



February 17, 2014

Joseph D. Shepard
President
Western New Mexico University
P. O. Box 680
1000 West College Ave
Silver City, NM 88062

Dear President Shepard:

Enclosed is a copy of Western New Mexico University's *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*. Your Systems Appraisal Team provided extensive detail in the full report by identifying nine distinct groups of what they view as your institution's *strengths* and *opportunities for improvement*, one group for each of the nine AQIP Categories. We are also emailing your institution's Accreditation Liaison a copy of this report.

To receive maximum benefit from your Systems Appraisal, you and your colleagues should plan to invest substantial time in discussing it, considering the team's observations and advice, and identifying which actions will best advance your institution.

We ask that you formally acknowledge receipt of this report within the next two weeks, and provide us with any comments you wish to make about it. Your response will become part of your institution's permanent HLC file. Please email your response to AQIP@hlcommission.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary L. Green". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary L. Green
AQIP Process Administrator

SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

WESTERN NEW MEXICO UNIVERSITY

FEBRUARY 17, 2014



**Academic
Quality Improvement
Program**

The Higher Learning Commission **NCA**

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Table of Contents

Elements of the Feedback Report	1
Reflective Introduction and Executive Summary	3
Strategic Challenges	6
AQIP Category Feedback	7
<i>Helping Students Learn</i>	7
<i>Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives</i>	11
<i>Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs</i>	13
<i>Valuing People</i>	15
<i>Leading and Communicating</i>	19
<i>Supporting Institutional Operations</i>	22
<i>Measuring Effectiveness</i>	25
<i>Planning Continuous Improvement</i>	27
<i>Building Collaborative Relationships</i>	29
Accreditation Issues	32
Quality of Systems Portfolio	42
Using the Feedback Report	43

ELEMENTS OF WESTERN NEW MEXICO UNIVERSITY'S FEEDBACK REPORT

Welcome to the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*. This report provides AQIP's official response to an institution's *Systems Portfolio* by a team of peer reviewers (the Systems Appraisal Team). After the team independently reviews the institution's portfolio, it reaches consensus on essential elements of the institutional profile, strengths and opportunities for improvement by AQIP Category, and any significant issues related to accreditation. These are then presented in three sections of the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*: "Strategic Challenges Analysis," "AQIP Category Feedback," and "Accreditation Issues Analysis." These components are interrelated in defining context, evaluating institutional performance, surfacing critical issues or accreditation concerns, and assessing institutional performance. Ahead of these three areas, the team provides a "Reflective Introduction" followed closely by an "Executive Summary." The appraisal concludes with commentary on the overall quality of the report and advice on using the report. Each of these areas is overviewed below.

It is important to remember that the Systems Appraisal Team has only the institution's *Systems Portfolio* to guide its analysis of the institution's strengths and opportunities for improvement. Consequently the team's report may omit important strengths, particularly if the institution were too modest to stress them or if discussion or documentation of these areas in the *Systems Portfolio* were presented minimally. Similarly the team may point out areas of potential improvement that are already receiving wide-spread institutional attention. Indeed it is possible that some areas recommended for potential improvement have since become strengths rather than opportunities through the institution's ongoing efforts. Recall that the overarching goal of the Systems Appraisal Team is to provide an institution with the best possible advice for ongoing improvement.

The various sections of the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* can be described as follows:

Reflective Introduction & Executive Summary: In this first section of the *System's Appraisal Feedback Report*, the team provides a summative statement that reflects its broad understanding of the institution and the constituents served (Reflective Introduction), and also the team's overall judgment regarding the institution's current performance in relation to the nine AQIP Categories (Executive Summary). In the Executive Summary, the team considers such factors as: robustness of process design; utilization or deployment of processes; the existence of results, trends, and comparative data; the use of results data as feedback; and systematic processes for improvement of

the activities that each AQIP Category covers. Since institutions are complex, maturity levels may vary from one Category to another.

Strategic Challenges Analysis: Strategic challenges are those most closely related to an institution's ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning, and quality improvement goals. Teams formulate judgments related to strategic challenges and accreditation issues (discussed below) through careful analysis of the Organizational Overview included in the institution's Systems Portfolio and through the team's own feedback provided for each AQIP Category. These collected findings offer a framework for future improvement of processes and systems.

AQIP Category Feedback: The *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* addresses each AQIP Category by identifying (and also coding) strengths and opportunities for improvement. An **S** or **SS** identifies strengths, with the double letter signifying important achievements or capabilities upon which to build. Opportunities are designated by **O**, with **OO** indicating areas where attention may result in more significant improvement. Through comments, which are keyed to the institution's Systems Portfolio, the team offers brief analysis of each strength and opportunity. Organized by AQIP Category, and presenting the team's findings in detail, this section is often considered the heart of the *Feedback Report*.

Accreditation Issues Analysis: Accreditation issues are areas where an institution may have not yet provided sufficient evidence that it meets the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*. It is also possible that the evidence provided suggests to the team that the institution may have difficulties, whether at present or in the future, in satisfying the *Criteria*. As with strategic challenges, teams formulate judgments related to accreditation issues through close analysis of the entire Systems Portfolio with particular attention given to the evidence that the institution provides for satisfying the various core components of the *Criteria*. For purposes of consistency, AQIP instructs appraisal teams to identify any accreditation issue as a strategic challenge as well.

Quality of Report & Its Use: As with any institutional report, the *Systems Portfolio* should work to enhance the integrity and credibility of the organization by celebrating successes while also stating honestly those opportunities for improvement. The *Systems Portfolio* should therefore be transformational, and it should provide external peer reviewers insight as to how such transformation may occur through processes of continuous improvement. The AQIP Categories and the Criteria for Accreditation serve as the overarching measures for the institution's current state as well as its proposed future state. As such, it is imperative that the *Portfolio* be fully developed, that it adhere to

the prescribed format, and that it be thoroughly vetted for clarity and correctness. Though decisions about specific actions rest with each institution following this review, AQIP expects every institution to use its feedback to stimulate cycles of continual improvement and to inform future AQIP processes.

