

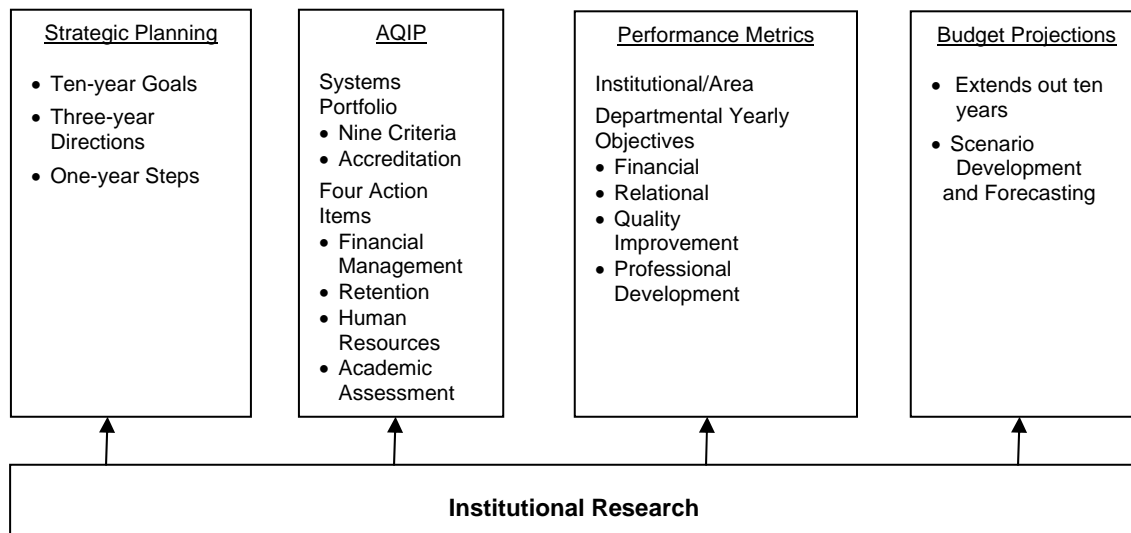


CATEGORY 7 MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

7C1 Collecting, Storing, and Using Data

The college is moving from decentralized and informal gathering and storing of data toward a more centralized, formal, and purposeful program for selection and storing of data. Before the Office of Institutional Research was established in the fall of 2003, data collection was limited to the gathering of basic statistical information, collected and summarized in reports for internal use and for reporting to external agencies.

The Office of Institutional Research is responsible, in cooperation with other departments of the college, for providing information support for the following key processes at the college: strategic planning (described in Category 8), performance of AQIP action projects, monitoring of the institution's key performance metrics, and the budgeting process.



The Office of Institutional Research maintains a set of statistical tables (fact book) that are available to the campus via the college's Web site. The office also is responsible for the completion of IPEDS, for providing the required State of Kansas report (KHEER), for maintaining the Common Data Set, and for supporting other required reports by providing data. The office is maintaining a more complete set of data for analysis.

In addition to work done by the Office of Institutional Research, individual departments collect and store information pertinent to departmental function, using several different tools and methods in addition to accessing the administrative database. In 2005-06, Southwestern purchased and converted to the SCT PowerCampus (administrative software), a fully integrated system that facilitates administrative processes and stores all student-related data. The software is password-protected and accessible to all personnel on campus, with limitations according to the individual's role and need for data.



The college participates in surveys and uses student survey instruments to explore topics of interest or concern. Specifically, the college participates in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and IDEA to identify areas of concern in the classroom. The results are received by the vice president for academic affairs and the vice president for professional studies and are shared with academic departments.

The Office of Student Life uses the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) to measure student satisfaction in all areas. The SSI helps identify specific concerns that are important to the students, and with three years of accumulated SSI data, the college is able to evaluate movement in key measures and respond appropriately. Specific department-related results from the SSI are shared with the appropriate departments.

The Noel-Levitz College Student Inventory (CSI) is completed by newly-arrived freshmen during orientation. Student-specific results are shared with the students' advisors who then provide appropriate guidance and support to their advisees.

