Reaffirmation of Accreditation Recommendation

for

North Iowa Area Community College

Mason City, Iowa

of the 2014-2015

Academic Quality Improvement Program

Review Panel on Reaffirmation

The Higher Learning Commission

September 9, 2014

AQIP Review Panel on Reaffirmation (lead reviewers starred)

Timothy Allwein, Associate Professor of Business, Indiana Institute of Technology, Fort Wayne, IN

Martha Casazza, Founding Partner, TRPP Associates, Chicago, IL

Joan Costello, Ret. Provost/VP for Academic Affairs, Inver Hills Community College, Grove Heights, MN

Scott Epstein, Executive VP for Quality and Effectiveness, Davenport University, Grand Rapids, MI

Mark Kretovics, Interim Director, School of Foundations, Leadership, and Administration, College of Education, Health, and Human Services, Kent State University, Kent, OH

Bill Lamb, VP of Instruction, Kirkwood Community College, Cedar Rapids, IA

*Deborah Loper, AVP Institutional Effectiveness. Colorado Mountain College, Glenwood Springs, CO

Lynn, Onken, Quality Systems Manager, Nebraska Organ Recovery System, Omaha, NE

Laurie Pemberton, Director, Institutional Research, Allan Hancock College, Santa Maria, CA

Rob Spohr, VP for Academic Affairs, Montcalm Community College, Sidney, MI

Karen Stewart, Ret. VP for Quality and Strategic Development, Waubonsee Community College, Sugar Grove, IL

William Tammone, Provost, Illinois Central College, East Peoria, IL

Wendolyn Tetlow, Ret. VP of Instruction and Student Learning, Bay de Noc College, Escanaba, MI

Elizabeth Towell, Associate Dean, College of Business, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL

*Linda Wellborn, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Evangel University, Springfield, MO

John Yoder, Higher Education Independent Consultant, Catonsville, MD

    Criterion One: *Mission.* The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

    Criterion Two: *Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct.* The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

    Criterion Three: *Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support.* The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

    Criterion Four: *Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement.* The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

    Criterion Five: *Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness.* The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

I. Context And Nature Of Review

A. Review Purpose, Process, and Materials

AQIP Reaffirmation of Accreditation reviews are scheduled seven years in advance, when an institution first joins the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) or when an institution already participating in AQIP is reaffirmed via the AQIP Reaffirmation of Accreditation process.

In conducting these reviews, the AQIP Reaffirmation of review panel examines the following materials for each institution:

- Current Commission History file of institutional actions

- Current Commission Statement of Affiliation Status

- Current official Commission Organizational Profile

- AQIP Review Panel Report(s) on Institutional Status Change Requests

- Focused visit report(s) and action letter(s)

- Institutional websites

- Key correspondence between the institution and the Commission

- Last Comprehensive PEAQ Evaluation team report, institutional response, and Commission action letter

- Summary of Action Projects attempted

- Summary Update of institutional activity and dynamics since the last Quality Checkup, provided by the institution on September 1 of the review year

- Systems Appraisal Feedback Report

- Systems Portfolio, including update provided by the institution on September 1 of the review year

- Quality Checkup report

- Any evidence supporting compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation

- Any other major reports or documents that are part of the institution's permanent Commission files

Two lead panelists from the AQIP Reaffirmation of Accreditation draft a recommendation that is reviewed and approved by the entire panel before it is forwarded to the Institutional Actions Council.

B. Organizational Context

North Iowa Area Community College (NIACC) was first accredited by the Commission in 1919.

The institution was admitted to AQIP on August 28, 2009.

It participated in a Strategy Forum in February of 2010.

Since admission to AQIP the institution has officially declared and attempted 16 individual Action Projects, and has provided AQIP with Annual Updates of ongoing projects and received Annual Update Feedback Reports on these. Seven Action Projects are currently active, and nine Action Projects have been completed (Progress Report: AQIP Action Projects by NIACC dated April 22, 2014).

The institution provided its Systems Portfolio for review on May 31, 2013, and received a Systems Appraisal Feedback Report on August 27, 2013.

AQIP conducted a Quality Checkup visit to the institution on September 18-19, 2013, and provided a report of the findings of the visiting team on November 8, 2013.

NIACC is participating in the Academy for Assessment of Student Learning (2013).

