

Rainy River Community College Institutional Overview

Rainy River Community College, a public institution, is the smallest community college in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system which is made up of 32 state universities, community colleges, technical colleges, and combined community and technical colleges located on 54 campuses across the state. Within in the system, there are three primary missions for community colleges: provide quality post-secondary education; enhance community enrichment; and economic development.

Rainy River Community College, founded in 1967, is one of five autonomous colleges in the Northeast Higher Education District, with a district president and a campus provost at each college.

The college is located in International Falls, (Pop. 6,703) Minnesota (on the center of the Minnesota border with Ontario, Canada). The service and market area for Rainy River Community College encompasses a geographic circle with a radius of about 50 miles, half of which is in Canada. There are seven small rural high schools within the market circle. The major industry in the region is paper manufacturing. Other employers include the National Park Service, Homeland Security, public schools, health care claims processing, and manufactured insulation board.

The college's 80-acre campus has eight buildings joined by heated walkways enclosing a courtyard. The grounds feature a softball field, a lighted cross-country skiing and hiking trail, and three ponds edged by decks and walkways. The residence hall offers furnished apartment style accommodations. The college property adjoins local school district property on the northeast side offering opportunities for shared use of athletic and educational facilities.

Overview 1.

Providing quality post secondary education is the primary goal for student learning and shaping our academic climate. Rainy River Community College’s eight Core Outcomes for general education guide achievement of our primary goal for student learning. In addition the Associate of Arts degree requires development of skills and understanding to meet the 10 goals of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum.

Figure O1A shows the college’s current credit instructional program Inventory.

Category	Program	Award	Credits
Liberal Arts and Sciences/Liberal Studies	Liberal Arts and Sciences	Associate of Arts	60
Business Administration and Management, General	Business Management	Associate in Science	60
Mathematics, General	Mathematics	Associate in Science	60
Science Teacher Education/General	Science	Associate in Science	60
Science Teacher Education			
Construction Trades, General	Green and Sustainable	Associate in Applied Science	60
	Construction Technology	Diploma	45
Industrial Mechanics and Maintenance Technology	Industrial Technology	Associate in Applied Science	60
		Diploma	45
		Certificate	24
American Indian/Native American Studies	Indigenous Studies	Certificate	23
Health and Physical Education, General	Fitness Specialist	Certificate	10
Nursing Assistant/Aide and Patient Care Assistant	Nursing Assistant	Certificate	4
Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse Training (LPN, LVN, Cert., Dipl., AAS)	Practical Nursing	Diploma	44

Non-academic programming and organizations provide students with learning and leadership opportunities outside the classroom. Varsity and club athletic programs attract students.

The college’s Core Outcomes as well as the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum address the essential nature of understanding diversity. The diversity of Rainy River Community College’s

student body is much greater than the average for MnSCU campuses and the community in which it is located.

The mission of the Continuing Education & Customized Training Department at Rainy River Community College is to provide quality workforce training and development, close to home.

The department focuses on creating long-term relationships with employers throughout Koochiching County. Utilizing “state-of-the-art” training classrooms, the Continuing Education Department offers a broad range of courses designed for professional growth and development plus customized training tailored to specific business needs.

Technology resources and support to enhance teaching and learning are available throughout the campus for faculty, students, and professionals. Communication between faculty, professionals, and students at RRCC is enhanced using web-based, accessible email. All classrooms are fully equipped with support technology resources. RRCC utilizes Desire2Learn (D2L) to provide academic course content, online discussions, and links to electronic resources, grade books, and quizzes.

Rainy Hall has recently been renovated and offers residents broad wireless access to the Internet, student email, file storage, and online course materials. E-Services can be used to register for courses, check grades, request transcripts, view business office accounts, and check financial aid information.

Overview 2.

Key services provided to students and other stakeholders include a TRiO Student Support Services program, financial aid, academic advising, peer and professional tutoring, test proctoring, disability services, student housing, food service, student life programming, activities, clubs and athletics, continuing education, and customized training. Our student

services are very comprehensive and accessible. Athletics include men's and women's basketball; men's baseball; and women's softball, volleyball and ice hockey.

Overview 3.

In the short-term, students and other stakeholders continue to expect Rainy River Community College to provide access to education via its Associate of Arts degree, including the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum, as well as through its career and technical programs. Other key stakeholder groups require and expect services including post secondary education, use of college facilities, cultural programming, and involvement in economic development.

In the long-term, students and other stakeholders expect Rainy River Community College to develop curriculum specific to their needs, and business and industry demands, including new career and technical programs as well as alternate delivery formats which accommodate the needs of this rural population.

The closest college and university campuses making up our competition are Mesabi Community and Technical College located in Virginia (98 miles), Bemidji State University (110 miles) and Hibbing Community College (112 miles). Because of our limited offerings, these colleges influence our recruiting efforts.

Confederation College has a branch located in Fort Frances, Ontario, Canada, (1 mile). This college provides technical programs and has less impact on Rainy River Community College's enrollment. There is a First Nations' program, Seven Generations, also in Fort Frances that sources post secondary education and technical skills training for Anishinaabe students. This provides a measure of competition and has the potential to reduce the number of Canadian native students attending Rainy River Community College. Students who come to Rainy River

Community College from Canada on a daily basis must cross a toll bridge and pay Canadian taxes on textbooks purchased in the U.S.

The rural location of Rainy River Community College is attractive to many students for its quiet, peaceful setting and relatively safe location. This same rural location is a vulnerability for the college as the local pool of students is declining along with the local population.

Overview 4.

Among the key factors that determine the college's human resources and how they are organized are the rural setting and the small college enrollment of between 275 and 300 full-time equivalent students. There are two part-time administrators for this campus and a president who serves four other campuses. The provost is the chief executive officer responsible for the overall operation of the college. Several other professional positions carry out the day-to-day operations that include academic and student services, maintenance, advising, residential and student life and financial aid. There are 10 full-time faculty, 17 part-time faculty plus 17 full- and part-time professional employees who cover multiple roles while maintaining a student-centered emphasis. This multi-tasking ability of RRCC employees is an advantage for the college and for students, but creates challenges in training and clear delineation of duties. This also creates opportunities for employees to expand their work experiences. Unions including Minnesota State College Faculty Association (MSCF), Middle Management Association (MMA), Minnesota Association Professional Employees (MAPE), and American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) represent college employees.

Overview 5.

Strategies for Rainy River Community College's leadership, decision-making and communication are aligned with its mission, vision, and guiding principles:

Mission: Rainy River Community College serves its communities by guiding learners to achieve their educational, career, personal, and civic goals.

Vision: Rainy River Community College will inspire learners and their communities to achieve their full potential.

Guiding Principles: Learner-Focus, Teaching and Learning, Shared Leadership, Cultural Diversity, Continuous Improvement, Stewardship.

Leadership, decision-making, and communication also align with the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system institutions' values of: Excellence, Integrity, Accountability, Innovation, Civility, Citizenship, Diversity, Institutional Uniqueness, Access, Affordability, and Flexibility.

The 15 member MnSCU Board of Trustees is appointed by the governor and has policy responsibility for system planning, academic programs, fiscal management, personnel, admissions requirements, tuition and fees, and rules and regulations, plus additional support functions. The MnSCU policy document is at:

<http://www.mnscu.edu/board/policy/index.html> Rainy River Community College is a member of the Northeast Higher Education District, a coalition of five autonomous colleges sharing support departments. The District President's philosophical message is at:

<http://www.truenorth.mnscu.edu/presidents-message.html>

The college has gone through significant reductions in staff and faculty and continues in the process of streamlining services to students. This involves the decision-making process and the

need to delegate responsibility with commensurate authority to professional staff and selected faculty. The administration consists of a provost shared with Itasca Community College (ICC), a sister college in NHED located in Grand Rapids, Minnesota. The fiscal and facilities director is also shared between RRCC and ICC and the academic dean from ICC is consulted on academic issues. The faculty contract requires a regular meeting with administration, faculty shared governance council (FSGC). This contractual obligation is followed. Agenda items are brought forward and discussed with the appropriate action steps determined jointly and assignments for follow-through. The college has risen to the challenge of more responsibilities with less staff and many people have taken on additional tasks in order to grow the college. It is a culture of working together for not only the survival of the college, but for the thriving of an institution of higher education that is extremely valued in the communities it serves.

Overview 6.

Rainy River Community College's strategies for administrative support goals align with the mission and values, keeping a strong focus on guiding learners' achievement and service to the community. The key administrative services are those directly associated with ensuring that the college remains viable, i.e., human resources, funding, and business operations. Key student services focus on the assessment of incoming students; correct course placement; appropriate course selection based on career objectives and educational goals; and referral to community agencies to meet basic needs. The student services staff provides a friendly, service-oriented atmosphere in a facility where services are grouped and accessible. Academic support through professional and peer tutoring, PC-based learning support, supplemental instruction, computer programs addressing learning strategies, are offered through the Learning Center. Student computer labs enable students to complete

assignments, conduct research, connect to any library in Minnesota, receive on-line instruction, learn new computer skills, and use e-communication to connect with instructors, family, and friends.

Rainy Hall has wireless network throughout the building as well as providing computers that are hard-wired to the college server. Students can access their college accounts anytime.

Overview 7.

The Northeast Higher Education District Office of Institutional Research coordinates with Rainy River Community College to determine what data and information is collected and compiled. This data is standardized for all five colleges in the district. When requested to do so, the shared institutional research office provides the college with data specific to individual institutional measures.

A statistical profile document is updated and published annually by the Northeast Higher Education Office of Institutional Research. The most current information is located at:

<http://www.rrcc.mnscu.edu/publications/Profile08.pdf>

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system provides uniform data gathering technology and training.

Overview 8.

Rainy River Community College's short- and long-term plans and strategies are guided by key commitments, constraints, challenges and opportunities. We are committed to ensuring student success and to the three mission elements of Minnesota community colleges: post-secondary education, community enrichment, and economic development.

Over the next 5-10 years, specific improvements will result from a strategic planning process that is constrained by tight budgets and demographic predictions of an aging and declining

population; is challenged to develop a strong reputation for its technical offerings; and finds opportunities in existing collaborative relationships, a positive institutional climate that maximizes the potential of employees, fosters learning and student success, and encourages creativity and innovation. Current and future AQIP Action Projects will move the college toward fulfilling its strategic plans.

Overview 9.

There are key partnerships and collaborations, external and internal, which contribute to Rainy River Community College's effectiveness. RRCC is a member of the Minnesota State College and University system that offers support to college operations and acts as Rainy River Community College's primary link to the Minnesota State Legislature.

The Northeast Higher Education District is a collaboration of five autonomous colleges located in the northeast region of Minnesota. This offers Rainy River Community College the benefits of a larger institution in the eyes of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System yet allows for individuality at each campus. With these two strong partnerships, the college is able to provide access to students who may not otherwise be able to obtain an education. The Northeast Higher Education District shares one president, a human resource department, an institutional research office, joint grant opportunities (Perkins Grant, TRiO Grant, and Clean Grant), diversity leadership, and a consortium offering 2+2 opportunities, and networking opportunities.

The Rainy River Community College Foundation, a private foundation with 501(c)(3) status, provides funding for campus development grants and scholarship opportunities. It also provides summer programs for the youth of the area: Prairie Fire Theatre and College for Kids.

Rainy River Community College is affiliated with the American Association of Community Colleges, the Minnesota Board of Nursing, and the National Junior College Athletic Association. Rainy River Community College enjoys a strong relationship with the Koochiching Economic Development Center.

The Northeastern Minnesota Office of Job Training under the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development rents space on the campus. They provide a connection to the regional employment community and exceptional service to students in the area of career exploration, resume preparation, and job search.

Voyageurs National Park, located near International Falls, has ties with the college through Rainy River Community College's Water Resources Center and science offerings. Students are placed in work-study positions with the park, and have opportunities for seasonal employment and internships. National park facilities are used as field study sites.

Grant opportunities with the Center for Teaching and Learning through the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system have provided additional funding to the college for special projects (Birding Guide publication, soup bowl supper, art and science department projects) Boise Cascade, the largest employer in the International Falls area, provides strong support of the Rainy River Community College Foundation through grant funding. The company offers yearly opportunities to apply for "safety dollars" which have been used for athletic safety equipment and for an automatic electronic defibrillator. The college partners with Boise Cascade to provide customized training to their employees.