REFLECTIVE INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR WESTERN NEW MEXICO UNIVERSITY

The following consensus statement is from the System Appraisal Team's review of the institution's *Systems Portfolio Overview* and its introductions to the nine AQIP Categories. The purpose of this reflective introduction is to highlight the team's broad understanding of the institution, its mission, and the constituents that it serves.

Western New Mexico University (WNMU) serves a diverse student population in a remote area of the state through the use of technology and appropriate support services. They clearly understand the constituency that they serve and have defined this base using a variety of characteristics ranging from academic background, diversity, full versus part time, and economic constraints.

Since 2009, WNMU has been on an inconsistent quality journey. They have pursued several action projects, but have experienced a high turnover in the individuals responsible for follow through on AQIP initiatives.

The University has gone through significant organizational change transitioning to a new president, a new provost, and to other new VPs, which has negatively impacted its quality journey. It is encouraging that the university recognizes this fact and has devoted considerable attention to its continuous improvements efforts including the formation of the University Planning Council (UPC) and the establishment of the Quality Planning Committee (QPC).

The following are summary comments on each of the AQIP Categories crafted by the Appraisal Team to highlight Western New Mexico University's achievements and to identify challenges yet to be met.

- **Category 1:** WNMU maintains quality student learning processes that are stable, but agile. It has continually adapted its delivery mode to include more online courses and virtual classroom experiences to meet the needs of its student body. The University involves faculty, staff, and administrators in establishing goals and assessing the effectiveness of the college experience at WNMU. The institution acknowledges the need for further process improvement efforts in the

areas of general education, discipline-based and effective integration of assessment, and more efficient collection and analysis of data.

- **Category 2:** WNMU defines “Other Distinctive Objectives” in a variety of ways, but with a focus on outreach activities to communities who traditionally do not consider higher education as an option. Internally, these systems are robust with a well-defined matrix of key non-instructional processes and goals with specific measures to gauge success. However, external efforts are not yet systemic, aligned, or tracked. Progress can be made by aligning these processes and integrating them into the institutional goals and strategies.
- **Category 3:** WNMU has orchestrated many opportunities for gathering data to identify various stakeholder needs. It has collected data from surveys, retreats, and collaboration efforts within departments that feed into the development of a persistence plan; the establishment of learning communities has led to collaborative efforts that serve constituencies across its various sites. The institution recognizes that further work is needed in creating consistent support for co-curricular activities and support services at all sites, and monitoring student needs for dual enrollment and virtual campus students.
- **Category 4:** In the area of *Valuing People*, WNMU has responded positively to feedback from the last Systems Appraisal. The University seems to have many programs and practices in place that support employees, increase satisfaction, and encourage organizational productivity. However, it does not appear that it has collected data on the perceived effectiveness of these efforts. Considerable quantitative data is collected, but tracking and using this data for analysis and improvement does not always happen. Specifically, opportunities exist in performance evaluation processes.
- **Category 5:** WNMU has seen a significant change in leadership over recent years and thus a test of its leadership and communication process. It has processes in place to review and reaffirm its mission, vision, values, and goals. Under the new administrative leadership, the institution is examining its processes to see if there is a better way to organize in order to serve its students, faculty, staff, and external constituencies. Leadership continues to break down silos via new communication processes, but this is a slow cultural change. WNMU acknowledges that opportunities exist to improve its ability to share day-to-day learning among organizational units, and there appears to be no formal succession plan.

- **Category 6:** Cross-functional discussions about shifts to an electronic hiring process, means of processing financial accounts, and innovations in virtual learning practices are examples of the institution's growing maturity in this area. The institution hopes to leverage this maturity into integrated processes that support institutional operations. WNMU recognizes that this effort will require additional process mapping for departments across campus.
- **Category 7:** The processes related to *Measuring Effectiveness* are relatively new and somewhat reactionary. Opportunities exist to ensure that the "right" data is captured, comparative data is identified, results are integrated effectively, and use of data to set targets for improvements is systematic.
- **Category 8:** WNMU recognizes mistakes from the past in *Planning for Continuous Improvement*, the opportunity to improve on processes, and the necessity to be thorough and creative in doing so. The institution has identified the need to determine metrics to assess progress on its strategic goals as well as a means to allocate resources in accordance with those strategic priorities.
- **Category 9:** WNMU has a clear understanding of how to build and nurture valuable collaborative relationships with its community, employers, sister institutions, high schools, and the communities that surround them. The institution sees its partnerships as a key component of its identity in a rural community. While the ability to develop and manage key collaborative partnerships exists, the institution recognizes an opportunity to leverage those partnerships within the institution and the larger community it serves. Further, WNMU has recognized a need to establish relationships with external communities through outreach programs, and recognizes some of the difficulties that exist due to geographical constraints. The University does recognize a weak link in sharing what has been learned and using that information to generate the greatest possible benefit for all involved.

Note: Strategic challenges and accreditation issues are discussed in detail in subsequent sections of the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*.

STRATEGIC CHALLENGES FOR WESTERN NEW MEXICO UNIVERSITY

In conducting the Systems Appraisal, the Systems Appraisal Team attempted to identify the broader issues that would seem to present the greatest challenges and opportunities for the institution in the coming years. These areas are ones that the institution should address as it seeks to become the institution it wants to be. From these the institution may discover its immediate priorities as well as shaping strategies for long-term performance improvement. These items may also serve as the basis for future activities and projects that satisfy other AQIP requirements. The team also considered whether any of these challenges put the institution at risk of not meeting the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*. That portion of the team's work is presented later in this report.