C. Organizational Scope and Structure (including extended physical or distance education operations)

North Iowa Area Community College offers 38 Associate Degrees and 32 Certificate Programs. It is approved for distance education courses and programs. On May 7, 2013, NIACC reported 1684 full-time students and 1595 part-time students enrolled, with dual enrollment of 898 students. There are no campuses or additional locations beyond the main site. NIACC is a public institution.

D. Notification of Quality Checkup Visit and Solicitation of Third-Party Comment

A Quality Checkup site visit to the institution was conducted on September 18-19, 2013. In compliance with Commission requirements, the institution notified its constituencies and the public of this visit, and solicited third-party comment to be sent directly to the Commission. The Commission shared all comments received with the institution and the team, and the team discussed both the comments with the institution and reviewed evidence of the institution's compliance with Commission's notification and third-party comment requirements.

E. Compliance With Federal Requirements

The Quality Checkup team examined evidence provided by the institution of its compliance with the Commission's federal compliance program during a site visit on September 18-19, 2013 and reported that NIACC met all the federal requirements.

F. Evidence of the Organization's Responsiveness to Previous Commission Concerns Regarding Fulfillment of the Criteria for Accreditation

The Systems Appraisal team found three core components (1C, 2C, 4C) to be unclear or incomplete. However, the Quality Checkup team determined that all core components were strong, clear, and well presented or adequate but could be improved (including 1C, 2C and 4C). Whereas NIACC 's final core component tabulation resulted in fourteen *adequate but could be stronge*r scores, the Quality Checkup team credited the institution with its attempt and improvement in effort to comply with the System Appraisal recommendations. It was deemed by the team that NIACC is moving down a path of continuous improvement and therefore satisfied the core component requirements.

II. Fulfillment of the Criteria for Accreditation

CRITERION ONE: MISSION. The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

Core Component 1A: The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

Subcomponent 1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.

Subcomponent 2. The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.

Subcomponent 3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission.

Team Determination: _X_ Core Component is met
                               __ Core Component is met with concerns
                               __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:
- The NIACC Board of Directors approves the mission, which is reviewed every five years in congruence with the strategic planning cycle.
- The institution reviews evidence on the effectiveness of the mission.
- When a new mission, vision or values are considered, they are vetted by all employees and voted on by the College Senate.
- The mission is interwoven into the strategic plan and the college budget planning process. Worksheets used in the planning and budgeting process were provided as evidence.

Core Component 1B: The mission is articulated publicly.

Subcomponent 1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.

Subcomponent 2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.

Subcomponent 3. The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

Team Determination: _X_ Core Component is met
                               __ Core Component is met with concerns
                               __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:
- The college mission is displayed on the college's public website as well as in student and employee handbooks.
- The strategic plan is available for download on the college website.
- Since becoming an AQIP institution, the college has used the continuous improvement model to infuse the mission, vision, values and strategic plan into the culture of NIACC with the help of the AQIP Quality Council.

Core Component 1C: The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the

diversity of society.

    Subcomponent 1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.

    Subcomponent 2. The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met
                                __ Core Component is met with concerns
                                __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:
- North Iowa Area Community College fosters diversity through coursework, student clubs and an active, global program.
- NIACC is ADA compliant, trains faculty to serve special populations, and delivers instruction in multiple modes to serve diverse student groups.

Core Component 1D: The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

    Subcomponent 1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.

    Subcomponent 2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.

    Subcomponent 3. The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met
                                __ Core Component is met with concerns
                                __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:
- NIACC works with the surrounding community and industry partners to meet their needs via program development. Advisory committees are in place for career and technical education programs.
- When community requests exceed the college's ability to execute those requests, the NIACC Board of Directors prioritizes needs based on input from industry partners.
- In addition to the advisory boards, the college conducts focus groups and surveys to determine external stakeholder needs.

Team Determination on Criterion One:
      X Criterion is met
      __ Criterion is met with concerns
      __ Criterion is not met

Summary Statement on Criterion One:

Criterion One is met and no Commission follow up is necessary.

CRITERION TWO: Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct. The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Core Component 2A: The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows fair and ethical policies and processes for its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met
                             __ Core Component is met with concerns
                             __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:
- The college sets forth standards for behavior in its Code of Ethics policy.   Additionally, employees receive harassment and ethics training.
- The Board has adopted a Code of Ethics policy which includes a legal and moral commitment, conflict of interest, and as directed by the Code of Iowa 68B2A, will not use their elected position for personal gain.
- A financial audit is performed annually; any comments or 'findings' are made a part of this audit. The college identifies how, if any, findings will be resolved and how to prevent recurrence. No findings have been reported during the past ten years.