Professional Studies gathers and stores information on programs specific to adult learners, using various tools including survey instruments. Enrollments in the various majors are tracked, both for budgeting purposes and for ongoing evaluation of each major. The information is used for making decisions regarding courses to be offered, new majors to meet market demand, and opportunities in new locations.

7C2 Key Institutional Measurements

Our key institutional measures are as follows:

- Four-, five-, and six-year graduation rate for main campus students
- Semester-to-semester retention rate for main campus students
- Graduation rate for Professional Studies learners
- Results of Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI)
- Growth of credit hours for main campus undergraduates, graduate studies, and Professional Studies
- Endowment draw
- Compliance with budget targets
- Educational outcomes assessment findings (see Category 1)
- Completion of goals specified in:
 - Statement of Goals and Directions
 - Administrative Council Implementation Assignments
- Campaign giving
- Annual fund giving

7P1 Using Information for Institutional Effectiveness

Decisions about the selection and use of information are made by the college's Administrative Council with involvement by the director of institutional research and other directors at the college. Ongoing information needs relate mainly to enrollment, budgeting, charitable giving, and academic outcomes. AQIP action projects related to retention, outcomes, human resources, and financial outcomes have prompted the Administrative Council to select new measures of effectiveness and to plan the gathering and evaluation of appropriate data.



7P2 Meeting Departmental Information Needs

The primary needs of the departments and units are determined by each individual department. Needs that require support from outside an individual department are assessed and addressed by the Administrative Council.

Until recently departments collected and maintained information for their use external to the administrative system. With the college's conversion to SCT PowerCampus (administrative software), new emphasis is being given to capturing relevant data and storing it in PowerCampus. In time, this emphasis will improve the quality and thoroughness of data available to college administrators in a large, integrated database.

7P3 Setting Information Priorities

Needs and priorities for comparative information are generally established by the college's Administrative Council. Specification of needs occurs either when the council is seeking information that addresses a specific circumstance of the college or when the council decides to begin tracking a new performance indicator as part of the college's growing emphasis on performance tracking. Comparisons normally focus on one of the following groups: members of the Kansas Collegiate Athletics Conference, members of the Kansas Independent College Association, or the universe of comprehensive colleges in the U.S.

Our principal criterion for selection of data is that the method of its gathering and reporting be uniform, allowing valid comparisons.

The college gathers and employs very little information from sources outside education, with the exception of the "Are We Making Progress?" survey.

7P4 Institutional Analysis of Information

Analysis of information and data mainly occurs at meetings of the college's Administrative Council. Key indicators of performance are periodically gathered and reported in an institutional scorecard. Performance results are often communicated to college employees through memoranda from the president.

7P5 Departmental Analysis of Institution

We do not have appropriate processes in place to review departmental use of data to ensure the information aligns with the college's goals.

7P6 Effectiveness of Information

Southwestern established a team composed of representatives from each department to lead in the conversion and implementation of its new administrative software. This team (PCUG – PowerCampus Users Group) has continued to function as a monitoring and decision-making group on issues of data input, emphasizing consistency and accuracy. Through reports from the vice president for information technology, the work of this team (along with their recommendations concerning means of improving the



effectiveness of the college's information systems) is forwarded to the Administrative Council and the president.

The Administrative Council, in conjunction with directors, is actively engaged, day by day, with evaluation and improvement of the college's information systems.

7P7 Measuring Institutional Effectiveness

The college's director of institutional research works actively, through professional conferences and other interactions with peers, to remain abreast of best practices for measuring effectiveness. This work has not yet resulted in a formal annual assessment of our measures.

7I2 Setting and Communicating Targets for Improvement

The college's Administrative Council establishes targets for improvement. Because the Office of Institutional Research is new and the school has not had processes in place, the first priority is to establish the processes and measurements.

The college will undertake in 2007-08 an assessment of internal satisfaction with the accuracy, availability, and relevance for decision-making of its information and data resources.