Agreements at the administrative level are made with local public schools for support to the Minnesota Post Secondary Enrollment Options Program. One agreement with Independent School District 361 provides the sharing of facilities to support athletics at both locations. Rainy

River Community College offers financial aid education meetings, discussions on concurrent enrollment, and training opportunities at local schools.

Through Rainy River Community College's nursing program, relationships have developed with the area hospitals, nursing homes, and clinics to provide clinical settings and career guidance for our students. The college administers testing for Certified Nursing Assistant/Home Health Aides, and professional development opportunities for other medical staff from these locations.

Customized training and continuing education programs at Rainy River Community College also enhance the economic development and community enrichment aspects of the college's mission. College facilities are frequently used as hearing sites, meetings, and for timber auctions.

Leading by example, Rainy River Community College students learn the importance of community service and civic goals from the faculty and professionals involved in area organizations: International Falls Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, Community Education, Friends Against Abuse, Dementia Care Givers Support Group, Circles of Support, and others. Events sponsored by these groups are held on campus with assistance and participation from volunteer students.

The RRCC Advisory Council identify community needs and provide advice and support to technical programs and the college in general.

1) AQIP Category One

HELPING STUDENTS LEARN focuses on the design, deployment, and effectiveness of teaching-learning processes that underlie your organization's credit and non-credit programs and courses, and on the processes required to support them.

PROCESSES (P)

1P1. Providing quality post secondary education is the primary goal for student learning and shaping our academic climate. Rainy River Community College's eight Core Outcomes for general education guide achievement of our primary goal.

1. Successful students demonstrate citizenship skills:
 - Demonstrate citizenship responsibilities by participating in the community
 - Analyze community issues and develop strategies for action
 - Analyze global issues and develop strategies for action
 - Analyze environmental issues and develop strategies for action
2. Successful students demonstrate critical thinking strategies:
 - State the problem or issue and possible assumptions
 - Collect appropriate information
 - Explain the analytic process used
 - State and discuss the results
3. Successful students communicate effectively:
 - Read and apply information from a variety of sources
 - Write clearly and accurately
 - Speak clearly and accurately
 - Demonstrate a visual means of communication

4. Successful students demonstrate effective technology skills:
 - Demonstrate keyboarding techniques
 - Demonstrate basic computer application skills
 - Access information electronically
 - Demonstrate ability to effectively utilize technology
5. Successful students demonstrate mathematical/logical reasoning:
 - Summarize the problem and gather pertinent data
 - Identify possible problem solving strategies
 - Apply computational skills
 - Explain problem solving processes and outcomes
6. Successful students demonstrate personal development:
 - Demonstrate self-directed learning skills
 - Demonstrate academic growth
 - Demonstrate enhanced awareness of self and others
 - Establish strategies for personal wellness and health
7. Successful students demonstrate effective cooperative skills:
 - Demonstrate active listening
 - Show ability to concede and conciliate
 - Reflect on experiences with cooperative roles
8. Successful students demonstrate an awareness of diversity:
 - Identify one's unique attitudes and beliefs that shape behavior
 - Experience and appreciate the difference of others
 - Show growth in personal definition of diversity

Changes to the Core Outcomes go through the Academic Affairs and Standards Council having representation from both faculty and administration.

In addition to the eight Core Outcomes, the Associate of Arts degree requires development of skills and learning to meet the 10 goals of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum:

1. Written and Oral Communication: The broad goals are to develop writers and speakers who use the English language effectively and who read, write, speak, and listen, critically.
2. Critical Thinking: The goals are to develop thinkers who are able to unify factual, creative, rational, and value-sensitive modes of thought.
3. Natural Sciences: The goals are to improve students' understanding of natural science principles and the methods of scientific inquiry.
4. Mathematics/Symbolic Systems: The goals are to increase students' knowledge about mathematical and logical modes of thinking.
5. History and the Social and Behavioral Sciences: The goals are to increase students' knowledge of how historians and social and behavioral scientists discover, describe, and explain the behaviors and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, events, and ideas.
6. Humanities, the Arts, Literature, and Philosophy: The goals are to expand students' knowledge of the human condition and human cultures, especially in relation to behavior, ideas, and values expressed in works of human imagination and thought.
7. Human Diversity: The goal is to increase students' understanding of individual and group differences and their knowledge of traditions and values of various groups in the United States.

8. Global Perspective: The goal is to increase students' understanding of the growing interdependence of nations and peoples and to develop their ability to apply a comparative perspective to cross-cultural social, economic, and political experiences.
9. Ethical and Civic Responsibility: The goals are development of capacity to identify, discuss, and reflect upon the ethical dimensions of political, social, and personal life and to understand the ways in which they can exercise responsible and productive citizenship.
10. People and the Environment: The goal is to improve students' understanding of today's complex environmental challenges. Students examine the interrelatedness of human society and the natural environment.

The Minnesota Transfer Curriculum is the result of a collaborative effort by all of the two- and four-year public colleges and universities in Minnesota to help students transfer their general education credits. Each goal is periodically reviewed at the statewide level and updated.

Rainy River Community College offers an Associate of Arts degree in Liberal Arts and Sciences; and Associate in Science degrees in Business Management, Science, and Mathematics Education. Career and technical programs include Certified Nursing Assistant/Home Health Aide, Practical Nursing, Fitness Specialist, Green and Sustainable Construction Technology, Indigenous Studies, and Industrial Technology.

Category	Program	Award	Credits
Liberal Arts and Sciences/Liberal Studies	Liberal Arts and Sciences	Associate of Arts	60
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Mathematics, General	Mathematics	Associate of Science	60
Science Teacher Education/General Science Teacher Education	Science	Associate of Science	60
Construction Trades, General	Green and Sustainable Construction Technology	Associate of Applied Science	60
		Diploma	45
Industrial Mechanics and Maintenance	Industrial Technology	Associate of	60

Technology		Applied Science	
		Diploma	45
		Certificate	24
American Indian/Native American Studies	Indigenous Studies	Certificate	23
Health and Physical Education, General	Fitness Specialist	Certificate	10
Nurse/Nursing Assistant/Aide and Patient Care Assistant	Nursing Assistant	Certificate	4
Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse Training (LPN, LVN, Cert., Dipl., AAS)	Practical Nursing	Diploma	44

Rainy River's Associate of Arts Degree prepares students for transfer by completing the liberal arts general education requirements for a Bachelor's Degree. The college guarantees that the AA Degree will transfer to any Minnesota college or university. RRCC follows the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum requirements and helps students carefully plan their studies. Class schedules, course outlines and the college catalog list the goals met by MTC courses.

Non-transfer students are required to complete a computerized new entering student assessment, helping to ensure success in their program of study. This assessment determines college-level readiness in reading, written English, and mathematics. Students who do not test into college-level coursework are required to complete remedial courses in order to ensure future success in college courses.

Non-academic programs and organizations such as Student Senate, Phi Theta Kappa, Anishinaabe Student Coalition, and the Black Association of Students provide students with learning and leadership opportunities outside the classroom. Varsity and club athletic programs are also a draw for the college's students, and include men's and women's basketball, men's baseball, women's ice hockey, volleyball and softball.

1P2. Learning objectives for specific courses are detailed in each course outline. The objectives connect to the Rainy River Community College Core Outcomes and the Minnesota

Transfer Curriculum. Course outlines are developed by individual faculty, approved and cataloged by the Academic Affairs and Standards Council.

Academic programs are designed to: increase students' knowledge and understanding in a field of study or discipline, qualify students for employment in an occupation or range of occupations, and/or prepare students for advanced study. The college's Academic Affairs and Standards Council is responsible for course and program development, publication and review. After approval by the AASC, approval of the chancellor is required for new academic programs, changes to existing academic programs, and suspension and/or closure of academic programs. An approved academic program includes curricular requirements for earning an academic award, including total credits, standards, required courses and prerequisite courses and/or certificates.

1P3. 1P4. We don't have defined processes for these things at this time, and recognize developing stable policies and procedures as future improvement opportunities.

1P5. Individual faculty determine the level of skill and preparation relating to reading, written English, and math that is required for their respective courses as well as identifying other courses required as prerequisites or co-requisites. Faculty recommendations are forwarded to the Academic Affairs and Standards Council for final approval. Preparation and prerequisite requirements are detailed in each course outline and in the description listed in the college catalog. Program requirements are detailed sequentially beginning with pre-requisites. All degrees, diplomas, and certificates are detailed and described on-line and on printed sheets that are available to stakeholders.

1P6. The requirements of each degree, diploma and certificate are outlined in the college catalog, on the college's web site and on handouts available in the student services center.

Academic advisors review these requirements with students in initial meetings and at each registration session.

Class schedules list the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum goals met by general education courses.

Course outlines are kept on the college's shared network drive. Each outline includes a discipline mission statement, course content, recommended resources, specific course outcomes, and identification of the outcomes relative to the Rainy River Community College core outcomes and the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum goals met.

All instructors are required to provide a syllabus to their students detailing the elements of the course outline, standards for evaluating student learning, a notice to students with disabilities, and additional information the faculty member may feel is important. A template is available for faculty to use for designing course syllabi.

1P7. In order to help students select programs of study that match their needs, interests, and abilities the college employs the Accuplacer Computerized Placement Test (CPT) to assess the level of skill that incoming students have achieved in the areas of reading, written English, and mathematics. System-wide identified cut scores determine whether a student must take developmental coursework prior to enrolling in college-level classes in accord with statewide mandatory placement. The skills assessment process provides the opportunity to re-test if a student requests. In addition, there is a policy exempting some students from taking the CPT. Students may also request accommodation in the case of a documented disability.

Arrangements are made through the Disability Services Director.

The College's advisors use the results of the CPT to identify courses the student takes based upon their individual testing scores in accordance with MnSCU mandatory placement.

Students are encouraged to take a broad variety of courses early in their education to assist them in making a career choice. Career options are also discussed with students based upon their abilities and interests.

The academic advisors and library staff have developed a Career/Transfer Center in the College Library. It consists of “in-state” and “out-state” college catalogs, college applications, scholarship and financial aid information, and career literature. Reference books containing data on careers and college/university campuses are available for student use.

The Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training is located on the Rainy River Community College campus. The Center offers resources and services in the areas of employment and training, career interest exploration, job search, resume writing, and job seeking skill development. In addition, financial assistance for vocational classroom training may be available to qualifying students. Staff, faculty, and students are encouraged to utilize the resources and services available at the Workforce Center.

1P8. The College deals with students who are under prepared by offering remedial courses in reading, written English, and mathematics. These courses have been developed to close the gap between a student’s skills and the requirements of college-level coursework. In some cases, students may be encouraged to seek adult basic education courses, not provided by the college.

1P9. Learning styles are detected, measured and explored in study skills classes and at the Learning Center to help raise student awareness of individual learning styles, strengths and weakness. In addition, faculty employ a variety of course delivery methods in order to accommodate the varied learning styles of students.

1P10. The special needs of student subgroups are addressed in a variety of ways. Students

must self identify and document their disability to the Disability Services Program Director in order to receive accommodations under the Americans With Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation act of 1973. A variety of accommodations are provided on campus in integrated settings.

Seniors citizens may opt to audit courses and are charged a reduced tuition rate. There are several offerings specifically tailored to seniors needs including the Fit for Life physical education course. This course is offered in one-half semester segments to accommodate the population that travels south during the winter months.

Post Secondary Enrollment Students are assigned an academic advisor who is familiar with the program and graduation requirements of their high schools. This advisor communicates with the students' high school and parents regarding progress. The bookstore, registration and business offices address their specific needs.

1P11. 1P12. We don't have defined processes for these things at this time, and recognize developing stable policies and procedures as future improvement opportunities.

1P13. Rainy River Community College ensures that programs and courses are up-to-date and effective by systematic review. One of the college's Action Projects is entitled "Developing, Implementing, and Reviewing Academic and Technical Programs." Goal three of this action project states, "To systematically review all program areas to ensure they meet student, community, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, and employer needs."

One of the outcomes of this project is the college's Program Review Process. This process defines how college personnel might improve, update, or replace programs. The Academic Affairs and Standards Council and the Provost determine the schedule for program review.

Currently, once a program has been selected for review, the provost develops a team of faculty, staff, students currently enrolled in the program, graduates from the program, and community members. The goal of this team is to gather data from various sources and prepare a final report of findings and recommendations to be forwarded to the provost. The provost uses this information to make decisions regarding the future of the program.