Core Component 2B: The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met
                             __ Core Component is met with concerns
                             __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:
- The well-designed college website contains comprehensive information, including, but not limited to, program and degree requirements, tuition, fees, and information regarding transfer of credit, safety information, and employment opportunities. Comprehensive information is also available in the college catalog.

Core Component 2C: The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

   Subcomponent 1. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.

   Subcomponent 2. The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.

Subcomponent 3. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests, or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.

Subcomponent 4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

Team Determination: _X_ Core Component is met
                              __ Core Component is met with concerns
                              __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:
- The nine-member Board of Directors is elected from its nine service districts by a vote of the people, and operates under the *Code of Iowa, 68B2A*, the book of statutes public officials must follow.
- The Board of Directors is responsible for approving the budget and the strategic plan, but the college president has jurisdiction over the day-to-day operations of the institution

Core Component 2D: The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

Team Determination: _X_ Core Component is met
                              __ Core Component is met with concerns
                              __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:
- The college believes the inherent nature of academic freedom requires investigation, criticism, and the staging of ideas in an atmosphere of freedom and mutual confidence. Professional development opportunities in innovative teaching ideas are promoted to faculty. Faculty members are required by the College to meet course competency expectations in their instructional duties, but are afforded academic freedom on how course competencies are delivered and assessed in the act of student learning.

Core Component 2E: The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

Subcomponent 1. The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.

Subcomponent 2. Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.

Subcomponent 3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Team Determination: _X_ Core Component is met
                              __ Core Component is met with concerns
                              __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:

- The Institutional Review Board oversees all research conducted by faculty, staff and students.
- The student handbook clearly outlines the student code of conduct that includes: honesty, plagiarism, and copyright infringement and integrity policies. Detailed procedures for infractions of the academic honesty and integrity policies are located in the student handbook.

Team Determination on Criterion Two:
> X Criterion is met
> __ Criterion is met with concerns
> __ Criterion is not met

Summary Statement on Criterion Two:
> Criterion Two is met and no Commission follow up is necessary.

CRITERION THREE: Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support. The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

Core Component 3A: The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

Subcomponent 1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.

Subcomponent 2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.

Subcomponent 3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

Team Determination: X Core Component is met
                                 __ Core Component is met with concerns
                                 __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:
- NIACC has presented data from Northern Iowa University demonstrating that NIACC is their leading feeder school, and that NIACC students attain higher academic standing at NIU compared to transfer students from other Iowa community colleges. Additionally, the supplemental resource materials included a document showing specific success, transfer, and graduation rates of NIAAC transfer students in comparison to the other 15 Iowa community colleges. NIACC ranked fourth.
- Courses and programs are held current through state-wide faculty collaborations and regular meetings of the college's advisory committees.
- Academic leaders across the various departments are responsible for overseeing academic program quality that is consistent across all programs and modalities.

Core Component 3B: The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational

programs.

Subcomponent 1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.

Subcomponent 2. The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.

Subcomponent 3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

Subcomponent 4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.

Subcomponent 5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission.

Team Determination: _X_ Core Component is met
                               __ Core Component is met with concerns
                               __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:
- General education objectives were developed by the faculty, and reflect the mission of the institution. Academic leaders and ultimately the Board of Directors approved the college-wide objectives.
- The general education core with a minimum of 40 semester hours, aligns with the college mission and is comprised of 8 semester hours each in Communications, Social Sciences, Humanities, Natural Sciences/Mathematics and 8 elective hours.
- A standing Diversity Plan Committee guides the institution in fostering diversity among faculty, staff and students. Most of the academic programs include an ethics and diversity course specific to the discipline.

Core Component 3C: The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

Subcomponent 1. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.

Subcomponent 2. All instructors are appropriately credentialed, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.

Subcomponent 3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.

Subcomponent 4. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in

their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.

Subcomponent 5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.

Subcomponent 6. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

Team Determination: _X_ Core Component is met
                              __ Core Component is met with concerns
                              __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:
- Academic leaders monitor enrollment to determine adequate staffing needs.
- Faculty are hired through a long-standing HR process that verifies transcripts, uses background checks, teaching demonstrations, applicant responses to educational issues and consideration of the candidate's educational philosophy, to determine a fit for the college.
- Newly hired faculty are under a probationary period when their performance is evaluated semi-annually for the first two years; according to college policy all faculty are evaluated every three years.
- Full- and part-time faculty, librarians and counselors are required to complete a Quality Faculty Plan annually.
- Full-time faculty are required to post five hours of open office hour time each week.