Knowing that **Western New Mexico University** will discuss these strategic challenges, give priority to those it concludes are most critical, and take action promptly, the Systems Appraisal Team identified the following:

- **Processes:** The institution describes many processes that are in the planning or beginning stages. However, many processes are not clearly delineated, and there is a demonstrated reliance on informal processes indicating a reactive rather than proactive approach. Further, responses described in the Portfolio generally indicate activities rather than processes. Once these proposed processes are implemented, the institution should be able to demonstrate systematic and repeatable processes that can be consciously managed, assessed, and modified when necessary.
- **Metrics:** In most cases, results are not aligned with the measures indicated. Results are generally narrative in form and not supported by data. Determination of what data is needed and collected, and to whom it goes is not evident. Trends, benchmarks, and goals are not connected to specific processes. Targets are not apparent in most categories. It is important that the institution develop specific and appropriate metrics, including setting goals and comparing its results to both its own data as well as the data of comparable institutions, as it implements new processes in order to determine if these new processes are working.
- **Communication:** The institution relies on informal communication, which often results in inconsistent messages being communicated. The institution has an opportunity to develop more formal communication processes to ensure consistency, formality, and integrity of message. Consequently, the message would be uniform and could be replicated at all levels and/or

coordinated among units. Consequently, the flow of information will be transparent at all levels which will facilitate unified and aligned efforts to achieve organizational goals.

AQIP CATEGORY FEEDBACK

In the following section, the Systems Appraisal Team delineates institutional strengths along with opportunities for improvement within the nine AQIP Categories. As explained above, the symbols used in this section are **SS** for outstanding strength, **S** for strength, **O** for opportunity for improvement, and **OO** for outstanding opportunity for improvement. The choice of symbol for each item represents the consensus evaluation of the team members and deserves the institution's thoughtful consideration. Comments marked **SS** or **OO** may need immediate attention, either to ensure the institution preserves and maximizes the value of its greatest strengths, or to devote immediate attention to its greatest opportunities for improvement.

AQIP Category 1: Helping Students Learn: This category identifies the shared purpose of all higher education organizations and is accordingly the pivot of any institutional analysis. It focuses on the teaching-learning process within a formal instructional context, yet it also addresses how the entire institution contributes to helping students learn and overall student development. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to learning objectives, mission-driven student learning and development, intellectual climate, academic programs and courses, student preparation, key issues such as technology and diversity, program and course delivery, faculty and staff roles, teaching and learning effectiveness, course sequencing and scheduling, learning and co-curricular support, student assessment, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Western New Mexico University** for Category 1. *WNMU is clearly committed to Helping Students Learn. It has systematic processes in place for course and learning objectives, program design and review, and program and course delivery. It has begun to develop comprehensive and repeatable processes in the areas of student preparedness, support systems, and co-curricular learning. The opportunity exists to build a more robust system of methodical direct measurement so that comparable results can be obtained to assist them in continuous quality improvement.* **Systematic**

1P1, S. WNMU's general education goals are tied to its mission and aligned with the New Mexico HED's common core in five General Education areas. Faculty have created four

overarching goals specific to its General Education program, and established specific learning objectives for General Education courses. Annually, the Faculty Assembly and Provost approve the assessment report for common core and implement changes. Plans are in place to address the remaining gaps that exist in program assessment of these goals.

1P2, S. Student Learning Objectives (SLO) are developed by faculty based on survey input from seniors, program graduates, peer institution comparisons, industry standards, community and society needs, certification, and accreditation requirements.

1P3, S. Utilizing input from both internal and external stakeholders, WNMU has established a process for the development of new programs/courses. This process is grounded in need-analysis and is faculty driven. Changes are made in response to changing environments and local community, regional, state, national, and international demands.

1P4, S. Academic programming balances learning objectives, employer requirements, and career goals that align with the university's mission statement through the establishment of student learning outcomes and the use of feedback in program evaluations.

1P5, S. WNMU employs multiple approaches to assess student-learning preparedness including placement testing, prerequisites, faculty advising, and grade requirements that guide students' successful progress through courses.

1P6, S. WNMU communicates with students and other stakeholders about preparation, learning, and development objectives, and course and program requirements through print, online, and social media materials. A required Student Success seminar and Advising Space are also used.

1P7, S. A comprehensive advising process is in place that begins with prospective students selecting their programs of study. In addition, First Year Experience helps new freshman and undeclared students with career planning and selection of programs that match their needs and abilities.

1P8, O. Although WNMU uses standard entrance tests to identify underprepared students, they have only just begun to develop strategies for developmental math and writing programs. Completion and implementation of these processes could provide the catalyst for underprepared students to move beyond the developmental sequence.

1P9, S. WNMU's commitment to differences in learning styles is enforced through student self-identification in the Student Success Seminar, faculty access to instructional design professionals,

and the institution's commitment to the principles of universal course design.

1P10, S. Special needs of student subgroups are addressed through accommodations, scheduling, advising, and online services. Further, WNMU recognizes opportunities for improvement in the areas of accessibility, scheduling, and support needs of online and remote location students. An Action Project has been established to address these areas.

1P11, S. WNMU has well-established processes for defining, documenting, and communicating expectations for effective teaching and learning including, but not limited to, departmental assessment reports, accreditations, exit exams, certification test scores, student evaluations, student portfolios, and capstone courses.

1P12, S. WNMU uses a variety of course delivery methods to meet the needs of its various student groups based on assessing needs, organizational requirements, and feedback from stakeholders on the effectiveness of its efforts.

1P13, S. To ensure program and courses are up-to-date and effective, WNMU utilizes program and assessment review cycles, accreditation maintenance, graduate and employer surveys, and the expectation that faculty remain current in their fields.

1P14, S. Programs are discontinued or changed as a result of a 5-year program review process. Further, WNMU is engaged in a program prioritization process that compares all programs to align with the University's priorities.

1P15, O. Although WNMU has learning support systems in place, it is unclear, beyond faculty and student input, how these systems are determined, prioritized, and evaluated for quality and effectiveness. Establishing a process by which support needs are identified and reviewed regularly could provide a baseline for future determinations.