Components of a Program Improvement report include:

1. Program history

- Reason the program was developed.
- Mission of the program and how it aligns with the mission of the college.
- Age of the program
- Significant changes that have occurred since the program was first offered.
- Recommendations of the last program improvement report and any action taken since that time.

2. Collaboration

- Review of the current degree sheet or program course guide.
- Review of articulation agreements written and recognized.
- Program objectives relative to industry standards.
- Level of technology support.
- Distance-learning strategies.

3. Information and people

- Feedback from the various stakeholders.
- Various measures of program success.
- Demographics.

- Cost efficiency.

4. Communication

- Guidelines for communications among faculty, the curriculum committee, advising, registration, enrollment management, marketing, instructional support, technology support, and physical plant support for the program.
- Interactions between the program and other similar programs within Minnesota State Colleges and Universities or throughout the nation.
- Recruitment and marketing plan for the program.
- Promotional materials available for the program.

5. Summary and recommendations

- Program's greatest overall strengths.
- Aspects of the program in need of attention.
- Specific recommendations for improving the program.
- Resources necessary to enact the necessary improvements.

Course outlines are kept on file through the Academic Affairs and Standards Council and are periodically reviewed. Proposals for changes to general education courses or to the programs or courses of academic programs on campus include assessment evidence to be submitted to the Rainy River Community College Academic Affairs and Standards Council. Assessment plans for each academic program are required to include valid direct and indirect assessment measures.

1P14. Programs are changed, continued or discontinued following the program review.

Courses are updated, changed or discontinued by faculty as needed.

1P15. Learning support needs of students and faculty are determined and met with a variety of

methods.

The Computerized Placement Test gauges the skill level of new entering students in reading, written English, and math. In addition to determining the course level placement of a student, the results help determine the type of support a student may need. Advisors use this information when meeting with students to make referral to available services.

Many of the faculty use pre-tests to measure base level learning and determine areas in which students may need additional work to bring them up to the required beginning level of knowledge or preparation in a particular course.

Faculty, in conjunction with the Academic Affairs and Standards Council, determine the preparation level necessary for a student to succeed in each specific course. All students at RRCC are assigned an academic advisor who works individually with each student to develop their academic plan. Advisors direct students to the necessary resources for their success.

The college uses an academic alert system to communicate between faculty, the advising staff, and the student. Faculty members send academic alert notices to advisors when student's attendance or grades are below expectations. The advisor then meets with the student to determine what action is needed. If the problems are personal, the student may be referred to the college counselor. If the needs are academic, then study skills training, and tutoring are available options. Faculty members provide mid-term grade reports to the advisors for follow-up in a similar manner as the academic alert system detailed above.

The library and library staff assist students with course work, research projects, and recreational information, in addition to educating students on methods needed to do an effective search for information. Resources are available through hard copy books, journals,

periodicals, maps, newspapers, on-line references and resources, and inter-library loans. The Minitex system provides an inter-library loan system connecting all libraries in Minnesota.

In addition, the library has a faculty development section where instructors may contribute and access materials for classroom development and pedagogy.

Courses are offered on study skills. In cases where students test low on their Computerized Placement Test, a course in study skills is recommended or even required.

Rainy River Community College's Learning Center provides tutoring for students. Tutoring methods include, group, one-on-one, peer groups, and computer based options. The Learning Center is available to students who have individual and diverse needs. Group and one-to-one peer and professional tutoring are available to all students. Study groups and technical support with up-to-date software are available for self-paced learning.

The Student Senate meets regularly to discuss student issues and needs including support services. The senate communicates these needs to administration through their advisor.

The Minnesota State College Faculty Association is the faculty bargaining unit. Their contract details basic needs and obligations to which the college must abide. Faculty members meet on a regular basis to discuss their needs. The Shared Governance Council is mandated as a communication avenue for faculty to discuss with administration what their needs are and if there are any issues to be resolved.

Professional faculty development funds are provided annually per bargaining contract. These funds are available for faculty to update their skills. A shared duty day is held annually for faculty from the five colleges within the Northeast Higher Education District to provide opportunities for faculty to network with colleagues in similar fields. Sabbaticals are available. These allow faculty an opportunity to focus on their professional development and curriculum

development. The library maintains current professional journals and publications requested by faculty relevant to their discipline.

1P16.

1P17. Determination of completion of degree and certificate learning and development expectations is accomplished through a process involving a cross section of campus professionals.

Students meet with their academic advisor to register for classes, prepare for graduation and review completion of their chosen degree or certificate. The requirements are reviewed, and the student is given a copy of their Degree Audit Report, which is also available to them on the college website using their personal access information. This report is updated and reviewed at each registration meeting between the student and advisor.

Upon application for graduation, the student's official transcript is audited against the degree, diploma or certificate requirements by the Director of Student Services and the Registrar for meeting the learning and development requirements of the degree or certification sought.

1P18.**RESULTS (R)**

1R1. Measures of our students' learning and development are collected and analyzed through cooperation with the NHED Office of Institutional research. Rainy River Community College is able to collect college graduation and student success data on a regular basis using a graduation survey, new incoming student surveys, IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) data, transfer student profiles, and a college profile (<http://www.rrcc.mnscu.edu/publications/Profile08.pdf>).

The MNSCU system also provides feedback information through the Accountability

Dashboard, available at <http://www.mnscu.edu/board/accountability/index.html>

The Northeast Higher Education District Office of Institutional Research coordinates with Rainy River Community College to determine what data and information is collected and compiled. This data is standardized and shared throughout the district. When requested to do so, the shared institutional research office provides the college with data specific to a number of individual institutional measures.

Rainy River Community College employs effectiveness measures originating from a number of sources. Some internal measures are voluntary. Some are externally controlled by entities that hold Rainy River Community College accountable or have the authority to request or the ability to entice Rainy River Community College to comply with requests for information regarding effectiveness. Other measures for tracking effectiveness are mandated by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system. In some instances, Rainy River Community College measures effectiveness to serve needs related to voluntary participation in comparison groups. In addition to the institutional measures for tracking effectiveness, each academic area, functional area, program, or initiative may employ additional formal or informal measures of effectiveness that are area or situation-specific.

1R2. The College has identified initial markers with which to begin the analysis of performance results for common student learning and development objectives:

- The Nursing Program employs measures required by the Certified Nursing Exam and the Licensed Practical Nurse State Boards.
- Graduation rates are calculated annually.
- Course and program completion rates are collected.
- Grade analysis is performed by faculty.

1R3.

1R4. Evidence that students completing our programs, degrees, and certificates have acquired the knowledge and skills required by our stakeholders is demonstrated in the student satisfaction and graduate follow-up survey, the transfer student profile, IPEDS data and the MNSCU accountability dashboard. The passing rate of nursing program graduates taking the licensure exam is a measure. Graduation and retention rate, and student grade analysis are reviewed regularly. With the expansion of technical programs on campus, an employer satisfaction survey is being implemented.

College personnel formed an advisory committee to work closely with the college, the K-12 school districts, and business and industry to identify local and regional workforce needs. As these needs are defined, course offerings, and customized training opportunities will be developed. This will enhance the college's relationships with its communities as well as its student body.

1R5.

1R6. No significant data is currently available for performance in this category.

IMPROVEMENT (I)**1I1.**

1I2. The culture and infrastructure of Rainy River Community College help select and implement processes to improve and set targets for improved student performance results through small size and the ease of interactive communication. A quick and easy conversation with a colleague down the hall whose door is open will often answer questions and inspire improvements. Small size makes for ease of gathering committees for review, information exchange and decision.

2) AQIP Category Two

ACCOMPLISHING OTHER DISTINCTIVE OBJECTIVES addresses the key processes (separate from your instructional programs and internal support services) through which you serve your external stakeholders — the processes that contribute to achieving your major objectives, fulfilling your mission, and distinguishing yours from other educational organizations.

PROCESSES (P)

2P1. Key organizational services provided to our students and external stakeholders are designed, operated and guided by the college’s mission, vision, values, and goals.

Mission

“Rainy River Community College serves its communities by guiding learners to achieve their educational, career, personal, and civic goals.”

Vision

“Rainy River Community College will inspire learners and their communities to achieve their full potential.”

Guiding Principles

The collective “we” used in the guiding principles refers to the faculty, staff and administrators at Rainy River Community College.

- Learner-Focus – We will focus on learners as the primary reason why the college exists. We will continually make decisions from the perspective of, “what is best for learners?”
- Teaching and Learning – We will embrace teaching and learning in all forms as the primary way the college serves students.

- Shared Leadership – We will share responsibility with learners and the community to lead and manage the college.
- Cultural Diversity – We will recognize the diverse experiences, cultural/ethnic backgrounds, opinions, beliefs, and worldviews of different peoples.
- Continuous Improvement – We, along with learners and the community, will use the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) framework to evaluate and continuously improve the College's programs, services, and processes.
- Stewardship – We will oversee and demonstrate openly the wise and efficient use of the College's resources.

Goals and Strategies

The numbered goal statements complete the phrase, "Rainy River Community College will..."

1. Recruit and retain the students best served by the College.
 - Review, revise, and implement the enrollment management plan.
 - Determine the appropriate size and growth rates for Rainy River Community College.
 - Identify and recruit the learners best served by Rainy River Community College.

These learners live in local, regional, national, and international locations. These learners range in age from traditional college age (18-24) to non-traditional college age (25 and older).

These learners come from each of the following segments:

- College Experience Learners are preparing for life and for a career. This segment includes many of the 18 to 24 year old students for whom the "coming of age" process that occurs in college is often as important as specific academic learning.

- Pre-College (K-12) Learners are interested in taking college-level work prior to completion of secondary school. This segment may be interested in getting a "jump start" on college.
- Degree Completion Adult Learners are seeking to complete an under-graduate or graduate degree. They are frequently working adults and must often balance work and family needs with their educational goals.
- Occupational/Professional Enhancement Learners are seeking to advance in or shift careers. They take credit and/or non-credit courses to further career goals.
Occupational and professional enhancement learners are typically employed full-time or part-time.
- Employed Learners work for employers and are seeking education to maintain skills or advance their careers. The purchase decision is usually made by the employer and not by the individual acting alone.
- Remediation Learners are interested in learning as a prerequisite for enrollment in another program.
- Life Fulfillment Learners are interested in education for its own sake. They enjoy learning and the academic environment and view additional education as a source of personal development or enrichment.
- Identify the programs and services that Rainy River Community College students need to remain enrolled at the College and achieve their learning goals.
- Improve and promote the image of Rainy River Community College to current and potential students and their parents.

2. Review and develop academic and technical programs that best serve the College's students and communities.
 - Review, revise, and implement the academic plan including a three-year program review cycle.
 - Develop academic and technical degree emphases and programs that meet student and community needs and articulate with appropriate degree programs at other colleges and universities.
 - Provide students with opportunity and access to programs through traditional and non-traditional instructional delivery processes and modes.
 - Delivery processes may include traditional lecture processes, active learning strategies, online learning, work-based learning, team learning (cohorts), as well as other processes that fit student-learning needs, curricula, courses, and programs.
 - Incorporate global perspectives into programs, curriculum, services, and co-curricular activities.
3. Pursue collaboration with community, government, business and education organizations to improve teaching and learning and enhance community vitality.
 - Engage community, government, business, and education partners in the shared leadership process.
 - Improve and promote the image of Rainy River Community College to key community, government, business, and education organizations.
 - Encourage faculty, staff, and learners to participate in community service.
 - Seek funding to foster collaborative relationships that support civic engagement.

- Actively collaborate within the Northeast Higher Education District (NHED) and with other higher education institutions.
 - Establish the Water Resources Center with community, business, and natural resource agency partners.
4. Encourage and empower faculty, staff, students, and community members to guide the College.
- Engage faculty, staff, and students in the leadership process.
 - Engage community, government, business, and education partners in the leadership process.
 - Identify and provide training to support leadership processes.
 - Align Rainy River Community College's strategic plan with the leadership processes.

As a community college, connection to "community" is particularly important. One of Rainy River Community College's goals is to "recruit and retain the students best served by our college." This conscious recruitment plan will help the college retain its students.

Key services provided to students and other stakeholders include a TRiO Student Support Services program, financial aid, academic advising, peer and professional tutoring, test proctoring, disability services, student housing, food service, student life programming, continuing education, and customized training.