Core Component 3D: The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

Subcomponent 1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.

Subcomponent 2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.

Subcomponent 3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.

Subcomponent 4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

Subcomponent 5. The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

Team Determination: _X_ Core Component is met
                              __ Core Component is met with concerns
                              __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:

- The college provides a full range of support services for students in the areas of career counseling and placement, academic support, health and wellness, housing, social life, technology, and cultural events.
- The Teaching and Learning center provides faculty support and training in a variety of topics and teaching methods.
- The library provides an impressive array of reference and media training and support for faculty and students in a variety of formats.

Core Component 3E: The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

   Subcomponent 1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.

   Subcomponent 2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

Team Determination: _X_ Core Component is met
                                  __ Core Component is met with concerns
                                  __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:
- NIACC provides 33 student clubs and six organizations for students' co-curricular experience; all co-curricular activities align with the college mission and are educational in nature and intent.
- In addition to the co-curricular organizations, the college provides activities and fitness centers, a gymnasium, and multiple social and cultural events.

Team Determination on Criterion Three:
         X Criterion is met
         __ Criterion is met with concerns
         __ Criterion is not met

Summary Statement on Criterion Three:
    Criterion Three is met and no Commission follow up is necessary.

CRITERION FOUR: Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement. The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

Core Component 4A: The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

Subcomponent 1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.

Subcomponent 2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning.

Subcomponent 3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.

Subcomponent 4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.

Subcomponent 5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.

Subcomponent 6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

Team Determination: _X_ Core Component is met
                                          __ Core Component is met with concerns
                                          __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:
- The registrar's office evaluates transcripts based on written college policies; the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning is contracted to review and evaluate credit for prior learning portfolios. Military transcripts are evaluated based on the American Council on Education standards.
- Faculty and division chairs recommend prerequisites to academic leadership with final approval by the Academic Affairs Committee. Rigor for all courses, including those offered at high schools for dual credit, follow the same process for approval and oversight.
- The college is accredited by the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnership that sets standards for alignment of high school and college curriculum.
- NIACC has four specialized program accreditations that are all in good standing.
- The college uses employer and graduate surveys to determine program success.

Core Component 4B: The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

Subcomponent 1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.

Subcomponent 2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.

Subcomponent 3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.

Subcomponent 4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

Team Determination: _X_ Core Component is met
                                                __ Core Component is met with concerns
                                                __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:
- NIACC participated in the HLC Assessment Academy in August 2013 and brought in experts to provide training and research in development of its general education assessment plan which it recently implemented.
- Student senators monitor club and organizational activities and submit reports to verify co-curricular activities support club goals.
- NIACC indicates it uses the five-year program review information to determine program learning outcomes.
- Faculty led the development and implementation of the general education assessment process.

Core Component 4C: The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

Subcomponent 1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.

Subcomponent 2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.

Subcomponent 3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.

Subcomponent 4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

Team Determination: _X_ Core Component is met
                                                __ Core Component is met with concerns
                                                __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:
- The Quality Checkup Team verified that the institution has retention, persistence and completion data to guide institutional decisions. NIACC completed an Action Project in 2011 focusing on a retention alert system. This system has been institutionalized for general population students.

- In 2014, the college was awarded the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence

wherein IPEDS data are used to identify the top 150 community colleges through an assessment of institutional performance, improvement and equity in student retention and completion measures.

Team Determination on Criterion Four:

<u>X</u> Criterion is met

__ Criterion is met with concerns

__ Criterion is not met

Summary Statement on Criterion Four:

The institution's faculty have put great thought and effort into designing the eight general education objectives.

The Systems Appraisal and Quality Checkup Visit teams reported concerns with the lack of data related to retention, persistence and completion. Indications are that NIACC does collect, analyze, and use completion data, thus is encouraged to provide clear evidence of such in its next Systems Portfolio.

CRITERION FIVE: Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness. The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

Core Component 5A: The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

Subcomponent 1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.

Subcomponent 2. The institution's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.

Subcomponent 3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.

Subcomponent 4. The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.

Subcomponent 5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

Team Determination: <u>X</u> Core Component is met

__ Core Component is met with concerns

__ Core Component is not met

Evidence:
- The process to lead the college in a strategic fashion has improved over the last five years, with the development of a strategic plan based upon education, leadership and partnership.

