CATEGORY 9

BUILDING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

On the "splash page" of the Southwestern College Web site (www.sckans.edu) each visitor sees the word "Connect." That word expresses the aspiration of the college to foster collaborative relationships within the college and between the college and other organizations. The college's participation in AQIP has made its people more mindful of our collaborative relationships. To date, little has been done to evaluate the quality of the relationships.

9C1 Institution's Key Collaborative Relationships

The table below details Southwestern College's key collaborative relationships.

Key Relationships/Type of Relationship	Example
Senders: Institutions and organizations that send students and adult learners to Southwestern College	• High schools in Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas • Community college in Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas • EduKan: online community college consortium in Kansas • Colleges and universities in Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas • Corporate employers, regional and national • Educational staff and leadership at military installations served by the college • eArmyU consortium for laptop learning • Local, county, state, and national law enforcement and homeland security agencies • Professional societies (APICS, SHRM, ASIS, ISM, SME, ASQ) • Health care providers • Churches, particularly the United Methodist Church
Receivers: Institutions and organizations that receive students, adult learners, and graduates from Southwestern College	• Universities for graduate and professional study • Corporate employers • Non-profit employers • Churches and religious organizations • Military • Transfer institutions • Local, state, and national government agencies
Organizations that provide services to Southwestern College	• Follett – bookstore for main campus and Professional Studies • Sodexho – food service for main campus • Sodexho – facilities maintenance and planning for main campus

	• Cowley County Mental Health Association • Blackboard – hosting of college's Blackboard service • William Newton Memorial Hospital • SunGard/SCT PowerCampus (administrative software) • Dell Computers
Educational associations, external agencies, consortia, accrediting bodies	• Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association/AQIP • Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) – for athletic training • National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) – for the college's laboratory preschool • National Association for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) • State of Kansas Department of Education – certification, teacher education • National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) • Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) • State of Kansas Board of Nursing • University Senate of the United Methodist Church – accreditation as a United Methodist Church-affiliated college • Kansas Independent College Association (KICA) – advocacy, consortial projects • National Association of Independent College and Universities – advocacy • Council of Independent College – consortial projects
General community	• Chambers of Commerce • Community non-profit organizations and churches • College neighbors • College alumni

9C2 Collaboration for Service

The complexity of the college's service environment – those we serve, and those whose services we need – requires collaboration. Our whole purpose is to facilitate the attainment by individuals and organizations of their goals through our educational offerings. The college's recruitment and retention goals for main campus students are specified in the college's planning process. Collaborations with our food service provider, with campus maintenance services, with Dell Computer for our student laptops, are all essential for providing an attractive and technologically rich setting for learning. The college's planning process has produced specific targets for enrollment growth. Collaborations with organizations that send us main campus students and Professional Studies learners are critical to attaining these targets. In many cases, the organization that sends the college a student (Cessna, the U.S. Army) is also the organization that receives our graduates, so effective collaboration is critical to maintaining a tuition remitting relationship that allows the college to grow.

9P1 Managing Relationships With Stakeholders

Senders
Relationships with high schools and colleges that send Southwestern traditional-age students are primarily maintained by the college's admission staff and – for articulation agreements, evaluation of transfer credits – the college's academic affairs staff, particularly the registrar. Athletics coaches also maintain a number of key relationships with sending schools. These relationships are fostered over time through an appreciation, on all sides, that as educational institutions we all are looking for win-win situations for students, and that students thrive when they attend a school that offers the right "fit" for them. Church-related partnerships are handled by main campus staff connected with the college's campus ministry program and its Wilke Institute for Discipleship

Relationships with tuition remitting employers – corporate, non-profit, military, and government agencies – are almost exclusively handled by the college's Professional Studies staff with occasional assistance from main campus personnel such as the president, the registrar, and business office staff. The college's Professional Studies staff was recently realigned to create a position in charge of initiating, monitoring, and improving partnerships with these sending organizations.

Receivers
Most relationships related to facilitating the interests of Southwestern graduates in pursuing advanced degrees are handled from the main campus. The college's career planning program assists institutions that wish to visit the college to talk with students about graduate study. Individual faculty members also facilitate connections with graduate schools. The career planning office also works to arrange connections between main campus students and corporate, non-profit, and governmental employers through career fairs, hosting interview days, etc. Many main campus academic programs support the work of advisory committees, made up of alumni and friends, whose members help the college stay current concerning the educational needs and requirements of both graduate schools and employers.