The selection of athletic opportunities is guided by the interest expressed by prospective and current students, the district wide opportunities for competition and the availability of facilities. Our women's ice hockey team is one example of a successful venture in terms of competition, cooperative facilities agreements and recruiting.

Community enrichment is accomplished through monthly colloquiums on a variety of topics presented by current faculty, professionals and community members. They have ranged from the use of Google Earth, to South African Savannah Ecology, to Bald Eagle Recovery. The college theatre is used for Ice Box Radio Theatre, dance and theatrical performances, music and movies. Presentations for students and campus gatherings are held in the theatre. The college is a partner in economic development discussions and the efforts of the Koochiching Economic Development Authority.

2P2. Our organization's major non-instructional objectives for external stakeholders are determined in administrative and student services meetings using anecdotal information and data gathered on formal surveys. Students, professionals, especially student services personnel, and faculty are involved in setting these objectives.

2P3. We communicate our expectations regarding these objectives through the Rainy River Community College's Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals that define how we select our other strategic objectives. Meeting notes are distributed electronically through a campus-wide listserv, the *River Currents* newsletter, and by a shared drive accessible by all college faculty and professionals.

2P4. 2P5. We don't have defined processes for these things at this time, and recognize developing stable policies and procedures as future improvement opportunities.

2P6. We don't have defined processes for these things at this time, and recognize developing stable policies and procedures as a future improvement opportunity.

RESULTS (R)

2R1. One measure of accomplishing our major non-instructional objectives and activities is the compilation of statistics from our athletic teams. Successful teams are a draw for students

looking for opportunities to continue their athletic careers.

The TRIO Student Support Services grant requires documentation and reporting of a variety of student success measures related to its activities. The grant director annually analyzes and compares our data to that of the other Northeast colleges to make decisions about utilization of grant resources.

2R2. 2R3. 2R4. We don't have defined processes for these things at this time, and recognize developing stable policies and procedures as future improvement opportunities.

IMPROVEMENT (I)

2I1. Internal and external constituents of the college are given the opportunity to complete a satisfaction survey and the results are analyzed. The college conducts at least three types of student satisfaction surveys each year including one where students self report their learning progress. This information is gathered and analyzed to determine areas of need and focus for the coming year and any restructuring of educational delivery and services.

2I2. Rainy River Community College's campus size and staffing allows for the entire campus to work together on specific goals and objectives or to break into small teams. Each team consists of members representing the different classifications on the project. Everyone has opportunity for input and participation. The latest accomplishment is the addition of a men's baseball team at RRCC. The entire campus met to discuss enrollment initiatives and fielding a baseball team came to the table, individuals volunteered to take on the actions necessary for this initiative. Together as a campus this goal was accomplished and produced additional enrollment.

3) AQIP Category Three

UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS' AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS' NEEDS examines how your organization works actively to understand student and other stakeholder needs.

PROCESSES (P)

3P1. The changing needs of our student groups are assessed with a campus student and residential life survey each fall at student orientation. The results of these surveys are used to plan for and meet the needs of students.

The *New Student Survey* – given to new entering students. An anonymous summary is prepared from the survey and used for college research and planning efforts.

The *Graduate Survey* – given to all students graduating from the college. An anonymous summary is prepared from the survey and used to see how graduates rate their satisfaction with the college and how it could be improved.

Summaries from both of these surveys are included in an annual College Profile compiled by the Office of Institutional Research. Data from these surveys is also compared to other colleges in the region.

As a very small school, faculty and professionals are able to obtain valuable feedback from students and stakeholders in informal settings. The Foundation Board is comprised of community members who provide valuable feedback.

TRiO advisors meet with participants during the first month of school to complete an individual needs assessment and educational plan. Academic services and seminars are designed around the information collected. Advisors work closely with students to ensure fulfillment of all requirements for the Associate degrees, diplomas and certificates as well as pre-requisite

requirements for the students' intended transfer institution and major. Advisors provide career and transfer advisement and assessments.

3P2. The building of relationships begins at the time of student orientation, assessment and registration. Advisors work with students on a one on one basis to select classes, discuss possible careers, transfer and employment options. Students are assigned an advisor who meets with him or her on a regular basis during their studies at RRCC.

Key services provided to students and other stakeholders include a TRiO Student Support Services program, financial aid, academic advising, peer and professional tutoring, test proctoring, disability services, student housing, food service, student life programming, continuing education, and customized training. Students who qualify for the TRiO Student Support Services program are provided services above and beyond those listed to encourage their success.

Rainy River Community College has a strong policy around the new student assessment, *Placement for Success*. This assessment tool is employed to assess reading, written English, and math skills, and allows advisors to work closely with students to ensure proper placement in developmental or college level courses. This in turn helps ensure student success.

Faculty are required to maintain scheduled and posted office hours during which students can get assistance with coursework. Approachability is a standard for faculty hired at Rainy River Community College. The art lab is open for studio activities daily.

3P3. We analyze the changing needs of our key stakeholder group first by delineating their

- | |
|---|
| <p><u>Students</u>
 Prospective
 Current
 PSEO
 TRiO
 Full-time
 Part-time
 Athletes
 Transfer
 Certificate/Technical
 Continuing Ed
 Life-long learners
 Alumni</p> |
|---|

relationship with the college. Student stakeholders are differentiated based on being prospective, current, or past.

Other stakeholders are differentiated based on their interest and their working relationship/partnership with the college.

Courses of action to serve the changing needs of these groups are selected by analyzing surveys, listening and responding to requests, and considering the current trends in education.

- | |
|---|
| <p><u>Other Stakeholders</u>
 Parents
 K-12 school districts
 Community
 Businesses
 NHED
 MnSCU
 Legislators
 Foundation Board
 Transfer Institutions</p> |
|---|

3P4.

3P5. RRCC determines if it should target new student and stakeholder groups with our offerings

by looking at demographic data, business and industry trends in our community, past performance with certain groups, and budget considerations.

Application for new programs through Minnesota State Colleges and Universities requires soliciting input from the community in terms of interest and need. This information is used to determine targets.

Rainy River Community College is a member of the International Falls Area Chamber of Commerce, with key personnel serving on the Chamber’s Board of Directors and the Economic Development Committee. The Chamber of Commerce is a business organization

that advocates for retention and expansion of jobs in the local community. Rainy River Community College is committed to playing a vital role in this process with the Chamber. The college Advisory Council is a pipeline for community information and helps the college with direction for future action. Rainy River Community College also has an active Foundation Board, which helps direct the college to address area needs.

3P6. In order to collect complaint information from students and stakeholders, the college participates in the Community College Survey of Student Engagement every two years. Valuable information is gained from this survey and the results are shared with all campus personnel. Specific actions are determined from analysis of survey results and individuals are assigned to tasks in order to alleviate concerns or breakdowns in processes. Specific student complaints are funneled to the campus manager and the provost is notified of any serious situations. The provost determines the appropriate person to investigate the matter and a report is prepared for the provost's review. Student concerns are addressed with the appropriate action taken, at the discretion of the provost. If an appeal is requested, the president of the Northeast Higher Education District hears it.

Any formal or informal remedial action is done in accordance with the RRCC Student Guide (<http://www.rrcc.mnscu.edu/publications/handbook09.pdf>), the NHED Employee Policy Handbook (<http://www.rrcc.mnscu.edu/FacultyStaff/index.cfm>) and/or MnSCU policies (http://www.oocr.mnscu.edu/CurrentEEs/Policies_%26_Procedure.html).

RESULTS (R)

3R1. We determine the satisfaction of our students and other stakeholders through the collection and analysis of survey data. The NHED office of Institutional Research provides RRCC with student survey data throughout the year. The Student Profile provides general

statistical and descriptive information about the college, it reviews enrollment trends, student demographic and academic profiles, academic progress and degrees earned. The New Student Survey is conducted at the beginning of each academic year to provide student opinions about the information and services they received upon entering the college. It also asks students to give themselves grades in various academic areas and seeks to determine what educational goals are important for them as they enter the college. The Graduate Survey is a student satisfaction survey to measure how RRCC graduates rate their satisfaction in both instructional and non-instructional areas with the college and how it can be improved. It also measures student intent and a self-rating of how much progress they made toward reaching their educational goals. RRCC participates in the CCSSEE (Community College Survey of Student Engagement program). The CCSSEE provides information about effective education practice in community colleges and assists institutions in using that information to promote improvements in student learning and persistence.

3R2. The 2009 Graduate survey rates both instructional and non-instructional areas. Results of the 2009 survey indicate the following: the level of satisfaction for instructional ranged from course variety with a mean of 3.79 to location 4.20. Most areas were rated significantly higher than the previous year. Class size was the only area rated lower than the previous year. Non-instructional services ratings ranged from food services (2.79) to academic advising (4.08). Respondents rated both academic advising and registration with a mean above 4.0. Most areas of non-instruction services were rated higher than last year. A complete report is available in the Director of Student Services office and is shared with all campus entities.

3R3. 3R4. 3R5. 3R6.

IMPROVEMENT (I)

311. Improvements in the instructional area that are being addressed over the next months are class size and course variety. In the non-instructional area, the food service challenge was addressed with the contracting of an independent food service for the campus. With the recent expansion of technical programs, job placement, resume writing and job seeking services are being expanded in coordination with the Minnesota Workforce Center on campus.

312.

AQIP Category Four

VALUING PEOPLE explores your organization's commitment to the development of your faculty, staff, and administrators.

PROCESSES (P)

4P1. We identify the specific credentials, skills, and values required for faculty, staff and administrators by following guidelines set by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board. Policy 4.3 sets designation of assigned fields and minimum qualifications for Minnesota State College Faculty. It is sometimes challenging in this rural area to fill faculty positions with instructors who have the required credentials. There is exception language when a fully qualified candidate is not found.

Professional staff contracts are negotiated between the State of Minnesota, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; and the Minnesota Association of Professional Employees, which outline required, as well as desired, qualifications.

A centralized regional Human Resources department ensures that each element of the hiring process is accomplished according to Minnesota State Colleges and Universities requirements.

4P2. Our hiring processes make certain that the people employed possess credentials, skills and values we require by following system guidelines, carefully screening applicants, conducting interviews that include a skill demonstration and recommending final candidates to the provost, who checks references and, in some cases, conducts an additional interview. All faculty and professionals of the Minnesota State College and University System are employees of the State of Minnesota. The MnSCU Office of the Chancellor defines credential fields, and their associated minimum qualifications, for all faculty. A credential field, assigned

field, or license field means a defined area of knowledge and skill that is specifically related to a program, service, or academic discipline, and for which there are system-established minimum qualifications.

Employment positions with the system generally fall into two categories: unclassified (faculty, deans, director of programs, vice presidents) and classified service positions (ex: financial aid professionals, office and administrative specialists, maintenance workers). Unclassified position announcements are posted on the system website while many, but not all, classified positions are posted there as well.

Our district human resources office ensures that we post for the most qualified candidate based on contractual requirements. Hiring committees, with representation from all campus bargaining units, screen applicants, conduct interviews, and recommend final candidates to the provost, who checks references and, in some cases, conducts an additional interview.

4P3. Recruiting, hiring and retaining employees are helped at this time by the employment market and the fact that employment at the college is looked at in this community as a positive opportunity. It is a pleasant and opportunity filled place of employment. Recruiting is done through word of mouth, newspaper and one-line advertising and postings. The hiring is done by an established process of establishing a committee, reviewing applicants, committee meetings, interviews and passing a recommendation to the provost who sometimes conducts an additional interview before making an offer.

Having opportunities to influence the structure of the position retains employees and there are generous opportunities to discuss needs and wants with the provost.

The college, along with the NHED Human Resource department, is continuing to develop and update the employee handbook and orientation packet that is provided to new employees.

4P4. 4P5. 4P6. We don't have defined processes for these things at this time, and recognize developing stable policies and procedures as future improvement opportunities.

4P7. The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system has very specific policies regarding ethical behavior of employees. All employees are required to annually complete an on-line training regarding the MnSCU code of conduct and security process and policies. The Office of the Chancellor also has staff assigned to specific areas such as harassment, discrimination and equal opportunity and who travel to campuses periodically or at the request of the provost to conduct investigations and training. College employees are obligated to follow all applicable state laws and codes of conduct.

4P8.

Determination of training needs is accomplished informally, and by meeting system guidelines. The system office provides general training.