Institutional, as well as unit goals and strategic priorities are formulated in alignment with the strategic plan.
- The college budget and the three-year budget prediction cycle are aligned with the strategic plan and are widely distributed throughout the college for comment. The priorities are set by college leadership and approved by the Board of Directors.
- The hiring process assures faculty and staff meet institutional qualifications and expectations. The college supports professional development to ensure employees are current in their respective fields.
- The mission is appropriate for the institution. Evidence indicates that the college looks to the mission, vision and strategic plan to guide its decisions.

Core Component 5B: The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

Subcomponent 1. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution's governance.

Subcomponent 2. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight for the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

Subcomponent 3. The institution enables the involvement of its administration, faculty, staff, and students in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met
                          __ Core Component is met with concerns
                          __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:
- The college offers multiple opportunities for governance participation via committee and task force work. Most meetings are open to employees; proceedings for meetings are posted internally.
- The Board of Directors acts under the *Code of Iowa* and does not participate in day-to-day decisions of the college.

Core Component 5C: The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

Subcomponent 1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.

Subcomponent 2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.

Subcomponent 3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.

Subcomponent 4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.

Subcomponent 5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

Team Determination: _X_ Core Component is met
                              __ Core Component is met with concerns
                              __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:
- The college, through an established planning process, uses its mission statement to guide allocation decisions.
- The Educational Effectiveness Committee has oversight of the academic assessment process.
- The five-year strategic planning cycle incorporates input from employees and external stakeholders through environmental scans and focus groups.

Core Component 5D: The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

Subcomponent 1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.

Subcomponent 2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

Team Determination: _X_ Core Component is met
                              __ Core Component is met with concerns
                              __ Core Component is not met

Evidence:
- An annual report of the college KPI progress is produced to identify areas of success and weakness.
- NIACC uses the reports from the various committees and groups to make decisions and plan for progress.

Team Determination on Criterion Five:
        X_ Criterion is met
        __ Criterion is met with concerns
        __ Criterion is not met

Summary Statement on Criterion Five:
Criterion Five is met and no Commission follow up is necessary.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION

A. Affiliation Status

Recommendation: The Systems Appraisal Feedback Report, Quality Checkup Report, and Quality Highlights indicate that the institution provided evidence that it complies with the Five

Criteria for Accreditation and their Core Components. The Reaffirmation Panel agrees that the Criteria for Accreditation are all met.

Rationale: The Panel's rationale for this conclusion is spelled out above for each of the five Criteria for Accreditation.

Criterion-related Monitoring Required (report, focused visit):

Monitoring: None

Rationale: N/A

B. Commission Sanction or Adverse Action

None

III. Participation in the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP)

A. Comments and counsel on specific improvement projects

The college has gotten off to an ambitious start on its quality journey by launching16 Action Projects in the past four years. While the eagerness is commendable, NIACC is encouraged to consider narrowing its focus to Projects more broad in focus which will help the institution to develop indicators of high performance organizations. Feedback from the Systems Appraisal should reveal those opportunities for improvement which will strengthen the institution.

As student learning is the backbone of the college experience, it is important for North Iowa Area Community College to clearly document its understanding of student learning and the culture of outcomes assessment. The college is commended for its participation in the Assessment Academy and the five Action Projects focusing on assessment. The college is encouraged, however, to diligently and collaboratively work on implementing the assessment plans, collecting data, and converting those data into meaningful information to support critical decision making at all levels, and to continue to refine program outcomes and assessment of student learning.

The impact of early Action Projects is not detailed in the Systems Portfolio, and as a first cycle AQIP participant, the impact of Action Projects may just begin to be observable. It will be important for North Iowa Area Community College to publicly celebrate the accomplishments of each Action Project, and to highlight changes to specific departments, systems, and processes, and thus foster pride and momentum for quality initiatives.

B. Comments and counsel on key institutional processes and systems

North Iowa Area Community College is commended for completing its first AQIP cycle and the accomplishments of the early stages of its quality journey. It is clear that the college is committed to supporting the success of its stakeholders. It exhibits evidence of its commitment to high performance, AQIP principles, and continuous quality improvement. The institution is approaching

quality efforts systematically and deliberately, fostering a culture that bases decision making on analyzing data, setting goals, and measuring progress.