1P16, O. Although WNMU has established a few programs that support co-curricular learning objectives, the institution does not present a systematic alignment and evaluation process for these activities. Developing a crosswalk of co-curricular and curricular goals could demonstrate how these interface and support each other.

1P17, S. In addition to passing required courses to earn certificates and degrees, student learning is assessed through Student Learning Outcome Assessment Plans in all departments to ensure students have met program competencies or objectives.

1P18, S. The complex processes to assess WNMU students are designed by faculty in collaboration with HED, Deans, Chairs, employers, and accrediting agencies. The Assessment Committee is a vehicle for sharing best practices among departments.

1R1, S. WNMU has an extensive set of metrics and instruments for assessing student learning and development objectives.

1R2, O. WMNU acknowledges several assessment mechanisms are inadequate and recognizes an opportunity to address this concern. Doing so should allow for the development of more direct measures of assessment, the means to track results over time, and the chance to identify the root cause for poor or underperforming results.

1R3, O. While WNMU describes how the assessment of testing scores has impacted individual departments, it is unclear if the results provided are measures of specific program learning objectives. Alignment of measures with learning objectives could provide a systematic, repeatable, and consistent process by which trends in performance can be analyzed.

1R4, S. WNMU has access to a number of current metrics as evidence that its graduates have acquired the necessary knowledge and skills needed in their fields of study.

1R5, O. The results shown from the Library, the Writing Center, and Computer Lab indicate usage only. It could be more useful to analyze any correlation found between the usage of these support services with student success measures (course completion, GPA, graduation, etc.) in order to see the effectiveness of these services and to focus improvement activities.

1R6, O. While there is multiple-year comparisons of NCLEX pass rates, most of the data provided are for a single year. Multiple-year comparisons to other higher education organizations can provide a clearer picture of how WNMU processes compare to peer institutions over time.

1I1, O. While WNMU has used some assessment results to inform curricular decisions, it is not clear if process and performance results are systematic and comprehensive. Identification of specific performance measures aligned with student learning objectives could furnish the basis for data-driven decision making.

1I2, O. Although WMNU indicates that a process change in leadership has created an opportunity for the institution to be reflective on its performance and set new goals for the future, it is unclear how these evidence a culture of continuous improvement. Its efforts to improve processes and results in *Helping Students Learn* could benefit from clearly identifying specific

processes and targets for improved performance.

AQIP Category 2: Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives: This category addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of the institution's major objectives that complement student learning and fulfill other portions of its mission. Depending on the institution's character, it examines the institution's processes and systems related to identification of other distinctive objectives, alignment of other distinctive objectives, faculty and staff roles, assessment and review of objectives, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Western New Mexico University** for Category 2.

*WNMU's Category 2 processes show that the institution has initiated the beginnings of systematic approaches to meet the basic requirements of Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives in order to achieve its institutional mission and values. These approaches are in the early stages of deployment for most work units. Early transitions from reacting to problems to a general improvement orientation are evident. Approaches are largely aligned with other work units through joint problem solving. WNMU shows performance results in some of its other distinctive objectives areas, and some trend data is reported. The institution still needs to improve its approach in reporting comparison data. It needs to develop comprehensive and repeatable processes within its culture and infrastructure that are designed to facilitate action planning and set benchmark targets and address the needs and expectations of the key stakeholders involved with Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives. **Reacting***

2P1, O. It is not evident how WNMU designs its key non-instructional processes. Figure 2P1.2 shows the deployment and alignment of the primary office or person responsible for overseeing each key non-instructional process including the measures and results the institution uses to evaluate its effectiveness. However, the processes describing how these goals are set and how the results are used in CQI decision-making are not addressed. Senior leaders have an opportunity to ensure that the key non-instructional processes are thoughtfully designed in order to achieve intended goals.

2P2, S. The key sources for creating non-instructional objectives come from WNMU's mission and vision, environmental scanning, and strategic initiatives aligned with the Strategic Plan. Stakeholder groups involved in setting action plans and objectives include faculty and staff leaders, BOR, Cabinet, UPC members, and community members.

2P3, O. It is not clear that WNMU uses a systematic communication approach to disseminate its

other distinct directives to all its stakeholders and to know how effectively its communication channels are helping stakeholders better understand the institution's mission and strategic plans. By addressing this issue, senior leaders have an opportunity to determine stakeholder satisfaction and engagement.

2P4, 5, & 6, O. It is not clear that WNMU has developed a comprehensive and systematic process to determine faculty and staff needs related to *Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives* and operations linked to the Strategic Plan. By addressing this issue, the university may gain a better understanding of its faculty and staff needs related to *Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives* in order to initiate actions plans for improvement.

2R1, S. WNMU has developed specific measures relevant to each individual non-instructional objective and, where available, includes comparative data.

2R2, S. WNMU presents examples of measures collected for the various other distinctive objectives. Many show positive trending data.

2R3, O. With the exception of the Early Childhood Program, WNMU has yet to determine comparison for its other distinctive objectives. The university may benefit in using appropriate comparisons of other distinctive objectives vs. peer institutions whether they are inside or outside higher education as it would be able to identify gaps in its service in these areas and make improvements to address any identified deficiencies.

2R4, S. WNMU results for *Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives* serve WNMU and the community in a variety of ways including: recruitment, reputation, community awareness, partnerships, and significant cultural opportunities.

2I1, O. WNMU highlights several improvements made for *Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives*. However, it is not evident that the university has developed a comprehensive and repeatable process to measure and analyze performance results from Category 2 for decision making in order to develop plans for improvement.

2I2, O. It is not clear how Category 2 process improvements or targets are determined. By developing specific targets for improvement of these objectives, the university may be able to provide documented evidence of continuing success and identify areas for improvement.