4P9. Throughout the academic year training and development are accomplished at faculty and administrative duty days, providing opportunities for faculty and professionals to work together. Examples include training on our online classroom platform (D2L), content-specific and general discussion on pedagogy, sharing best practices for active learning, testing, and classroom management, and workplace safety and crisis management. The workshops presented by the MnSCU Center for Teaching and Learning and similar activities reinforce this training. In addition, AQIP, Master Academic Planning, and Strategic Planning initiatives are developed and refined during these duty days. The training is reinforced with written materials, handbooks and follow-up sessions.

4P10. Our personnel evaluation system is designed and used by the provost and other campus leaders. The evaluation categories and questions align with our objectives for

programs and services. Performance evaluations of all employees are required by the collective bargaining agreements. Non-faculty have annual performance reviews and the intent is not only to evaluate but also to develop professional development plans for growth of the employee and their ability to successfully complete their responsibilities. Faculty are evaluated on a three-year rotation with the purpose being continuous improvement in teaching strategies, technology, etc. All evaluations are done with the emphasis on how we can help the employees contribute to the overall college mission and serve students to the best of our ability.

4P11. Compensation systems for both instructional and non-instructional programs and services are defined by existing union contracts. The college tries to best fit the job to the employee resulting in a sense of ownership and pride. A formal employee recognition processes is an opportunity that should be further addressed.

4P12. 4P13. We don't have defined processes for these things at this time, and recognize developing stable policies and procedures as future improvement opportunities.

RESULTS (R)

4R1. RRCC is committed to its employees and to its students. This is demonstrated through: Safety, security and access at Rainy Hall, the student residence hall has newly installed security cameras as well as wireless connectivity throughout the building. Security entrances are wired and the use of a coded key fob is the only entry into the building. A Campus Crime and Security Report is published annually and posted on the college's website. There is limited activity on these reports with no serious crimes posted.

The college provides professional development opportunities to its employees in a number of ways. The faculty bargaining agreement contains a provision for the allocation of \$250 faculty

development funding per each full-time equivalent faculty position at the college. The faculty contract also provides for sabbatical leave opportunities. The sabbatical process includes an application, which is developed by the faculty member in consultation with the administration. Projects are designed for professional growth as well as a clear indication of how it will impact the college.

Classified staff have professional development opportunities through an internal campus committee. Evaluation instruments are utilized for effectiveness of the particular workshop or training attended. Periodically, a staff development survey is administered as a means to find out what topics the staff would like to have as on-campus presentations.

There are also numerous opportunities such as use of the college's fitness center, tuition waivers for staff and/or family, and the RRCC Foundation has funded various training, projects or proposals from staff.

4R2. 4R3. 4R4.

IMPROVEMENT (I)

4I1. A review of the student application and admissions process resulted from the data received from student surveys. The college is currently undergoing a complete recruiting and admissions process flow review to determine appropriate assignments for existing staff and determine the need for any additional staff. The intent is to streamline the process to create efficiencies while improving the experience for the students.

4I2.

5) AQIP Category Five

LEADING AND COMMUNICATING addresses how your leadership and communication processes, structures, and networks guide your organization in setting directions, making decisions, seeking future opportunities, and communicating decisions and actions to your internal and external stakeholders.

PROCESSES (P)

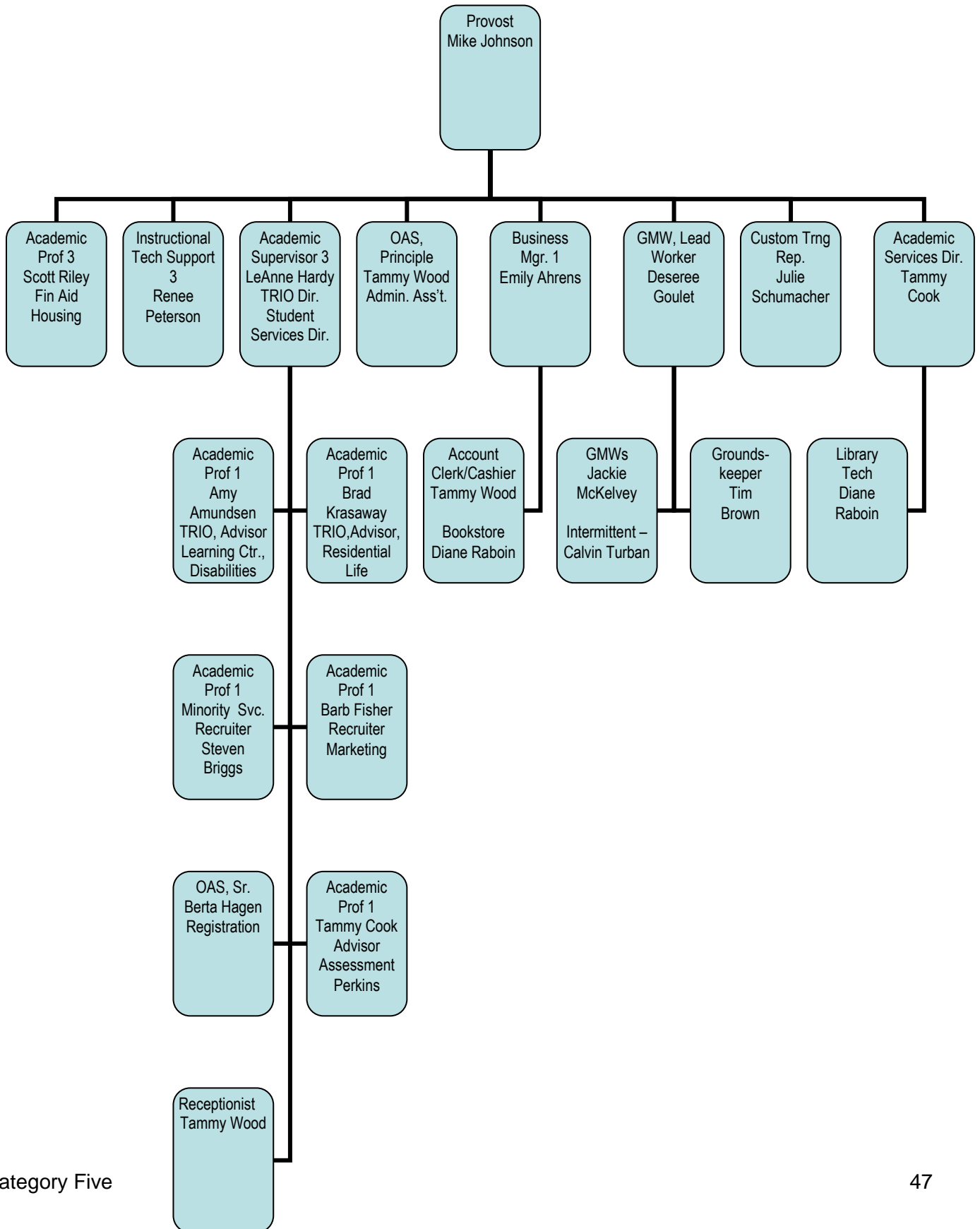
5P1. The processes for alignment and direction of mission, vision and values are continuing to be developed as we move through the restructuring and right sizing of college staff and faculty. The collective bargaining agreements help formalize the communication structure and the administration is committed to a participative decision-making process. Open communication is encouraged throughout the institution. All proposals that may impact the mission of the college are brought forward and discussed and disseminated in an orderly process to enable significant input from all entities, including students.

5P2. The process of restructuring after significant financial challenges has been and will continue to be an on-going process with the new provost setting direction.

Administration has attempted to flatten out the organization and allow staff to move forward with decisions that are critical and time-sensitive. The provost makes major decisions in alignment with our mission, vision, values and commitment to high performance. This is done in consultation with all represented collective bargaining groups as well as the student government. Administration is in the process of developing and implementing a communication structure to further enhance the awareness of campus issues and plans for the future.

Professional duty-days are also utilized to determine broad objectives and streamline specific actions and activities.

The following diagram represents Rainy River Community College's 2009 organizational chart.



5P3. 5P4. We don't have defined processes for these things at this time, and recognize developing stable policies and procedures as future improvement opportunities.

5P5. Decisions are made by consensus of the affected parties after ample opportunity is given for input. The administration has the final authority on all decisions impacting the college after thoroughly considering the contractual obligations and any specific structure that is in place to ensure campus-wide awareness.

The Minnesota State College Faculty Contract provides language for the Faculty Shared Governance Council, which has authority to present the views of the faculty in meetings with the college president or provost. The council makes recommendations to the college in the areas of personnel, student affairs, facilities, fiscal matters, and general matters. The provost's participation in the Faculty Shared Governance Council meetings helps to inform and aid in decision-making regarding the aforementioned areas.

The Academic Affairs and Standards Council established through the Minnesota State College Faculty Association recognizes that "faculty have fundamental and unique responsibility in matters affecting the academic well-being of the state colleges." Administration and faculty bring proposals regarding academic affairs and standards to the Academic Affairs and Standards Council for consideration and decision.

Labor management meetings with professionals from the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees, and the Minnesota Association of Professional Employees are also held periodically to allow them an avenue to discuss issues with the provost. Ad hoc committees are formed as needed to address specific issues. Relevant information is shared with the appropriate campus personnel and administration is responsible for the decision and implementation of the approved recommendation.

5P6. We receive significant data and information from the Office of the Chancellor and the Northeast Higher Education District Office of Institutional Research. The challenge is sifting through what is significant, and the forecast for financial resources is always a bit of an unknown. All resources are utilized on the campus to determine what processes and policies result in a positive impact on students and what changes need to be made. Administration is responsible for analyzing and responding to the data and information and sharing the results with all staff. Consensus as to what next steps need to be taken and where we need to improve is part of the overall campus continuous quality improvement culture.

5P7. Administration follows the collective bargaining units requirements for meetings and the minutes are available to all staff. As we are a very small college, most meetings where information and decisions are made impact the entire college. Everyone e-mail and paper minutes as well as periodic duty-day presentations and general information sessions are our effective communication tools.

5P8. The uniqueness and diversity of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities and the power of a unified system enables Minnesota State Colleges and Universities to excel as the most accessible, highest quality, and innovative education provider in the region.

In 2008, The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board of Trustees adopted a revised four-year strategic plan aimed at increasing access, expanding learning options, strengthening community development and economic vitality, and fully coordinating the system of 32 institutions.

Vision: The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will enable the people of Minnesota to succeed by providing the most accessible, highest value education in the nation. MnSCU

Strategic Directions and Goals Summary - Adopted 2006 by the Board of Trustees—Revisions

adopted March 2008 by the Board of Trustees. The full document is available at:

http://www.mnscu.edu/media/publications/pdf/strategicplan_2008-12.pdf

Strategic Direction 1: Increase access and opportunity

Goal 1.1 Raise Minnesota's participation and achievement in post-secondary education by meeting the needs of students with diverse backgrounds and educational goals.

Goal 1.2 Work with other organizations to prepare all young people to graduate from high school and enroll in college prepared for college-level work.

Goal 1.3 Maintain an affordable cost of attendance for Minnesota residents.

Strategic Direction 2: Promote and measure high-quality learning programs and services

Goal 2.1 Promote accountability for results through a system of accessible reports to the public and other stakeholders.

Goal 2.2 Produce graduates who have strong, adaptable and flexible skills.

Goal 2.3 Provide multiple delivery options for educational programs and student services.

Strategic Direction 3: Provide programs and services that enhance the economic competitiveness of the state and its regions

Goal 3.1 Be the state's leader in identifying workforce education and training opportunities and seizing them.

Goal 3.2 Support regional vitality by contributing artistic, cultural and civic assets that attract employees and other residents seeking a high quality of life.

Goal 3.3 Develop each institution's capacity to be engaged in and add value to its region and meet the needs of employers in its region.

Strategic Direction 4: Innovate to meet current and future educational needs

Goal 4.1 Build organizational capacity for change to meet future challenges and remove

barriers to innovation and responsiveness.

Goal 4.2 Reward and support institutions, administrators, faculty and staff for innovations that advance excellence and efficiency.

Goal 4.3 Hire and develop leaders who will initiate and support innovation throughout the system.

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities mission: The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system of distinct and collaborative institutions offers higher education that meets the personal and career goals of a wide range of individual learners, enhances the quality of life for all Minnesotans and sustains vibrant economies throughout the state.