The college's Professional Studies program actively partners with tuition-remitting organizations that are, in fact, both senders and receivers. As such these partners are very much aware of the need to receive value from their investments in college study by their employees. PS staff actively troubleshoot issues related to specific learners. They also regularly connect with the human resources and executive staffs of receiving organizations to maintain current knowledge of the requirements of these employers. Both standing advisory councils and ad hoc gatherings of relevant employers allow Professional Studies staff to elicit feedback and guidance from these partners.

Service Providers
In the past decade the college has, increasingly, looked to external organizations to provide expertise and services. The college's bookstore was outsourced to Follett five years ago. The college's food service and facilities maintenance and planning are provided by Sodexho. In the realm of information technology, the college has chosen Dell to provide machines for our laptop learning program, has hired Blackboard to host our Blackboard services, and has recently converted to SCT PowerCampus for administrative computing. In each case, a competitive bidding and evaluation process was employed. Because of the small size of the college's main campus student body, it has not been feasible to provide a full-service student health center on campus. Consequently, the college has worked to build good partnerships with the local hospital and mental health agency. The latter relationship has not been particularly effective and a search for an alternative provider is underway.

In seeking external service providers the college has not been motivated by the need to reduce costs. Rather, the college has been motivated either by a wish to enhance the quality of the service it provides or by the recognition that the service in question is not a core activity of the college and is one for which we have no expertise, and as such should be outsourced.

Educational associations, external agencies, consortia, accrediting bodies
The college's collaboration with accrediting bodies is structured by the needs of the college and the bodies. Our relationship with the Higher Learning Commission is principally the responsibility of the college's president and those he seeks to involve. Relationships with specialized accreditors normally involve the college's vice president for academic affairs and the relevant academic program director. The college's connection to the United Methodist Church is multi-faceted and that is reflected in the large number of individuals who play specific roles in that collaboration. The president takes the lead in the college's collaborations with advocacy organizations and other consortia of private colleges.

Work related to accreditation requires, each year, a larger share of the time of administrators and faculty. The college's involvement in AQIP reflects, in part, a desire to realize greater value from its relationship with the Higher Learning Commission. The growing emphasis on specialized accreditation in higher education has necessitated increased efforts by faculty. The college's accreditation by NCATE, in particular, requires work by many faculty members, not just those in the teacher education program.

9P2 Meeting the Needs of Stakeholders

The college's key responsibility in maintaining all its relationships is to listen carefully and communicate well with our partners. Reliance on listening and good communication have served us well, though there is, at present, a lack of strong oversight of all our collaborative relationships. We do not have in place strong monitoring and reporting expectations on all these collaborations, nor do we have in place metrics that would allow an evaluation of the vigor of our all collaborations.

9P3 Managing a Complex Internal Environment

The college is a much more complex organization than it was ten years ago, largely due to the growth of its programs for adult learners. As these programs grew the college's leadership chose to continue to function, when practical, as a single institution responding to the needs of a diverse student body. Sometimes that is easier said than done. Instruction is offered through multiple means at multiple locations to learners who have very different needs. Employees of the college are geographically dispersed and some, particularly instructors in the college's online program, have never been face-to-face with their supervisor or with any other employee of the college. In response the college has developed an array of committees, councils, task forces, and cross-functional teams to conduct the college's business. Key internal relationships revolve around:

- Academic oversight and governance, conducted by faculty committees and councils, division chairs, the Academic Planning Council, and the Board of Trustees Academic Affairs Committees. Key leaders for coordination are the president, the vice president for academic affairs, the vice president for Professional Studies, and the Professional Studies director of academic programs.

- Learner support services and institutional operations, including library resources, career planning, sponsorship of student organizations, registrar's office, financial aid office, business office, advising. Daily coordination of routine processes takes place at the directors level, with the Administrative Council becoming involved when matters of policy are being discussed.

- Marketing and public relations, involving the staff of the communications office, institutional advancement, admission, athletics, and Professional Studies. The college has employed a decentralized approach in this realm, allowing different units of the college a great deal of freedom to tailor their messages to their varied audiences. The college's vice president for

communications has developed and employs standards concerning the use of standard colors, typefaces, and branding logos.

- Institutional technology infrastructure, which involves support for laptops, networking, Web presence, support for administrative software, support for Blackboard and other instructional software applications, and support for Professional Studies interfaces with key organizational portals maintained by tuition remitters. The college's approach to coordination in this realm has been to foster active communication among members of an informally constituted IT group, many of whom do not report to the same supervisor. The college has recently completed a search for its first vice president for information technology. This vice president will be charged with reviewing the college's IT personnel and assets and recommending changes in reporting relationships.

- Diverse strands of work in institutional research are being gathered and centralized through the work of the college's director of institutional research. See Category 7.