AQIP Category 3: Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs: This category examines how your institution works actively to understand student and other stakeholder needs. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student and stakeholder identification, student and stakeholder requirements, analysis of student and stakeholder needs, relationship building with students and stakeholders, complaint collection, analysis, and resolution, determining satisfaction of students and stakeholders, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Western New Mexico University** for Category 3.

WNMU has worked to understand and address students' needs and its processes for understanding students' needs. However, there is a need to expand this work to include other key stakeholder groups, including part-time and non-traditional students. The university could be more conscientious and deliberate in some of its processes for collecting and analyzing data, and closing the loop of analysis utilizing plan-do-check-act cycle. Systematic

3P1, S. WNMU has multiple methods to identify the changing needs of its student groups, including formal and informal processes, and proactively analyzes the data obtained to address these needs often using the UPC for cross-campus collaborative efforts.

3P2, S. WNMU's relationships with its students are built beginning with dual enrollment and recruiting efforts and maintained through a variety of activities such as advising, work-study opportunities, and engagement with faculty and staff.

3P3, S. The needs and expectations of key internal and external stakeholders are gathered formally through survey results and environmental scans, as well as informally with public forums and personal contacts, and the data is prioritized and folded into the strategic planning process and operational/unit plans.

3P4, S. WNMU has a number of initiatives and supporting processes for building and maintaining relationships with a wide range of stakeholders (Figure 3P4.1).

3P5, S. WNMU uses an environmental scan in the strategic planning process that includes a SWOT analysis, the results of which guide its action plans for targeting new student and/or stakeholder groups.

3P6, SS. WNMU describes a comprehensive and thorough process for collecting, analyzing, and acting on complaint information. The quality of the process was noted in the institution's recent

Quality Checkup Visit.

3R1a, S. Figure 3R1.1 illustrates some of the vehicles through which student data are collected, with examples of outcomes and actions resulting from the data.

3R1b, O. However, WNMU presents limited measures that they collect and analyze to determine other stakeholder satisfaction, and these do not seem to be part of a systemic process. Developing a more complete and considered process could help the university better understand and address the needs of those stakeholder groups.

3R2, S. WNMU reports a number of measures of satisfaction of students, including the SSI results. The measures are multi-faceted, quantitative, and allow comparison with other institutions. Overall, WNMU's performance on these measures is above average and shows an improvement trend.

3R3, S. WNMU reports increasing successful results in building relationships with students through data collected from dual enrollment, Campus Recreation, Student Health Services and Multi-Cultural Affairs, and Student Activities.

3R4, OO. Although WNMU refers to the development of a new comprehensive survey, the university recognizes a lack of evidence provided for stakeholder satisfaction. There is an opportunity to develop a systematic collection of such measures in order to build stronger relationships.

3R5, O. Although WNMU reports robust attendance numbers at events, it is unclear how these results are used to build and/or maintain successful relationships. There is an opportunity to collect additional measures of building relationships with key stakeholders, and analysis of that data could help determine stakeholder satisfaction and focus its improvement efforts.

3R6a, S. Overall, WNMU's performance measures in student satisfaction are above average, compare favorably to the national average, and generally show improvement trends.

3R6b, O. However, as a follow up to 3R1, the university cannot compare performance results if it is not collecting measures for its other stakeholders in a systematic fashion. Again, there is an opportunity to collect additional measures and an analysis of that data could help them to better understand its stakeholders' needs.

3I1a, S. WNMU has applied data concerning student needs to make improvements in a variety of

areas including teaching, training, and outreach.

3I1b, O. However, WNMU does not provide evidence of systematic and comprehensive processes in making these improvement decisions. WNMU recognizes the need to identify gaps and close feedback loops to better understand the needs of all its stakeholders. In these feedback loops, extensive analysis of results could inform the design and re-engineering of current processes as well as the selection of processes for improvement.

3I2, O. WNMU does not describe a culture and infrastructure that lead to setting of targets or selecting processes to improve. Although the institution identifies infrastructure improvements in Student Services, it does not describe a university culture that systematically promotes setting targets or selecting processes to improve, nor is it clear if these best practices go beyond the student service division. Eliminating a siloed approach could help WNMU integrate student and stakeholder needs with its larger institutional goals.

AQIP Category 4: Valuing People: This category explores the institution's commitment to the development of its employees since the efforts of all faculty, staff, and administrators are required for institutional success. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to work and job environment; workforce needs; training initiatives; job competencies and characteristics; recruitment, hiring, and retention practices; work processes and activities; training and development; personnel evaluation; recognition, reward, compensation, and benefits; motivation factors; satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Western New Mexico University** for Category 4.

*WNMU has a number of processes and basic systems in place for Valuing People and has recently made some changes to further improve these processes. A comprehensive set of measures for Valuing People seems to be lacking as well. Many opportunities exist to move these processes to a higher level of maturity. Integral to this effort are the identification and development of appropriate measures that will serve the purpose of assessment in a culture of continuous improvement. Further, WNMU could benefit from a comprehensive and systematic data collection, analysis, and utilization plan aligned with institutional goals and objectives in order to track its effectiveness and identify areas for improvement in this category. **Reacting***

4P1, S. WNMU uses defined procedures for faculty (AACN for nursing faculty) and Kenexa for

staff to identify the specific credentials, skills, and values required of its faculty and staff.

4P2, S. Before hiring an employee, WNMU requires proper credentialing, conducts a criminal background check, verifies references, and runs an Internet search to validate that an applicant's credentials, skills, and values align with the requirements of the position. Faculty and staff are evaluated during their probationary periods to ensure that they have the required skills and values to fulfill the duties required of the position.

4P3, O. It is not clear that WNMU has a systematic and repeatable process to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of its recruitment, hiring, and retention processes. For example, it is not clear that the institution uses data from employee satisfaction surveys to develop employee retention strategies, or if the institution is aware of how successful it has been in this area. The university has an opportunity to measure the effectiveness of its recruitment, hiring, and retention processes to ensure that its workforce has the skills and values needed to accomplish the institution's mission.