5P9. Leadership abilities are encouraged, developed and strengthened through development funds available to faculty and staff. These funds are mandated by contract and are utilized to attend conferences that enhance classroom skills as well as the overall campus environment. Performance reviews that are completed for professionals include an area where the supervisor and employee discuss the employees desire for a leadership role in the future and what activities or opportunities can be made available to advance the employee's leadership ability.

The MnSCU system provides the opportunity for selected individuals to participate in the *Chair Academy*, Worldwide Leadership Academy for Post-Secondary Leaders, from which several Rainy River Community College administrators have graduated.

5P10.

RESULTS (R)

5R1. The primary means of measuring leading and communicating are the periodic evaluations of administrators and directors at RRCC. The provost and director of finance and

facilities are evaluated via an on-line survey that is available to all faculty and staff. The instrument is anonymous and is summarized by the NHED Office of Institutional Research. Results are shared with the NHED president and the president shares key points with the campus at information sessions.

Performance evaluations that are conducted on professional staff are confidential. The administration utilizes these opportunities to ask faculty and professionals for their input. The results are shared with the employee and a plan is formulated for professional development. The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) is also administered with several questions for students regarding the quality of their relationships with administrative and professional staff. These results are utilized for future direction and goals.

Employee communications are most frequently through e-mail. RRCC is a very small college where people see each other on a constant basis. The provost holds informational sessions and the president of NHED also holds a "conversation with colleagues" once each semester. E-mail is recognized as the official communication method, and the collective bargaining units have contractual shared governance meetings that enable communication channels to remain open. The campus intranet T-drive is used to post internal documents and information. It provides a historical record of document changes.

5R2. 5R3.

IMPROVEMENT (I)

5I1. Efforts to improve leadership processes have begun in a number of ways. Performance evaluations are utilized not only to provide feedback on past performance, but to plan for further professional development in areas identified by the supervisor and the employee.

Internal communications have increased by the use of everyone e-mails on specific issues relevant to all on campus as well as following the contractual requirements of faculty shared governance councils and labor/management meetings. The website is also being utilized more with announcements and updates posted on a regular basis. Duty days continue to be a good avenue to reach a majority of the faculty and professionals.

External communications have also been enhanced by the website as well as more regular coverage in the local daily newspaper and the local radio stations. The provost does a monthly presentation on the radio and the paper has been very accommodating with highlighting events and activities. The RRCC advisory council and the RRCC Foundation are excellent communication models to facilitate college plans.

Finally, we are utilizing continual improvement processes by analyzing best practices in other NHED institutions. The provost has many opportunities at NHED cabinet meetings to interact with peers and establish relationships in order to enhance the sharing of best practices and resources.

512.

6) AQIP Category Six

SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONAL OPERATIONS addresses the organizational support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive.

PROCESSES (P)

6P1. Support service needs are identified locally and with assistance from the NHED office of Institutional Research that compiles data from our student surveys throughout the year. The Student Profile provides general statistical and descriptive information about the college, it reviews enrollment trends, student demographic and academic profiles, academic progress and degrees earned. The New Student Survey is conducted at the beginning of each academic year to provide student opinions about the information and services they received upon entering the college. It also asks students to give themselves grades in various academic areas and seeks to determine what educational goals are important for them as they enter college. The Graduate Survey is a student satisfaction survey to see how RRCC graduates rate their satisfaction in both instructional and non-instructional areas and desired improvements. It measures student intent and a self-rating of how much progress a student has made toward reaching their educational goals. RRCC participates in the CCSSEE (Community College Survey of Student Engagement program). The CCSSEE provides information about effective education practice in community colleges and assists institutions in using that information to promote improvements in student learning and persistence. The RRCC College Foundation is the most active external stakeholder on campus. A college employee acts as the liaison to this committee and shares information with both groups.

6P2. Identification of administrative support service needs of our faculty, professionals and administrators are gained through surveys that we complete on an annual or semi-annual

basis such as the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), the campus climate survey, new student survey, graduation satisfaction survey, and performance evaluations of all non-faculty. These are all key indices of needs of our faculty, staff and administrators. Also, periodic e-mails to our “everyone list” creates a platform for feedback as to the satisfaction of all campus personnel. External communications are also utilized through the local media and the RRCC advisory council and RRCC Foundation which consist of community members who are influential and supportive of the college enhance our ability to determine the support services needed.

Figure 6PA: Student and Administrative Support Services by College Administrative Unit	
Division/Office	Support Service/Processes
Office of the Provost	College Foundation Grants Marketing and Public Relations
Academic Services	Assessment Tutoring Disability Services Supplemental Instruction PC-Based Learning Support Testing Services Student Computer Labs Library
Human Resources, Fiscal, and Facilities Services	Business Office Accounting Payroll Purchasing Cashier Risk Management Budgeting

	Facilities Planning Information Technology Facilities Maintenance Receiving Human Resources Hiring Employee Performance Review Benefits Auxiliary Services Bookstore Services Food Services Student Housing
Student Services	Academic Advising Admissions Career Planning & Placement Financial Aid Learning Center Multicultural Services Registration Student Activities Student Clubs Student Records Student Senate

6P3. The campus safety director provides leadership in designing, maintaining and communicating the key support processes that contribute to everyone’s physical safety and security. The safety director leads the team that deals with health and safety issues. Yearly safety in-service sessions, including use of Material Data Safety Sheets and dealing with blood bourn pathogens, are held for staff and

student workers. The safety director is responsible for maintaining emergency phones, fire and tornado alarms, fire extinguishers, outdoor safety lighting and an escort system for students.

This director is also responsible for fire and tornado drills.

Federal law requires that campus crime statistics be maintained, updated and made available to the public. These are reported on the college website.

Several professional employees are certified in the FEMA National Incident Management System basic training and serve on the campus Crisis Response Team. The manual on crisis response is updated regularly and training drills are held quarterly for team members.

The campus recently received grant funds to purchase a second, more up-to-date Automated Electronic Defibrillator.

6P4. Figure 6PA provides information on the management and reporting relationships for support service areas on campus that ensure that we are addressing the needs intended to be

met. The small size of Rainy River Community College ensures thorough and rapid communication, via e-mail, phone, and face to face, between all departments. All-campus meetings occur at least twice during each academic year, department and committee meetings occur frequently.

6P5. We do not have defined processes for these things at this time, and recognize developing stable policies and procedures as future improvement opportunities.

RESULTS (R)

6R1.

6R2. Performance results for student support service processes are gathered through the Graduate Survey. It is a student satisfaction survey that measures how RRCC graduates rate their satisfaction in both instructional and non-instructional areas, and how these services could be improved. It also measures student intent and self rates how much progress is made toward reaching individual educational goals. One trend that has been identified is that fewer students intend to obtain a degree prior to transferring. This issue is being addressed by the enrollment team. Knowing this change in student intent, a new marketing strategy is being designed. Student satisfaction continues to remain strong or constant in both instructional and non-instructional services.

6R3. 6R4. 6R5.

IMPROVEMENT (I)

6I1. RRCC is committed to continuous improvement and supports the institution's operations by scheduling in-service or duty days to gain employee input. A survey is used after the duty day to determine the effectiveness and gain feedback as to the format and function of the day's activities. All bargaining units on campus have some type of shared governance meeting

on a regular basis. These meetings provide first-hand opportunities for exchange of information that supports institutional operations. Agendas and minutes are shared with all employees.

There is a variety of factors that influence improvements in institutional operations, including factors such as legislative or system mandates and audits, data analysis, campus-wide input and intentional studies. Recruiting efforts have been enhanced but most importantly, strategies and target marketing has changed and improved due to the analysis of data of past and future student numbers and the potential programs that are determined based on need.

612.

7) AQIP Category Seven

MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS examines how your organization collects, analyzes, distributes, and uses data, information, and knowledge to manage itself and to drive performance improvement.

Processes (P)

7P1. Where possible, the process of selecting, managing, and using data and information is determined by the following: the purpose for which it is intended; the nature of the data and information; the source of the data and information; the organizational level(s) that will collect, manage, and/or use it; and the required volume and type of processing, storage, maintenance, access, and communication. The general process used at Rainy River Community College begins with recognition of a need or an opportunity for addressing a situation involving data or information. The responsible and/or interested stakeholder parties are identified. The group members and/or their leaders are assigned the task of creating a solution for selecting, managing, and using the data. Objectives for the solution are developed. Constraints that must be satisfied are considered.

The Northeast Higher Education District Office of Institutional Research coordinates with Rainy River Community College to determine what data and information is collected and compiled. This data is standardized and shared throughout the district. When requested to do so, the institutional research office provides the college with data specific to a number of individual institutional measures. See figure 7P1A.

Figure 7P1A

Examples of effectiveness measures, analyses, and reports at Rainy River Community College

<p>Recruiting/Marketing:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of applications received • applications converted • source of application by geographic location • source of application by school • transfer student by source institution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • applications per academic school and department • number of student cancellations and reasons • number of student transfers out and destination
<p>Student:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enrollment (current and long-term trend) • enrollment composition detail and summary • enrollment by semester • continuing education enrollment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • entrance skills assessment (CPT) score • honors program participation • academic program participation • student academic load

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • county and state of origin • ethnic background/minority student composition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student retention • graduation rate • placement rate
Human Resource:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • faculty composition by rank • faculty composition by tenure status • faculty terminal degree status and composition • faculty profile by age and years of service • faculty credit hour production • faculty load history • professional staff years of service • support staff years of service • operations/maintenance staff years of service • Grants Received • professional certifications earned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of advisees advised • sponsorship of student groups • number of and type of absences • qualifications for position • number and type of grievances filed • employee diversity • supervisor evaluation results • employee professional development goals and progress • employee evaluation results • faculty development expenditures • search committee summaries of candidates
Financial:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revenue composition by source • revenue composition trends • faculty development expenditures • student financial aid composition by source • budget resource availability • actual resource utilization vs. budget • tuition rate history and trend • housing occupancy • food service revenue • capital projects completion percentage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • audit results • expenditure composition by category • foundation asset status and growth/decline rate • student financial aid by source and amount • scholarship composition by source and amount • amount of government funding returned • number of delinquent student accounts
Infrastructure and Related Resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical asset inventory verification status • percentage of information system uptime • network bandwidth utilization • number and type of maintenance requests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • campus beautification expenditures • equipment maintenance histories • room and building utilization • utility consumption rate • project completion rate
Academic Programs or Emphases:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of students in program • credit hour production of program • credit hour production/FTE faculty of program • number of graduates by program • number of declared students dropping a program • number of faculty FTE assigned to a program • direct and indirect assessment measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student exit interviews • results of graduating student survey • pass rate: professional certification examinations • approval by accreditation agencies • placement rates • employer satisfaction study
External Stakeholders:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of current articulation agreements • alumni satisfaction feedback • donations of financial resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • foundation board composition and recommendations
Innovation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • amount of external grant funding received • amount of internal grant funding awarded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quality improvement initiatives • number of learning communities/cohort groups
Goal Attainment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • subjective evaluation of goal congruence with strategic goals of the institution • specific identification of goals accomplished and not accomplished 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervisor rating of employee progress towards/attainment of goals

The effectiveness measures used at Rainy River Community College may be categorized as:

financial/monetary measures, non-monetary quantitative measures, and qualitative measures.

A standardized profile document is updated and published annually by the Northeast Higher Education Office of Institutional Research. The measurements expressed in the profile are determined by the regional and state offices and through requests from our campus. The most current information is located at:

<http://www.rrcc.mnscu.edu/publications/Profile08.pdf>

The Rainy River Community College Profile provides general statistical and descriptive

information about the college, which is useful to those engaged in leading, planning, assessment, preparing reports, writing grant proposals, or other endeavors. The Profile is a reference tool that provides a picture of Rainy River Community College for fiscal year 2009 by using fall 2008 data, along with historical trend data. The Profile accurately depicts the major areas of the college including: Enrollment Trends; Fiscal Year Headcounts; Student Demographic and Academic Profile; Ethnicity; Canadian Students; Student Intent; Students Receiving Financial Aid; Academic Progress and Degrees Earned; Program Enrollments; Retention; Graduate Follow-up Survey; Continuing Education & Customized Training Enrollment; Technical Program Headcount; Faculty and Staff; College Financial Data; Regional Population and Employment; Population Estimates; Average Unemployment Rate; New Student Survey Summary; Graduate Survey Summary.