9P4 Measuring Collaborative Relationships

The college's measures of collaborative relationships have focused on outcomes that are presumed to reflect effective levels of collaboration:

Collaborative relationship	Measure
Relationships with alumni and other donors	Giving to the college, volunteering for the college
Relationships with churches	Giving to the college
Relationships with tuition remitting employers	Count of remitted tuition learners
Status of relationships with accrediting agencies	Good standing
Organizations that provide services to the college	SSI results

These are all outcome measures rather than process measures and are not strong measures of collaborative relationships.

9R1 Results of Measuring Collaborative Relationships

- Total giving and alumni giving to the college: 1,276 - $2,062,142 (FY2006)

- Alumni volunteering for the college: 406 (FY2006); 707 (FY2007)

- Church and religious organizations giving to the college: 113 - $202,890 (FY2006)

- Count of remitted tuition learners: 632

Institutional Advancement Results

Fiscal Year	Total Giving All Purposes	Total Annual Fund Giving	Total Annual Fund Giving Less Estates	Number of Alumni Donors
2006	$2,768,311	$893,033	$593,033	1,184
2005	$3,803,385	$1,008,652	$599,642	1,254
2004	$3,111,951	$691,555	$607,740	1,478
2003	$3,208,537	$721,328	$622,185	1,517
2002	$1,912,730	$590,744	$516,786	1,405
2001	$3,259,730	$923,734	$618,688	1,371
2000	$2,687,456	$668,231	$563,028	1,513
1999	$2,464,423	$679,444	$401,656	1,369
1998	$2,054,623	$326,939	$276,567	1,235

Fiscal Year	Giving by Religious Organizations
2005	$291,494
2004	$300,038
2003	$344,480
2002	$315,568
2001	$263,431
2000	$224,277
1999	$201,201
1998	$214,841

Accreditation Status

Accreditor	Status (Next Review and Reaffirmation)
Higher Learning Commission of NCA	2009-2010
University Senate of the United Methodist Church	2011
Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education	2013
Kansas State Board of Nursing	2011
National Association of Schools of Music	2011
National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education	2008
Kansas State Department of Education	2008
National Association for the Education of Young Children	2009
Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education	2010

Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) Results for Service Providers

	2005-2006			2006-2007			
	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap	Change
Cafeteria	6.25	5.04	1.21	6.2	4.84	1.36	0.15
Student Center	5.75	5.04	0.71	5.81	5.19	0.62	-0.09
Bookstore	5.89	6.3	-0.41	5.96	6.11	-0.15	0.26
Campus Facilities	6.31	5.92	0.39	6.41	5.81	0.60	0.21

9R2 Result Comparisons

To evaluate relationships with alumni and donors, the college uses Voluntary Support for Education data to compare fund-raising outcomes to those attained by other colleges in the Kansas Independent College Association (KICA). The college is in the top third of KICA institutions in terms of charitable support received. To evaluate the college's relationships with providers of outsourced service, the college's SSI data allows comparisons to results achieved at other four-year colleges. These measure indicate our students are more satisfied with these services than are students at other four-year institutions.

9I1 Improving Collaborative Relationships

The Administrative Council regularly monitors results attained in our work to build collaborative relationships (see 9R1 above) and works to enhance relationships and improve outcomes. At present, the college's weakness in the realm of measures and metrics (to be addressed through an AQIP Action Project) causes too great a reliance on indirect or enterprise-level outcomes data that is not particularly helpful for assessing and managing relationships with specific stakeholder groups or entities. Where specific data concerning a relationship is available (e.g., with SSI data on services outsourced), outcomes data support the work of advisory committees (for the bookstore, for facilities, and for the food service) that focus on improvement in performance.

9I2 Targets, Improvement Priorities, Communication

Targets for improvement in student learning are currently set in courses and in departments. The college is working to create *institutional* outcome targets that will be systematically measured (see Category 1). Until these targets are specified and baseline results are documented, it is not possible to set improvement priorities or communicate effectively with stakeholders about outcomes.

Targets for student progress and retention have been set and relevant data are gathered and analyzed each semester. Findings are shared with the college's faculty and administration. Both the Enrollment Management Team and the Retention Group propose and implement strategies designed to improve student retention and graduation rates. The college's retention targets are: achieve 90% freshman retention from the first semester to the second, achieve 75% retention from the end of the freshman year to the fall of sophomore year, and achieve a 60% four-year graduation rate. These targets are being

addressed through an AQIP action project and work will continue under the leadership of the college's newly appointed Associate Vice President for Advising and Student Success and through the Destination Graduation project in Professional Studies.