4P4, O. Although new and current faculty and staff are encouraged to participate in various programs, activities, and web exhibits designed to either orient or remind them of WNMU's history, mission, and values, an opportunity exists for the institution to establish a systematic process that ensures consistency of information and training for all employees in this area. This may help employees gain a better understanding of how WNMU's work processes and decision-making align with its mission and values.

4P5, O. Although planning processes for changes in personnel include tracking performance, years to retirement, length of service, annual evaluations, promotion and tenure processes, Early Retirement Incentive, and a Five-Year Plan to New Degrees, it is unclear if there is a succession plan in place. Formalized succession planning could assist in identifying and developing internal employees to fill leadership positions, and serve to align talent development with future needs. Because of the location of the university, it might serve it well to develop more "home grown" talent for future administrative leaders.

4P6, S. Staff members participate in the development of Operational Plans, which link daily operations to university goals thereby contributing to both productivity and satisfaction. Faculty pursuits include design of work activities such as course schedules and rotations, assessment and program review, and committee work.

4P7, S. “Uncompromising integrity” is one of WNMU’s core values. The University has a formal Code of Conduct and requires online ethics training for all employees.

4P8a, S. WNMU has established a feedback loop to evaluate what training is offered to ensure it meets the needs uncovered.

4P8b, O. Although WNMU uses conversations with employees to determine its training needs, the institution may consider other methods to examine the employee satisfaction data and student evaluations to help craft its development strategies. Planning for and instituting processes that anticipate needs, such as the implementation of new technology, could move the college from reactive to proactive.

4P9, S. WNMU uses different professional development approaches so that employees are able to contribute fully and effectively throughout their time with the University. This training is reinforced by the organization’s evaluation system.

4P10, O. It is unclear how WNMU’s performance evaluation processes interface with institutional objectives for both instructional and non-instructional programs. The inclusion of objective-specific evaluations may serve to align employee activities with institutional goals and provide the university with a better understanding of how effectively its workforce is contributing to the accomplishing of the mission.

4P11, O. It is unclear whether or not WNMU has a systematic process to design its workforce recognition, reward, compensation, and benefit systems to align with its unit and program objectives. Development of criteria for rewards and recognitions may improve employee engagement and satisfaction.

4P12, O. It is not evident that WNMU has a systematic and ongoing process to measure and decide on action plans for improvement on key issues related to the motivation of faculty, staff, and administrators. WNMU has relied on anecdotal and second-hand sources for determining issues. Identification and implementation of processes that address motivational issues could result in greater employee satisfaction. Processes would also address how such issues are mitigated and how such initiatives relate to changes in motivation over time (as a mechanism for continuous improvement).

4P13, S. Since the last Systems Appraisal, WNMU has made significant process improvements in this area, creating two new committees to focus on Health and Wellness and Safety. These

committees seem to have a good cross-representation of employees in their membership and are aligned with the larger UPC to ensure that their recommendations are heard at the highest level.

4R1, S. WNMU describes a number of measures for valuing people.

4R2, OO. WNMU recognizes that it needs to develop a systematic and repeatable approach to measure the performance results of its workforce. There is an opportunity to define a comprehensive set of metrics for *Valuing People*, which will be the basis for assessment and continuous improvement of these processes. For example, examining data from satisfaction results, turnover, and grievances filed could provide evidence of improvement in this category.

4R3, O. WNMU has an opportunity to develop a systemic process to link its measurement of *Valuing People* performance results to specific processes associated with faculty, staff, and administrators. Additional metrics addressing employee productivity and effectiveness could provide evidence of goal achievement. These metrics may include retention figures, average length of service with the college or employee satisfaction.

4R4, O. WNMU recognizes that it has an opportunity for improvement in the *Valuing People* category based on the Great Colleges Survey Results in Figure 4R4.1. Results from the GCS indicate gaps between WNMU and peer institutions in the area of *Valuing People*. Developing strategies to close these gaps may help create a more productive, motivated workforce.

4I1, S. By forming the two UPC committees of Health & Wellness and Facilities & Safety, WNMU has begun to provide a systematic approach for looking at its *Valuing People* processes and analyzing the results so that it can determine what improvement it can make in commitment to valuing the members of its workforce. Additional efforts toward a more efficient workplace are in progress. Along with creating efficiencies, WNMU has addressed issues of equity in its pay and benefits.

4I2, O. WNMU has an opportunity to allow the UPC structure to facilitate the review of its *Valuing People* processes that set targets for improving the performance results in this category. Inclusion of explicit feedback loops could improve current process and systems. In these feedback loops, extensive analysis of results informs the design and re-engineering of current processes. In addition, the institution anticipates that its commitment to AQIP, where faculty and staff work together on cross-functional committees, will encourage a culture that enables continuous improvement.

AQIP Category 5: Leading and Communicating: This category addresses how the institution's leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide planning, decision-making, seeking future opportunities, and building and sustaining a learning environment. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to leading activities, communicating activities, alignment of leadership system practices, institutional values and expectations, direction-setting, use of data, analysis of results, leadership development and sharing, succession planning, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Western New Mexico University** for Category 5.

WNMU has undergone a significant change in leadership in recent years and this demonstrated that senior leaders need to continue to improve the institution's processes for leading and communicating. Planning processes appear to be more reactive rather than proactive. Although Datamart could provide data for decision making, systematic processes to identify relevant data and to analyze that data are lacking. Development of measures and targets specific to the identification of strengths and weaknesses in Leading and Communicating efforts could provide the basis for assessment and the ability to devise plans of action. For WNMU to improve on its Category 5 process, results, and improvement, the institution may consider demonstrating that its processes are sustainable and repeatable over time.

Reacting

5P1a, S. WNMU has a defined mission and values statement developed by the faculty and staff that serve as the foundational pieces for discussions of strategic issues. Recommended changes to the mission are considered by the UPC, which has representation from across the university. The mission and values of the university guide the strategic planning process.

5P1b, O. Although WNMU explains that the Quality and Planning Committee gathers input from stakeholders for the next reiteration of its mission, vision, and values, the process itself is not clearly explained as to how this is done or what determines if these documents have remained "relevant," nor is the process explained as to what the institution does if one of these documents needs updating. Because the University is in the midst of redesigning its strategic planning process, there seems to be an opportunity to document a timetable, processes, and criteria for defining and reviewing the mission, vision, and values in order to ensure that these foundational documents remain relevant for decision making.

5P2, S. Senior leaders set direction guided by the Strategic Plan, which is developed based on the

university's mission and values statement. The strategic planning process involves representatives from the entire University community. SWOT analysis is conducted and evaluated each year. Planning is cross-functional, cyclical, and dynamic, most recently resulting in the reorganization of the university's reporting structure. The institution's newly developed leadership structure has also created an expectation of increased linkages between units with similar goals and the development of strategic initiatives by units across the campus.

5P3, O. Although WNMU has several processes by which needs and expectations of students and key stakeholders are identified, it is unclear how the planning process addresses these needs. In order to continue its quality journey as a data-informed institution, WNMU could benefit from a more robust process for gathering and analyzing all of the student data available when setting directions for the university.

5P4a, S. WNMU guides the university toward future opportunities through a number of formal and informal avenues with the presence of leaders from faculty and students on key university committees and councils allowing a wide variety of inputs to be considered when policies and programs are considered and evaluated and maintaining a strong focus on students and learning.

5P4b, O. WNMU has a number of processes in place to seek future opportunities and build a sustaining learning environment; however, it is not clear that the institution has a process in place that measures the effectiveness of the series of activities it uses to guide the institution in seeking future opportunities while enhancing a strong focus on students and learning. An opportunity exists to formalize the role of advisory councils and the inclusion of other external constituencies in the identification of future opportunities. Strategic planning that includes situational analysis, SWOT, and/or scenario planning that looks 3-5 years out could produce a roadmap for the future direction of the institution.

5P5, S. WNMU uses the Decision Cycle as a framework for institutional decision-making. A decision that does not have institutional implications is used at the unit level where it has been posited. Decisions that affect or potentially affect the entire institution or a significant numbers of units involve the BOR, Cabinet, UPC and its committees, Dean's Council, Directors, Faculty Senate and Assembly and its respective committees, Staff Senate Survey and Assembly and its respective committees, Associated Students of WNMU, WNMU AQIP Action Project Teams, and various other working groups. Communication channels among these groups include face-to-face meetings, teams, and cross-functional groups.

5P6, O. It is evident that WNMU systematically gathers large amounts of data for planning and operational purposes as evidenced by the respective action project and the development of a Datamart. The Datamart effort provided easily accessible student financial and academic data to all departments, colleges, and divisions so that informed data-driven decisions can be made across campus. It is not clear, however, what processes are in place to ensure that the information and results gathered are used. Such processes could ensure that the right data is available to the right person at the right time to support strategic as well as tactical decisions.

5P7, O. WNMU has a number of formal and informal channels to communicate with the different units within the institution. However, it is not evident that they have a process in place to measure the effectiveness of these communication channels in determining stakeholder satisfaction and engagement. The university has an opportunity to implement measures of its communication effectiveness that capture actionable information in determining stakeholder satisfaction and engagement.

5P8a, S. Leaders communicate the WNMU mission, vision, and values in a number of informal as well as formal means. This includes the development of institutional benchmarks, operational plans, and a goal-focused budget. The message is also supported by budgets tied to Strategic Plan goals, a visible marketing plan that visibly communicates the mission, vision, and values of the institution. Conscious efforts are being made to align and link day-to-day activities with mission, vision, and values.

5P8b, O. WNMU employs various actions and activities to reinforce the characteristics of a high performance organization. However, it is not evident the institution has a process in place that ensures a consistent message over time nor does there appear to be a process for assessment of communication. The university has an opportunity to put a systematic process in place that measures the effectiveness of its communication. This may help enhance the university's goal of becoming a high performance organization.

5P9, O. WNMU lists numerous activities and programs used to encourage, develop, and strengthen leadership abilities among employees. However, it is not clear whether the institution uses a systemic process to communicate these activities and programs or monitors each employee's involvement with them. Further, the institution acknowledges there is no formal knowledge management system in place. Addressing this issue may help to improve employee satisfaction and engagement.

5P10, O. No formal succession planning exists at WNMU. Having experienced two years of numerous leadership changes, the institution acknowledges it has relied on interim leaders as a means for developing the next generation of leadership for the institution. Succession planning could help create smooth transitions from one leader to the next, providing less disruption in the day-to-day activities of the institution.

5R1, S. Figure 5R1.1 provides examples of performance measures regularly collected and reviewed for Category 5.

5R2, OO. No results for leading and communicating processes and systems are provided. The Datamart, while useful, does not indicate results but rather provides information to be analyzed and acted upon. The metrics indicated do not appear to be relevant to leading and communicating, nor do they link to processes. The institution is encouraged to focus on appropriate metrics to measure communication and leadership efficacy rather than simply reviewing information.

5R3, O. It is unclear how response rates in the Great Colleges Survey and satisfaction with student services data provide comparative results for leading and communicating. Development of comparison data can serve to identify opportunities for future improvements.

5I1, O. Although administrative change may indicate or provide improvement in *Leading and Communicating*, these changes do not seem to be the result of action taken specifically to address issues in this area. There does not appear to be systematic or comprehensive processes to measure successes in *Leading and Communicating*. Development of specific processes could result in qualitative and quantitative data to be analyzed and acted upon.