A set of solution alternatives is generated and one or more of the solution alternatives is selected for implementation. The data and information needs are often dictated by external entities. In other cases, the data and information needs originate from within the college. Occasionally, the needs of multiple stakeholders must be met.

The Integrated Student Records System (ISRS) plays a role in assisting the stakeholders in identifying, developing, and implementing solutions. This system wide records data is valuable and very accessible to authorized users.

Rainy River Community College values student learning and recognizes the importance of data and information in improving it. The college has identified general objectives for student learning, as well as objectives for general education. These are stated in the general information section of the college catalog:

http://rrcc.mnscu.edu/publications/Catalog/2008_2010Catalog.pdf

Proposals for changes to general education courses or to the programs or courses of academic programs on campus submitted to the Rainy River Community College Academic Affairs and Standards Council must include valid direct and indirect assessment measures. The college also surveys graduating students, alumni, and employers regarding their perceptions of the quality of its academic programs.

Improvement initiatives at Rainy River Community College are strongly encouraged, and in many cases required. The district and system offices support these measures. In general, the problem or opportunity for improvement is identified, the objectives for an initiative to address it are stated, and the information needs are determined. Comparisons of post-change data against baseline data, comparison of actual results against planned results, and comparison of this college's results against those of others are all uses for the data or information through NHED's Office of Institutional Research.

For many other institutional objectives, a general process of identifying the need for data and information and then accessing or creating the mechanisms for fulfilling that need is used. For some of the other institutional objectives (as is occasionally the case for each of the categories listed above), it is necessary to determine the data and information needs as the project progresses rather than in advance.

7P2. Rainy River Community College recognizes the importance of data and information in the planning process and has taken steps to make it more available and useful. The initiatives in this area fall into two categories:

1. Providing additional or revised reports that better serve the end-user's planning needs.
2. Providing the means for end-users to access key information systems to get the information they need to support their own planning and analysis activities.

The provost's office, in conjunction with Northeast Higher Education District's institutional researcher, is investigating several useful reports in response to the needs expressed by college employees involved in planning and decision-making. The district's researcher is developing the ability to respond in a timely fashion to ad hoc queries needed by personnel across campus. The NHED Office of Institutional Research and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system have worked to make the Integrated Student Record System (ISRS), Desire 2 Learn, and other data access more available to the desktop of authorized users via the campus network.

7P3. Rainy River Community College employs effectiveness measures originating from a number of sources to determine the needs of our department and units for collection, storage and accessibility of data and performance information. Some measures are voluntary and some are externally determined. Other measures for tracking effectiveness are mandated by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system. The key institutional measures for tracking effectiveness address nine key focal areas:

1. Recruiting/Marketing
2. Student
3. Human Resource
4. Financial
5. Infrastructure and Related Resources
6. Academic Programs
7. External Stakeholders
8. Innovation
9. Goal Attainment (Strategic, Tactical, and Operational)

In addition to the institutional measures for tracking effectiveness, each academic area, functional area, program, or initiative employs additional formal or informal measures of effectiveness that are area or situation-specific.

7P4. The NHED Office of Institutional research assists with analysis of college student success data and comparison with the other Northeast colleges on a regular basis. The college also analyzes IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) data, transfer student profiles, and a college profile to evaluate overall performance.

The MNSCU system provides feedback information through its web based accountability dashboard: <http://www.mnscu.edu/board/accountability/index.html>

This information is emailed through the everyone email system and reviewed by college administration, student services staff and college faculty. Highlights of this information are discussed at duty days throughout the year.

7P5. The needs for comparative data at Rainy River Community College are determined by using this prioritized list:

1. Comparison of actual performance against planned or budgeted performance.
2. Comparison of current period data against data from prior periods.
3. Internal comparisons of measures from one part of Rainy River Community College with those from another.
4. Comparison against externally imposed benchmarks, standards, or targets.
5. Comparison against other sister institutions in either Northeast Higher Education District or Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.
6. Comparison against other institutions in various national or regional studies.

The greatest use of comparative data is current enrollment and enrollment trends. There is additional opportunity for learning and improvement from comparison data.

7P6.

7P7. Information security, timeliness, accuracy, and reliability are ensured by system wide management practices and MnSCU Board policy and procedures. The MnSCU Information Security Office serves to protect the resources of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system while supporting the open access required by academic pursuit

The Information Security Office is responsible for:

1. Coordinating the development of system-wide security policies, standards, and procedures to help ensure that decentralized data, facilities, services, and processes are uniformly protected, and
2. Ensuring that the integrity of MnSCU's central facilities, services and data are maintained through effective security management practices.
3. Information security best practices and resources standards provide the framework for ensuring information security by defining requirements that can be implemented and measured.

RESULTS (R)

7R1. What measures of the performance and effectiveness of your system for information and knowledge management do you collect and analyze regularly? [7P7]

Measures of the performance and effectiveness of our system for information and knowledge management are collected and analyzed annually. The registrar compiles enrollment characteristics reports on a semester basis so that trends and changes can be tracked closely. The Office of Intuitional Research compiles an annual college profile that includes five years of

history in student enrollment, student performance, and student placement. In addition the profile includes staff demographics, an overall budget, and summaries of recent student surveys. The college conducts a survey of placement of graduates and reports on it. The college conducts at least three types of student satisfaction surveys each year including one where students self report on their learning progress. The college has implemented a course evaluation survey and it conducts a campus climate survey every few years. The Office of Institutional Research provides reports on retention and graduation rates each year.

7R2.

7R3. Data provided by the Office of Institutional Research for the five NHED colleges is uniform and helps with comparisons, as does data from the system office.

IMPROVEMENT (I)

7I1. The current model for measuring effectiveness and systems has been in place for several years and is actually very good. The Northeast Higher Education District (NHED) has a full-time director of Institutional Research and a part-time research assistant. Ample information is also available from the MnSCU system office with help from their department of institutional research. The challenge has been one of utilizing the excellent data we have available. The NHED director of institutional research is developing a menu of data items that colleges will be able to choose for review. It is also the intent of the college to integrate the appropriate measures of performance to more readily adapt and change ineffective processes.

7I2.

8 AQIP Category Eight

PLANNING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT examines your organization's planning processes and how your strategies and action plans help you achieve your mission and vision.

PROCESSES (P)**8P1. What are your key planning processes? [8P1]**

RRCC's key planning process involves a campus-wide and community input strategy. One advantage to being a relatively small college is the opportunity to gather as a group during a duty day or specially scheduled meeting day. It is imperative to hear the voices of all professionals, faculty and most importantly, the students. The RRCC Advisory Council and the RRCC Foundation are also critical elements to the strategic planning process that occurs. The RRCC faculty association plays a lead role in developing curriculum and delivering appropriate recommendations to the administration in regards to academics. Technology has greatly enhanced the ability to communicate with all and follow-up through in person meetings to validate potential plans for the future.

8P2.**8P3.**

Key action plans are developed by the provost who is responsible for organizing the process to obtain input on what the campus feels are the immediate action plans needed to support the organizational strategies. Various communication modes are utilized with the most prevalent being the contractual requirement of specified meetings where information is shared and responses to questions are recorded. This is an ongoing process that is prevalent throughout the institution. It cannot be a once a semester meeting where action is not the result of the

investment of time. Significant data and information is available and must be disseminated in order to receive the feedback needed for effective decision-making

8P4. Planning processes, organizational strategies and action plans are coordinated and aligned using representatives from each level in the organization who are given the opportunity to submit feedback, ideas and strategies to the college administration. This is done through face-to-face meetings as well as the use of technology. All processes, strategies and action plans must align with the overall mission of the college as well as address the immediate challenges and opportunities the college is facing.

8P5. RRCC establishes annual performance targets in several areas as required by the Office of the Chancellor. These reflect performance in encouraging underrepresented students, meeting STEM education goals, and increasing the enrollment of non-traditional students. The provost has established a goal of increasing student enrollment across the board, and along with that growth will come continuous improvement in each college operation.

8P6. 8P7. 8P8. We don't have defined processes for these things at this time, and recognize developing stable policies and procedures as future improvement opportunities.

RESULTS (R)

8R1.

8R2. The college is in the planning process of aligning its accountability and effectiveness efforts as it moves into the next phase of enrollment growth. Time frames for specific action projects and assignments for progress monitoring are in process. Action projects have been completed and new ones initiated. This action project cycle along with the system portfolio development will greatly enhance our ability to track and monitor progress. The planning cycle is linked directly with the mission, vision and values of RRCC and the specific projects

identified for the short-term as well as long-term. It aligns with the strategic directions of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system as determined by the Board of Trustees.

8R3. 8R4. 8R5.

IMPROVEMENT (I)

8I1. A retreat will be scheduled during each academic year in which representatives from all bargaining units as well as students will review the results of the previous year's benchmarks. An action plan will be developed at this retreat with campus-wide participation. The RRCC general advisory council as well as the RRCC Foundation will also be included for feedback to represent the external stakeholders of the college. This wide array of college faculty, staff, students and external stakeholders, as well as the annual nature of the activity, will promote the identification of what is working and what is not. This will result in the ability to make changes that have full support from internal and external stakeholders.

8I2.

9) AQIP Category Nine

BUILDING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS examines your organization's relationships – current and potential – to analyze how they contribute to the organization's accomplishing its mission.

PROCESSES (P)

9P1. Rainy River Community College recognizes the importance of creating, prioritizing and building collaborative relationships with its communities, organizations, and other educational institutions especially those from whom we receive students. The relationships are in alignment with the college's mission, vision, and goals.

Collaborative relationships with other educational institutions generally start at the instructional level. Being a two-year institution, many of these involve articulation agreements with four-year institutions to which Rainy River Community College students plan to transfer.

Agreements are made at the administrative level with local schools for support to the Minnesota Post Secondary Enrollment Options Program and concurrent enrollment options for students in area high schools. This relationship offers an opportunity for both the college and the area school districts to build other mutually beneficial agreements. We have an agreement with Independent School Districts 361 and 362 that provides for sharing of facilities to support athletics at both institutions. Rainy River Community College offers financial aid educational meetings, discussions on concurrent enrollment, and training opportunities at local schools.

Rainy River Community College has also developed a working relationship with the Koochiching Economic Development Authority for involvement in community economic development activities, and grant support to the college.

The Northeastern Minnesota Office of Job Training under the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development maintains rented office space on the campus. The college provides the facility, and they provide a connection to the regional employment community. The Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training also provides an exceptional service to our students in the areas of career exploration, resume preparation, and job search. Voyageurs National Park is located near International Falls and has ties with the college through Rainy River Community College's Water Resources Center and science offerings. Students are placed in work-study positions with the park, and have opportunities for seasonal employment and internships. National park facilities are used for field study sites.

Grant opportunities with the Center for Teaching and Learning through the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system have successfully provided additional funding to the college for special projects (Birding Guide publication, soup bowl supper, art equipment, and science department projects)

Boise Cascade, the largest employer in the International Falls area, is a strong supporter of the college foundation. The company offers yearly opportunities to apply for "safety dollars" which have been used for athletic safety equipment and for an automatic electronic defibrillator. The college partners with Boise Cascade to provide customized training classes and continuing education to their employees.

Rainy River Community College's nursing program has relationships with the area hospital, nursing homes, and clinics. These institutions provide clinical settings for our students. The college administers testing for Certified Nursing Assistant/Home Health Aides, and professional development opportunities for other medical staff from these facilities. Rainy River Community College nursing students receive career guidance through their clinical training.

Customized Training and Continuing Education programs at Rainy River Community College also enhance the economic development and community enrichment aspects of the college's mission.

College resources are extended to those entities that provide the most benefit to the college based on its mission, vision, and goals. College facilities are frequently used as hearing sites, for meetings, and for timber auctions.

Leading by example, Rainy River Community College students learn the importance of civic goals from the faculty and professionals involved in area organizations. Many faculty and professionals have helped develop relationships with groups in the community through their membership: International Falls Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, Community Education, Friends Against Abuse, Dementia Care Givers Support Group, Circles of Support, and others. Events sponsored by these groups are often held on campus with assistance and participation from volunteer students.