The college has made significant progress in several areas including the recent redesign of the strategic plan and focus on general education outcomes. NIACC is poised to continue work aligning its processes, results and improvements. The institution is encouraged to identify certain data that will allow for benchmarking and comparison with peer institutions. The institution is encouraged to establish its own performance targets and to establish systems and processes to convert the data to useable information. Doing so will assist in guiding decision making and prioritizing the use of resources.

While NIACC is actively pursuing several Action Projects related to assessment of student learning, it is once again encouraged to consider the importance of successfully completing these Projects and implementing a robust system of assessing general education and program level outcomes as well as co-curricular objectives of the college.

C. Comments and counsel on the institution's culture of quality and its quality program or infrastructure.

North Iowa Area Community College has a rich history of nearly a century of academic excellence and has a strong foundation upon which to build an institutional culture of assessment. The choice to participate in the AQIP pathway emphasizes the institution's commitment to excellence. As noted, there is a need to systematize its processes for data gathering and analyzing and ensure that they are connected to decision making. A real culture of assessment permeates an institution and is not limited to academic goals but extends to all support service units of the institution such as student affairs, facilities, and other administrative units.

Summary of panel comments and counsel about the organization's commitment to continuous quality improvement and its participation in AQIP:

The Reaffirmation Panel notes that North Iowa Area Community College is in its first cycle under the AQIP Pathway and it has made significant progress on its quality journey. It is important that the institution understand that the feedback provided throughout the AQIP cycle is intended to aid the institution in meeting its goals and objectives. Seeking external feedback through benchmarking and gaining a better understanding of the institution's strengths and opportunities will be critical to continued success.

The Reaffirmation Panel acknowledges and commends North Iowa Area Community College for voluntary participation in the Academic Quality Improvement Program of the Higher Learning Commission in its pursuit of continuous quality improvement.

STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS WORKSHEET

INSTITUTION and STATE: North Iowa Area Community College IA

TYPE OF REVIEW*:* AQIP Reaffirmation of Accreditation Recommendation

DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW:

DATES OF REVIEW: 9/9/2014

☐   No Change in Statement of Affiliation Status

Nature of Organization

CONTROL: Public

RECOMMENDATION: nc

DEGREES AWARDED: Certificate, Associates

RECOMMENDATION: nc

Conditions of Affiliation

STIPULATIONS ON AFFILIATION STATUS:
Prior Commission approval is required for substantive change as stated in Commission policy.

RECOMMENDATION: nc

APPROVAL OF NEW ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS:
Prior Commission approval required.

RECOMMENDATION: nc

APPROVAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION DEGREES:
Approved for distance education courses and programs. The institution has not been approved for correspondence education.

RECOMMENDATION: nc

ACCREDITATION ACTIVITIES:

AQIP, Quality Checkup: 09/18/2013

AQIP, Systems Appraisal: 06/01/2018
AQIP, Systems Appraisal: 06/01/2022

RECOMMENDATION: AQIP, Systems Appraisal: 06/01/2018
AQIP, Systems Appraisal: 06/01/2022

Summary of Commission Review

YEAR OF LAST REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION: 2003 - 2004

YEAR FOR NEXT REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION: 2014 - 2015

RECOMMENDATION: 2022-2023

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE WORKSHEET

INSTITUTION and STATE: 1250 North Iowa Area Community College IA

TYPE OF REVIEW: AQIP Reaffirmation of Accreditation Recommendation

DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW:

☒   No change to Organization Profile

Educational Programs

Programs leading to Undergraduate	Program Distribution
Associates	38
Bachelors	0

Programs leading to Graduate	
Masters	0
Specialist	0
Doctors	0

Certificate programs	
Certificate	32

Recommended Change:

Off-Campus Activities:
In State - Present Activity
Campuses: None.

Additional Locations: None.

Recommended Change:

Out Of State - Present Activity
Campuses: None.

Additional Locations: None.

Recommended Change:

Out of USA - Present Activity

Campuses: None.

Additional Locations: None.

Recommended Change:

Distance Education Programs:
Present Offerings:
Associate 24.0101 Liberal Arts and Sciences/Liberal Studies Associate in Arts Degree Internet

Associate 52.0201 Business Administration and Management, General Associate in Science - Business Degree Internet

Recommended Change:

Correspondence Education Programs:
Present Offerings:
None.

Recommended Change:

Contractual Relationships:
Present Offerings:
None.

Recommended Change:

Consortial Relationships:
Present Offerings:
None.

Recommended Change: