

## **San Juan College Quality Highlights**

San Juan College's commitment to AQIP and continuous quality improvement is reflected in the College's Systems Portfolio, development of and implementation of Action Projects, participation in the Continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN), support of staff to become AQIP appraisers and participation in the HLC's Assessment Academy. In February SJC received a favorable Quality Site Visit review. In the team's judgment, SJC presented satisfactory evidence that it meets all federal compliance requirements and the institution is using quality management principles to build a culture of continuous improvement. The team commented that "SJC demonstrates a unique spirit that permeates all aspects of the organization and appears to be an emerging leader among comprehensive community colleges."

In March 45 faculty, and professional and support staff volunteered to assist in updating and preparing the college's second Systems Portfolio. Nine teams were formed to examine each of the nine categories. A campus-wide forum regarding the preliminary findings of those category teams was held in April. This fall campus meetings will provide additional opportunities for input and review in anticipation of the November 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.

### **Use of the Systems Portfolio**

The Systems Portfolio has been a catalyst for assessing institutional readiness for continuous improvement, identifying opportunities where improvements need to be made, and documenting what has been learned from improvement efforts. As a consequence, benchmarking and the use of comparative data have now become standard practice in decision-making and planning at San Juan. Institutional performance measures have been developed for regular presentation to the Board of Trustees and are subject to periodic reexamination to assure that they remain meaningful in light of changing operating circumstances.

The *Quick Quality Check* has been employed to bridge the strategic planning process and AQIP. As such, the Quality Check provides a baseline for each department and program to include in its annual work plan, as deemed appropriate, improvement activities related to these criteria that have been synthesized from both the Plan and the Portfolio: (1) Understanding Student/Customer and Other Stakeholder Needs, (2) Setting Direction, Planning and Improving, (3) Measures and Improvements, (4) Developing People, (5) Building Effective Processes, and (6) Relationships and Communication.

### **Use of Systems Appraisal Feedback**

SJC has used the Systems Portfolio Appraisal to guide the following accomplishments:

*Addressed all strategic issues identified in appraisal* – The Systems Portfolio Appraisal Team identified the following three strategic issues closely related to the institution's ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning and quality improvement goals:

1. *A lack of a process focus and a dependence on ad hoc improvements versus systematic process review, measurement, analysis and improvement* – The continued focus on refining processes and systems is resulting in a more systematic alignment of processes, measures and

results which address the long- and short-term goals of SJC. Examples include Annual Operational Plan and Budget Cycle, New Academic Program Approval, Grants Development and Quality Grant Program Review. A team will be formulated this fall to develop and pilot an Academic Program Review process.

2. *There is not an up-to-date centralized data collection system that aggregates data on institutional priorities...for use in making fact-based decisions* – In July 2003, SJC purchased the Datatel financial, student and human resource systems under the strategic initiative to *improve infrastructure of systems, resource allocation, and processes to develop structures to increase capacity to serve stakeholders*. All systems are now fully deployed.
3. *Implementation of a formal leadership development program* – the SJC Leadership Academy was piloted in spring 2007 to provide quality professional development to selected faculty, staff and administrators. Upon evaluation of the week long academy, the initial cohort has worked with the President to design a year long program that includes an academy, monthly leadership meeting days, and a service learning project. In addition, the cohort has developed guiding principles and performance outcomes.

*The Quality Community Linkages Council researched and benchmarked best practices for development, operation and use of advisory committees*. The efforts have led to the development of a SJC Advisory Council Training Guide. The training manual includes formation guidelines, roles and functions of advisory councils, orientation, recognition and retention of members, evaluation of meetings, and recruitment. The use of nearly 50 advisory councils involves SJC's partners in helping to set future direction for the College.

*Adjunct Faculty Development Program* – Linked to the strategic initiative of *Valuing People*, this Action Project (now in Phase II) supports recruiting and retaining highly qualified instructors. The Quality Student Learning Council was charged with researching national best practices in adjunct faculty development programs. The Vice President for Learning has approved the Council's recommendations. The Associate Vice President for Learning is now phasing in implementation of the program. The work of a faculty member, awarded the distinguished teaching chair two years ago, has led to the establishment of an Office for Adjunct Faculty Services. He has offered both beginner and advanced seminars. Each seminar is comprised of 4 two-hour sessions on Students Sense of Self and Critical Thinking.

The appraisal feedback from the upcoming second Systems Portfolio is anticipated by March 2008. That valuable information will be shared widely throughout the College in order to stimulate strategies for continuous improvement that will drive strategic and tactical planning for the future. This kind of feedback is an extension of the benchmarking practices San Juan increasingly employs.

### **Evidence that San Juan College is committed to Continuous Improvement**

Evidence of the institution's commitment to quality and continuous improvement since its first portfolio and appraisal includes:

*Establishment of the position of Vice President for Institutional Research and Planning* – In February 2007, a Vice President for Institutional Research and Planning was hired to coordinate the activities of the offices of Institutional Research, Strategic Development and Organizational Development.

This new unit embodies functions focused on continuous improvement and decision support that will be carried out in consort with other units of the College in pursuing strategies that enhance institutional effectiveness.

*Participation in the Academy for Assessment of Student Learning* – San Juan elected to participate in this HLC initiative in order to advance its efforts to assess student learning outcomes and to use the knowledge gained through the initiative to improve pedagogy and curricula. The project the College has undertaken through the Academy aims to broaden faculty commitment to assessment at the individual course level as well as build greater expertise in using the best practices that lead to greater student learning.

*Assessment of Student Support Services* – The Quality Student Support Council (QSSC) was tasked to develop a model for assessing student learning in Student Services departments with the purpose of: (1) improving utilization of time and resources, (2) communicating the value of student services work for student learning and (3) increasing collaboration between Learning and Student Services. A sub-committee from QSSC researched Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) standards and dialogued with the Student Outcomes Assessment Committee. Two members of the QSSC and the Vice President for Institutional Research & Planning traveled to Maryland to benchmark student services assessment practices at the Community College of Baltimore County and Harford Community College. The following five Student Support Learner Outcomes (SSLOs) have been developed:

- *Communication and Leadership* - Students will exhibit the ability to effectively and constructively communicate in written, verbal and electronic exchanges with others. Students will also exhibit the ability to inspire, to organize and guide others in a diplomatic fashion in the capacity as leader.
- *Goal Orientation* - Students will demonstrate the ability to self assess, prioritize and comprise realistic agendas for academic, personal and professional progression. Students will also effectively identify and utilize appropriate resources.
- *Problem Solving* - Student will demonstrate the ability to recognize problems, assess challenges, and determine a course of action to navigate around obstacles pertaining to their college education and life experiences.
- *Career Readiness* - Students will display appropriate appearance, diplomacy, and skills needed to be marketable in the current workforce
- *Social and Personal Development* - Students will demonstrate a constructive attitude toward education, apply time management and interpersonal skills, and use self advocacy in order to practice social responsibility, value diversity, and apply global perspectives.

This fall, the QSSC will conduct trainings on outcomes assessment. Several Student Services departments will pilot and assess the Problem Solving outcome.

## **Other Factors**

*1. Renewal of Strategic Plan* – SJC leadership has identified the following frameworks for renewing the Strategic Plan in the 2007-08 fiscal year: (1) Resource Allocation, (2) Enrollment Growth and Management, (3) Retention of our Students, (4) Developmental Education Success and (5) Communication Systems. These priorities have emerged in light of a pending decrease in enrollment-based state funding in the 2008-09 fiscal year, findings from a institutional climate survey that reveal

employee concerns about communication and decision-making, and mounting concern regarding the state's and region's competitiveness in a global economy. These priorities will be addressed through the following new task forces:

*Enrollment Management Taskforce* – A cross-functional Enrollment Management Taskforce has been charged with developing and implementing strategies to increase enrollment by at least 3.5 percent annually in student credit hours based on the findings of the STAMATS Student Recruitment Audit as well as benchmarking the best practices of other community colleges.

*Communication and Input Design Team* – Currently, structures and processes do not exist to allow appropriate sharing, review or input into decision making at SJC. A cross-functional Communication and Input Design Team has been charged with benchmarking collaborative institutional systems and structures that will enhance communication as well as serve as bases for sustaining continuous improvement at a functional level.

*On-line Learning Taskforce* – On-line learning courses and support services at SJC have been developed and offered without strategic consideration. An On-Line Learning Taskforce is charged with developing strategic directives for developing courses, programs and student support services.

*Assessment Taskforce* – The State of New Mexico is moving towards performance-based funding. A cross-functional Assessment Taskforce has been charged with furthering the Common Student Learning Outcomes (CSLOs) to assess student learning outcomes and to use the knowledge gained through the Assessment Academy initiative to improve pedagogy and curricula.

*Developmental Education Taskforce*– At the start of the fall 2007 semester the Vice President for Learning organized a charrette to explore through a cross-functional team the dimensions of and responses to the challenges the College faces in serving a large population of academically under prepared students. National benchmarking and school data on the progress of these students indicate that San Juan has yet to achieve significant breakthroughs when it comes to assisting these students with making progress toward their educational goals. The charrette is envisioned as an ongoing effort to renew the College's commitment to providing access to success for disadvantaged populations in the Four Corners region and thereby growing a workforce that is competitive in a global economy. A Developmental Education Taskforce is charged with researching best practices of other colleges and recommending strategies to improve success in developmental courses.

2. *Improved resource allocation and financial performance management* – With the introduction of line item budgeting for all departments for the 2007-08 fiscal year, San Juan has set higher expectations for budget managers with regard to planning for and monitoring the financial performance of their respective departments. Line item budgeting also makes possible more precise analyses of expenditures that will permit a more effective allocation of resources and the identification of strategies for more efficient business practices. Closer linkage as well between the institutional budget and the Strategic Plan in upcoming budget cycles will ensure that resources are targeted at major priorities that intended to ensure SJC's long-term sustainability.