performance projections for the strategic initiatives in the new strategic plan are included in each specific action plan. (See <http://www.terra.edu/about/helpfulinks/mission/strategic.asp>).

During FY03 a different planning process was used. Projections, comparative data, and results are available for prior years in the Office of Institutional Research.

8R3 Comparison of performance projections

Comparison data is used, when available. The Campus Quality Survey and the Student Satisfaction Survey provide national 2-year college norm data; the Ohio Performance Report provides community college data. Comparative data is listed in the results section.

During FY03 a different planning process was used. Projections, comparative data, and results are available for prior years in the Office of Institutional Research.

8R4 Results of Planning Effectiveness

One measure of planning effectiveness is the number of employees and community members involved in the planning process (see 8C1 and 8P1). This number indicates the highest involvement in Terra's history.

Outcome measures with due dates are assigned for strategic initiatives; therefore, the College is able to monitor the effectiveness of its planning for continuous improvement. (See <http://www.terra.edu/about/mission/strategic/updates.asp> for both the strategic planning update reports and the comparison on the latest environmental scan to the plan.) The Board of Trustees

reviews the updated information as well as the latest environmental scanning data in order to reflect on the effectiveness of the plan. At that time, the Board may determine any needed changes for implementation. Terra uses the Campus Quality Survey to assess employee satisfaction with planning. Terra's score for strategic quality planning in FY06 was 2.974, down from 3.182 in FY04, but above the 2.887 FY02 rating. A team, commissioned in Fall 2006 will investigate this area.

During FY03 a different planning process was used. Projections, comparative data, and results are available for prior years in the Office of Institutional Research.

Improvement (I)

8I1 Process and system improvement for planning

To enhance the College's planning for continuous improvement, the Administrative Council assessed the Balanced Scorecard process for strategic planning and, as part of that assessment, determined to go with another model that better addresses Terra's planning needs. The review of current processes for efficiency and efficacy is always a part of the process for improving the planning process and system.

The planning process is monitored periodically for its effectiveness, both in accomplishing goals and in stakeholder satisfaction. Surveys, stakeholder input, and other data gathering processes are used to determine the weak links. Methods such as employing outside consultants, creating College task forces or teams, or using benchmarking processes inform the College of better methods or processes. When changes such as the College's recent adoption of a new planning process occur, the new process is monitored closely for one year to determine (1) that the process has changed and been implemented appropriately, and (2) that the process is effective. If either condition does not exist, then the process is reviewed for adjustments or possible termination. After a year (or longer, if deemed necessary), the process is evaluated for effectiveness, applying a Plan - Do - Check - Act (PDCA) cycle of planning and improvement.

During FY2004, the College's newly formed Administrative Council discussed the current strategic planning process and its strengths and weaknesses. Specific elements were identified as essential to effective planning, including a one-page planning document. This document is highly visible to all key stakeholders and includes a revised mission statement, a vision statement, College values and strategic initiatives. Data from internal and external customers, including College employees, students, employers, elected officials, economic development corporations, high school staff, university employees, civic and social clubs, and other community members is included in the planning process.

8I2 Setting targets and communicating results

Targets are set by the implementation teams and Administrative Council based on baseline data, comparisons with other colleges, by team or council recommendations, recommendations/opportunities for improvement from outside evaluators (such as with OAE and AQIP), or through the benchmarking process. Terra will be continuing to address the strategic initiatives from the Ends Policies.

Communication of current results, improvement priorities, and performance projections are developed through the Administrative Council or the other appropriate councils. Presentations to the Board of Trustees, which include the College community, the public, and the press, are made periodically through the year. This is followed by written communication through the media, emails, public folders, the Intranet, or Internet, as well as in campus meetings, such as all-college meetings, faculty meetings, etc.