Response to Systems Appraisal Team Report

Submitted to the Academic Quality Improvement Program
The Higher Learning Commission
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
April 24, 2013
East Central College
Response to the Systems Appraisal Team Report

East Central College has received the Systems Appraisal Team Report and respectfully submits this response. The college appreciates the feedback provided in the team report and has already begun discussing how to build on strengths and address opportunities identified therein.

The team indicated that evidence for three core components was adequate but could be improved: Core Components 1C (1P4, 1P10), 3E (1P16), and 1B (5P3-5P8).

East Central College appreciates the opportunity to address these core components, and recognizes that more evidence could have been provided to provide a strong, clear, and well-presented case that the criteria and core components had been met. The purpose of this response is to provide such evidence. Moreover, the college also acknowledges that in addition to providing more evidence, the opportunity exists to improve our work in each of these areas. The responses provided below are also intended to illustrate, where applicable, improvements that are planned.

Core Component IC (1P4, 1P10)

1C: The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

ECC’s Portfolio Evidence:

1.C - ECC maintains processes related to programming and curriculum that are responsive and agile; the current environment for business and industry requires that faculty have the ability to update and modify programming to align with industry needs. The College addresses the relationship of its mission and diversity of society in the CLOs, the general education skill areas, activities on campus, the draft Ethics Policy and other events and programming. Non-discrimination policies are made public in institutional publications.

1.C - The College has an EEOC policy and statement regarding accessibility. The College addresses the relationship of its mission and diversity of society in the CLOs, the general education skill areas, activities on campus, the draft Ethics Policy and other events and programming. Non-discrimination policies are made public in institutional publications.

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ECC demonstrates the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society in a variety of ways.
First, the college approaches cultural awareness and diversity through academics and programming. The college has instituted three common learning objectives (CLOs), one of which is Ethics and Social Responsibility. Currently an Action Project is exploring how to best achieve and assess this objective. One goal of the project is to establish an institutional code of ethics, a draft document which was prepared over the past two academic years with input from the entire camps and is now under review by the Cabinet with a goal of approval by the Board of Trustees.

Another way that cultural awareness and diversity are addressed through academics is the current general education skill areas of Global and Valuing. For example, through coursework like World Fiction, World Music, African American Literature, Latino/Latina Literature and World Literature, as well as Spanish, French and German foreign language offerings, students learn about the richness and diversity of other cultures. Faculty use the disciplines of music, literature and art to guide students in exploring other cultures. The college has increased its offerings in the Global skill area with recent additions in these disciplines.

Academic programming also reflects the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society. The college has developed various programs to support the diversity of learners and new academic programming. Academic Boot Camp was developed as a pathway for adult, non-traditional students to be introduced to college. Through a series of academic activities, participants learn about being a college student and what various assessment results mean. In response to participant surveys, the college created the Basic Computer Skills class to assist learners under skilled in the basic computer abilities needed for college students. A Transitions Program was developed to provide smooth entry for grant participants. Various grants have supported the development of new academic programs (e.g., Health Information Management, Certified Medical Technician). These grants have attracted under employed, low skilled adults to the college. Transitions programming provides these participants with basic skills instruction in mathematics, writing and reading, and basic computer skills.

The relationship between the college mission and diversity of society is also addressed through campus-wide and co-curricular activities. The current action project on Ethics and Social Responsibility continues to explore options to measure and sustain offerings in support of this CLO.

The items in the table below represent a sample of how the college promotes to students, staff and community an understanding of the diversity of society:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization/Club</th>
<th>Activity/Objectives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Nursing Club</td>
<td>Soap drive for Honduras; promotes awareness of poverty in the third world and the impact of simple products like soap in reducing the spread of disease</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student Government

Established a food bank on campus; the goal is to provide students in need with access to food and other staples, for themselves and their families. Increases student awareness of poverty in the community.

Multicultural Committee

International Education Week events; speakers and presentations on a wide variety of world topics

The Green Committee

Earth Day activities; promote awareness of environmental and climate issues. Activities are intended for students, staff and the community.

ECC Foundation “Patrons of the Arts”

Music performances and events; includes multicultural performances from other countries. For examples, this year performers represented Mexico and Sweden.

Student organizations also play an important role, as noted above. One example, AHERO (Adult Higher Education Responsible Options) Club, formed to assist adult students in returning and acclimating to college. The club has become very active on campus, raised money to assist member students, and worked to provide support for adult students returning to college.

Finally, the Words in Motion speaker series has been particularly useful in creating a climate rich in diversity. Some of the presentations of the series have included the following:

- **Playback Theater-Community and Diversity.** This special presentation asks audience members to share their personal stories of life in our community. A group of professional, ethnically diverse actors then used improvisation to bring that story to life on stage.

- **Media in China-** A Chinese national working in the media discussed how television news is created in China and the difference between American and Chinese broadcasting.

- **Life in Brazil-** Students watched a film about drugs and crime in the *favellas* of Brazil then listened to a speaker who talked about life in Rio De Janeiro

- **Who Does She Think She Is-** A film and panel discussion about women in the arts

- **Miss Representation-** A showing of the documentary and a panel discussion about women's issues and media in our community

- **Primero Agua and Sin Nombre-** A showing of the film *Sin Nombre* about life in Honduras and Mexico then a special presentation from a group working to bring clean water to communities in Honduras
Core Component 3.E (1P16)

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

ECC’s Portfolio Evidence:

3.E - ECC offers a full range of student activities, both aligned with academic programming and others, like athletics, to support student enrichment. Activities include SMSTA (Student Missouri State Teachers Association), Art Club, Pre-Engineering Club, Rotaract, Bowling Club and many more. ECC provides students general disclosure information related to its programming, such as the types of jobs being prepared for, transfer expectations, pass rates on licensure exams, the cost of college and other important information to assist students in making a good decision regarding their higher education experience. This information and much more is available at the Student Consumer Information link from the College website. This information is reviewed regularly and maintained for currency.