Rainy River Community College collaborates with the following groups:

- Minnesota State Colleges and Universities
- Northeast Higher Education District
- Minnesota State and Federal Legislators
- Transfer Institutions
- Rainy River Community College Foundation Board
- Bremer Foundation
- Northland Foundation
- Blandin Foundation
- Marshall Knutson Family Fund

- Koochiching Economic Development Authority
- MN Geological Survey
- City of International Falls
- Koochiching County
- Boise Cascade
- Koochiching Soil and Water Conservation District
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
- International Joint Commission – Rainy Lake Board of Control and Lake of the Woods Watershed District
- K-12 school districts
- Koochiching County Health Department and area health providers
- Local industries
- Chamber of Commerce
- Gateway Community Corridor Taskforce
- Native American and First Nations Bands/Education Counselors
- Applied Learning Institute
- Voyageurs National Park
- The University of Minnesota NOVA Project
- International Falls Chamber of Commerce

These relationships are an important focus for college and for community development.

The RRCC Advisory Council has been somewhat inactive during the last year of transition.

Current administration plans to reinvigorate this group with the hope of quarterly meetings

intended to update the council members about the college and to receive input and guidance as we plan for the future.

9P2.

9P3. Relationships with organizations that provide services to our students are created, prioritized and built through contacts between academic advisors and representatives of these organizations. Relationships with community social service organizations are created with ease in this small remote community. College academic advisors cooperate with Koochiching Community Services to provide an information packet to new students who may need services. This packet includes information on the Minnesota Food Assistance program, Falls Hunger Coalition, Arrowhead Transit, Koochiching Family Planning, The Salvation Army, Rainy Lake Medical Center, and local financial institutions. Individual students are introduced to services in the community by their academic advisors.

Several local churches host Bible study sessions and have developed supportive relationships with individual students.

9P4. 9P5. We don't have defined processes for these things at this time, and recognize developing stable policies and procedures as future improvement opportunities.

9P6. We ensure that relationships are meeting the varying needs of stakeholders through agreements and communication. Regular review of the agreements is done and changing needs of partners are considered.

9P7. Rainy River Community College recognizes that internal relationships are necessary to maintain dedicated staff and serve students and communities adequately

The communication structure at RRCC is both a formal and informal model. The formal model respects the collective bargaining agreements. The informal model is very productive on our

small college campus. Periodic informational meetings called by the provost as well as e-mails with current updates and potential happenings on campus are very effective.

RESULTS (R)

9R1. The following is a sample of results from measuring one of the College’s key collaborative relationships:

The Rainy River Community College Foundation provides a significant amount of resources to help maintain access for students, upgrade physical facilities and fund program development. Most of the Foundation’s contributions go to fund student scholarships that range from \$200 To \$2,500. Most recently, the foundation contributed resources toward the development and implementation of a new math/science initiative. This will result in a significant increase in students in the STEM areas and will help bolster RRCC enrollment. Table 91A below gives a brief history of the impact the Foundation has had on the college throughout the years.

Table 9R1A RRCC Foundation Contributions to Rainy River Community College

Fiscal Year	Scholarships	Mini Grants and/or Equipment	Other
FY07	\$34,800	\$58,296	\$2,500
FY08	\$38,500	\$4,682	\$3,212
FY09	\$35,900	\$85,500	\$7,150

9R2. K-12 System – The college is located next to the International Falls High School and we started the first concurrent enrollment project during the fall of 2009. The Green and Sustainable Construction program has 17 high school students enrolled in courses leading to college credit. There are 11 college students who are being taught by the credentialed high school teacher as well. This is the first of what may be a significant increase in the number of concurrent opportunities with this high school. There are other high schools in the area where this can occur.

We also share many facilities with the local high school such as athletic fields, ice arenas, computer labs, fitness center, cross country ski trail, etc. We also allow a tutoring program to be housed at RRCC in the summer and offer a College for Kids program as well. Perkins funding has enabled us to collaborate in technical programs. The Applied Learning Institute (ALI) is a collaboration between all NHED colleges and area high schools. ALI has resulted in significant resources for equipment and coordination with industrial technology programs with our industry partner, Boise Cascade, and the local high school.

The college also has significant numbers of articulation agreements in place with numerous four-year colleges and universities. Most MNSCU system universities accept all credits, and program specific articulations are in place to enable students to transfer seamlessly.

Customized and Continuing Education represents collaboration between RRCC and the business community, as well as the greater communities it serves. The enrollment data is tracked and we are just implementing a satisfaction survey to determine the level of satisfaction from our customers.

9R3.

IMPROVEMENT (I)

9I1. The college has developed collaborative relationships with a wide variety of internal and external constituents. The College will continue to nurture these relationships and actively seek new partnerships and collaborations in order to continue to grow and serve the area. The college must:

- Assess industry needs to proactively develop appropriate programs, courses and training to prepare learner workers for the employment opportunities of the future.

- Leverage the college's internal competencies to expand the opportunity for more students to complete degree and diploma programs. An example is the Nursing program as it continues to expand geographically in order to satisfy the demand for health care workers in rural areas.
- Continue to search and apply for grants from national organizations and foundations as well as local and regional foundations. This resource will be invaluable in building new programs and creating new energy on the campus as new and motivated students enter the college through new doors.
- Anticipate enrollment potential in local feeder schools and expand the recruitment process in order to increase student numbers. The college needs to be a regional center and programs need to be created and expanded to become a regional center for specific disciplines and programs.

912.

Index to the location of evidence relating to the Commission's

Criteria for Accreditation found in Rainy River Community College's Systems Portfolio

Criterion One – Mission and Integrity. The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Core Component 1a. The organization's mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization's commitments.

Rainy River Community College's mission vision and guiding principles are developed with leadership and guidance from the district president and college provost. They have been reviewed and approved by the Office of the Chancellor. The College's mission documents are clear, and they publicly articulate our commitments. The Overview establishes the relationship of our mission to our purposes.

1P1

2P1

Core Component 1b. In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.

The diversity of learners is acknowledged in the eight Core Outcomes and the ten Minnesota Transfer Curriculum goals. The value of other constituencies is recognized in the vision and guiding principles.

O1

O5

Core Component 1c. Understanding of and support for the mission pervade the organization.

Rainy River Community College demonstrates understanding of the relationship between learners' expectations and its mission. Expression of the mission appears in many areas of the campus and on printed documents. The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board of Trustees approval of the mission, vision and guiding principles demonstrates public acknowledgement and this college's relationship to the MnSCU system. We are in alignment with the MnSCU primary mission for community colleges to provide quality post-secondary education; enhance community enrichment; and economic development. RRCC goals and strategies are learner focused, and demonstrate a relationship to the mission.

O1

O5

2P1

Core component 1d. The organization's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative process that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.

All proposals that impact the mission of the college are brought forward, discussed and disseminated in an orderly process with input from all entities. Governance is structured in a way that promotes communication between the college, the Northeast Higher Education District and the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system.

O4

O5

5P1

5P2

Core component 1e. The organization upholds and protects its integrity.

Integrity is one of the main values of the MnSCU system and Rainy River Community College's values reflect a commitment to integrity, as do its policies. The College operates with fiscal integrity, and is regularly audited. Information systems and data are protected with proven and accepted practices. The NHED Affirmative Action Officer monitors hiring practices to assure non-discrimination and equity. Staff and administrative performance reviews and faculty evaluations address responsibilities and expectations for performance.

O5

4P7

5P1

7P7

Criterion Two – Preparing for the Future. The organization’s allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill the mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Core Component 2a. The organization realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.

The college is committed to continuous improvement. Preparation for the future is demonstrated in the recent renovation of Rainy Hall and accompanying upgrade of electronic access. Reorganization of the college’s human resources demonstrated a flexible approach to current and future economic trends. A recent expansion in the technical program offerings demonstrates preparation for the future shaped by multiple societal trends. These actions are guided by RRCC goals and strategies.

O1

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Core component 2b. The organization’s resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

The right sizing of the college staff, employees who cover multiple roles while maintaining a student-centered emphasis, and the ability of these employees to multitask help the organization’s limited resource base support its educational programs with a view to the future. Data and information gathering, especially the Integrated Student Records System, play an important role in managing resources for the future.

O4

7P1

7P2

Core component 2c. The organization’s ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.

The ongoing processes of evaluation and assessment support the provost in developing key action plans, which are communicated to the entire campus, refined and acted on as strategies for continuous improvement. Representatives of each level in the organization give feedback and ideas to the college administration.

8P3

8P4

Core component 2d. All levels of planning align with the organization’s mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.

All processes, strategies and action plans are required to align with the overall mission of the college and address immediate challenges and opportunities. RRCC is in the process of aligning its accountability and effectiveness efforts as it moves into the next phase of enrollment growth.

8P2

8R4

Criterion Three – Student Learning and Effective Teaching. The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

Core component 3a. The organization’s goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.

Providing quality post secondary education is the primary goal for student learning and shaping the academic climate. Goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated in the Rainy River Community College eight Core Outcomes, and, for students earning the AA degree, the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum ten goals.

O1

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Core component 3b. The organization values and supports effective teaching.

Communication between faculty, professionals and students at RRCC is enhanced using web-based tools. The AA degree completes the liberal arts general education requirements for a bachelor’s degree and is guaranteed to

transfer in Minnesota. The college uses an academic alert system, mid-term grades, and offers tutoring and a study skills course to engage students in their learning.

O1

1P1

1P14

7P1

Core component 3c. The organization creates effective learning environments.

Technology resources and support to enhance teaching and learning are available throughout the campus. The special needs of student subgroups are considered in scheduling and classroom assignment.

O1

1P10

Core component 3d. The organization's learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.

The college's decisions for learning resources focus on what is best for learners. The library provides broad access to learning resources. Faculty and professionals have opportunities to learn from peers and presenters. Tutoring and supported learning are available to students. Nursing students have access to clinical practice in licensed medical facilities. Program and non-academic learning is supported by cooperative facility agreements with local schools and industry. Course outlines, syllabi and class schedules contain organizational information to support student learning and effective teaching.

O1

1P6

1P15

2P1

4P9

6I1

9P1

9R2

Criterion Four: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge, The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

Core Component 4a. The organization demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students, faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning.

The MnSCU goals and Rainy River Community College's goals and strategies demonstrate value for a life of learning. Core outcomes include personal development, cooperative skills and citizenship.

O1

1P10

2P2

Core Component 4b. The organization demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.

A breadth of knowledge and skills as well as the exercise of intellectual inquiry are expressed in the eight core outcomes required of students enrolled in all programs and degrees at RRCC. The Minnesota Transfer Curriculum is comprehensive in its knowledge and intellectual inquiry requirements for earning an AA degree. Rainy River Community College requires additional skill credits for students earning the AA degree.

1P1

Core Component 4c. The organization assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.

Goal 8 of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum addresses the need for global perspective of interdependence. Diversity is addressed in MTC goal 7. And technological function or skill is required by RRCC for an AA degree.

1P1

Core component 4d. The organization provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

The college's common shared objectives for learning provide support for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge. Nursing students adhere to ethical licensure requirements. All students and staff are

responsible for following a code of conduct. Students sign a computer usage compliance policy prior to receiving user privileges.

1P1

1P7

1R2

Criterion Five: Engagement and Service. As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

Core Component 5a. The organization learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.

The pursuit of collaboration with community, government, business, and education organizations for enhancing teaching and learning and community vitality is a key strategy of the college. Leadership and guidance come from a partnership with the Northeast Higher Education District and the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system.

O9

2P1

Core Component 5b. The organization has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.

The primary mission for MnSCU community colleges includes enhancement of community enrichment and economic development. Citizenship is an expressed MnSCU value. RRCC is committed to: engage community, government, business, and education partners in the shared leadership process; improvement and promotion of the college's image; encouragement of staff and learners' participation in community service; seeking funding to foster collaborative relationships; and active collaboration with its sister colleges.

O Introduction

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Core Component 5c. The organization demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service.

The changing needs of students are assessed and responded to. Key services for success are provided to students and other stakeholders. Complaint information is gathered and responded to. Safety, security and access are planned for and addressed on campus. College facilities and resources are easily scheduled and accessed by community entities.

3P1

3P2

3P6

4R1

Core Component 5d. Internal and external constituencies value the services the organization provides.

Graduate survey results demonstrate that students value the services that RRCC provides. Scholarship and development funds raised in the community by the RRCC Foundation are a demonstration of appreciation and value placed on the college by external constituents. Articulation agreements with four-year colleges and universities are a demonstration of the value placed on the graduates who transfer. Performance results for building collaborative relationships with a wide variety of constituents shows that external stakeholders value the services of Rainy River Community College.

6R2

9R1

9R2

9I1