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ECC fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment. Students at Campus Orientation are provided an opportunity to learn about various campus activities, clubs and organizations. Also at Orientation, students learn about the range of cultural and educational events free to them, as students, including Fine and Performing Arts events, the speaker series and other campus activities. Faculty in the arts often require student attendance at these events as an important component of the course. Students can participate at club fairs at Falcon Fest events, held mid-semester in the fall and spring, to learn more about the organizations and their contribution to the educational environment.

Cultural Events and Activities
Students at ECC may attend the full series of Patrons of the Arts programming at no cost. These students have the opportunity to see world class musicians, musical performances, plays and other related activities. Students may also join a variety of choirs and bands, open to non-major students and community members. Music students participate in recitals and programs with professional musicians. The college also has an art gallery, open year round, with shows changing regularly. The art students sponsor two specific shows annually. Students in the art club, for example, have the opportunity for a spring travel abroad, to see art in other cultures.

Student Activities and Organizations
ECC maintains a program of collegiate athletics. Three sports annually involve approximately 45 students as participants; students are recruited from all over the world to play in various athletics at the college. Entry to the sporting events is free.
The college also has a number of student clubs that help create and sustain an enriched educational environment, listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ECC Student Clubs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allied Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Art Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campus Crusade for Christ</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Cornerstone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performing Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>PTK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rotaract</td>
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<tr>
<td>PTK - Rolla</td>
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<tr>
<td>SGA - Rolla</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Nurses - Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMSTA</td>
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**Speakers and Presentations**
In addition to the Words and Motion speaker and film series, free to all students and community members, students often have speakers and presentations from professionals as part of a class. The students in Business and Accounting, for example, participate in the annual Business Symposium. Members of the community associated with business and industry join students for a morning long symposium and presentation.

**Athletics**
The college has three competitive sports, recruiting students from around the world. Sporting events are free to all students and the community. Student activities also sponsor intramural sports events for students.

**Student Publications**
Interested students take part in the production and publication of The Cornerstone, the college newspaper. Open to majors and non-majors, participants work to produce a high quality publication, which shares the news of the college and of particular interest to the students. In addition, the English department faculty work with students on the publication of the *Lit Review*, an annual anthology of student work. The English department also sponsors poetry readings by full-time and part-time faculty, as well as a writing contest each semester and open mic events for students. Faculty in several departments also support collaborative student activities.
Practicum and Internships
Students in a wide variety of programs have opportunity to participate in practicum and internship activities, related to their program of study. These experiences may be in a business or industry in the community or on campus. One example is the annual assignment of a graphic design student to the music department to assist in the production of promotional materials for distribution.

Faculty Diversity and Experiences
ECC hires a diverse group of faculty members, whom bring to the college and the students a world view, a diversity of experiences in their discipline or program and come from a diverse set of cultures. These faculty often have opportunity to share their experiences through events on campus and classroom activities.

Core Component 1.B. The mission is articulated publicly.

ECC’s Portfolio Evidence:

1.B - The institution’s mission, vision and value are conveyed by leaders in a variety of settings. The mission statement encompasses the nature, scope and purpose of the institution and its programs, is articulated in Board Policy, on the website, in the catalog and other documents of the college, and is shared in other venues.

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The East Central College mission statement is adopted publicly by the board of trustees and included in the board policy manual, a public document. The vision, mission, and purpose statements combined serve to identify the role and nature of the institution. However, the college in its portfolio could have better illustrated numerous documents and settings in which the mission is articulated publicly. What follows are examples of the public expression of the mission statement. The following screen shot illustrates the mission statement on the college web site:

http://www.eastcentral.edu/faculty/ldrship_initiatives/missionstatement.php
The College Catalog is available strictly on-line, and includes the mission statement:

http://www.eastcentral.edu/programs/catalog/web/about_the_college/mission.php

Moreover, regarding the communication of the college mission to students, the statement is included in the Student Handbook:


As a foundation to the college’s planning function, the Strategic Plan includes the mission and vision statement, and is available publicly on-line:
In the context of communicating the mission to employees, the Faculty Manual includes the Mission, Vision, and Purpose statements as illustrated below:

The statement is also included in the adjunct faculty handbook, master facilities plan, and other documents.

The College is in the midst of developing a new Strategic Plan to guide the institution in the years to come. The Strategic Planning Committee has drafted a revised set of statements that will
chart the course for the new plan. Included in this document are new statements of purpose, specifically: Vision, Mission, Purposes, Values, and Stakeholders. These statements serve to clearly identify the nature, scope and purpose of the institution, whom it serves, and the values and guiding principles by which the institution operates. The draft has been presented to the Board of Trustees for review, and will be presented to the campus community and public for feedback and comment. Once adopted, the mission will be broadly communicated to all constituents, including the documents and settings illustrated above.

Summary

This response to the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report is intended to provide additional evidence of the college’s fulfillment of Core Components 1C (1P4, 1P10), 3E (1P16), and 1B (5P3-5P8). The evidence provided herein illustrates that the college does meet the requirements of the core components and the requirements of the Higher Learning Commission as outlined in the Criteria for Accreditation. The institution is committed to continuous quality improvement and will look for ways to enhance the processes and outcomes that enable it to meet these expectations.