5I2, O. WNMU uses a number of mechanisms to identify processes for improvement, but it is unclear from the portfolio how culture and infrastructure influence the selection of specific processes for improvement or setting of targets for improved performance. In times of reduced resources, further attention may be warranted towards processes aimed at systematically prioritizing which processes to improve and how to set targets for improvements. By addressing this issue, the institution may be better able to understand the impact of improvements.

AQIP Category 6: Supporting Institutional Operations: This category addresses the variety of institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to student support, administrative support,

identification of needs, contribution to student learning and accomplishing other distinctive objectives, day-to-day operations, use of data, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Western New Mexico University** for Category 6.

WNMU has done an effective job of identifying and addressing the basic requirements of support service needs. Although they indicate that, "Processes are stable, consciously managed and regularly evaluated for improvement....," it is unclear how and what data are collected, analyzed, and acted upon. WNMU acknowledges that there is work to be done to make Supporting Institutional Objective efforts systematic and proactive. An opportunity exists to explicitly relate improvement initiatives and accomplishments to process assessment and evaluation. In essence, improvement of current process and systems will need to include specific feedback loops. For WNMU to improve on Category 6 process, results, and improvement, it may consider demonstrating that its processes are sustainable and repeatable over time.

Reacting

6P1, O. WNMU outlines various methods for identifying the support service needs of its students and other key stakeholder groups. It is not clear, however, that the institution has a comprehensive and coordinated approach for identifying and addressing these needs. By using a systematic approach to analyze and address these needs, the university may be able to make more effective decisions for improving the support service for its various constituency groups.

6P2, O. It is not clear that senior leaders have an overall structure and comprehensive process that oversees the coordination of identifying and making decisions about improvement for the administrative support service needs of its various internal stakeholder groups. Addressing this issue may help the university become more efficient and effective in providing administrative support service to its internal stakeholders.

6P3, S. WNMU has improved in this area since its last Systems Appraisal and now utilizes the Facilities and Safety Committee of the UPC as well as other committee recommendations, personal observations, and/or regulatory change to identify physical safety support service needs. Communication occurs through email, safety reminders, safety training, and interaction with campus police.

6P4, S. Through the use of formative and summative assessment, WNMU collects critical feedback information required for optimizing the day-to-day management of the support service processes that ensure support service needs are being met. Further, focus groups, surveys, and

standardized assessment instruments indicate if needs are being met.

6P5, O. Although it is clear that the size of the campus facilitates knowledge sharing, it is unclear how support processes are documented. Instituting formal processes and procedures that document support service needs and actions could serve to create a consistent and responsive system campus wide.

6R1, S. Figure 6P1.1 lists an extensive set of measures for various support service processes. The metrics are aligned to specific services and responsible administrative units.

6R2, O. Figure 6P1.1 WNMU presents over 50 measures of student support services. However, only a handful of results are provided, most of which are measures not mentioned in that original figure. When attempting to see the effectiveness of its processes in *Supporting Institutional Objectives*, the university may find this disconnect between what is reported to be measured and the results presented in Figure 6P1.1 problematic. Consequently, identification of focused improvement efforts on key processes such as advising, tutoring, the library, and enrollment are difficult. Setting targets and tracking the metrics described in Figure 6P1.1 could provide data to indicate successes or improvement needs, and the institution may be better able to assess the effectiveness of these services in meeting the needs of its students.

6R3, O. WNMU provides data and information on the performance results on some of its administrative support services; however, it is not clear how these performance data results are integral to meeting the organization's operations as they are not listed in Figure 6P1. WNMU has an opportunity to identify the appropriate administrative activities with its performance results, which may help to strengthen the institution's performance of its administrative support services processes.

6R4, S. A variety of support areas use information and results as part of their processes. These range from system reports used to support day-to-day operations, interactive dashboards used to support academic program review activities to benchmark and nationally-normed survey results used to implement strategic changes.

6R5, O. WNMU provides some information on how the institution uses different sources for comparisons in Category 6; however, it is not clear that it has a comprehensive and systematic process in place for comparing its performance results in *Supporting Organizational Operations* with other higher education organizations. Addressing this issue may help the organization

improve and evidence its performance.

6I1, O. While significant improvements have been implemented, it is unclear if these result from systematic and comprehensive processes. WNMU acknowledges processes remain reactive; however, the institution is optimistic that improvements to its measurement systems will move them closer to continuous improvement.

6I2, O. WNMU's limited staffing provides the opportunity to identify processes to improve. However, it is unclear how culture and infrastructure assist in the selection of processes to improve or targets to be set. Identification of said processes and targets could assist in assessing the effectiveness of these services in meeting the needs of its students.

AQIP Category 7: Measuring Effectiveness: This category examines how the institution collects, analyzes, and uses information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to collection, storage, management, and use of information and data both at the institutional and departmental/unit levels. It considers institutional measures of effectiveness; information and data alignment with institutional needs and directions; comparative information and data; analysis of information and data; effectiveness of information system and processes; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Western New Mexico University** for Category 7.

*WNMU has recently embraced the need for data-driven decision making and identification, collection, and analysis of data. Moreover, the institution reports few performance results. However, limited evidence is provided for showing how effectively the information knowledge management system is meeting institutional needs. Also, limited comparative evidence is presented for Category 7. Addressing opportunities may benefit the institution as to how effectively its improvements are helping the institution fulfill its mission and goals. **Reacting***

7P1, S. Data and performance information for instructional and non-instructional needs are linked directly to the Strategic Plan and used to monitor progress on institutional goals and address reporting and regulatory requirements. Data is readily available through the Datamart that also functions as a performance dashboard for the institution's measures of effectiveness.

7P2 O. Identification, management, and distribution of data for planning and improvement efforts

are in the beginning stages. Measures have been recently identified. The IR director is responsible for the day-to-day management, but overall management is scattered. Distribution appears to be self-selecting. Ongoing refinement of the processes that support the data management system could produce a more comprehensive and streamlined approach.

7P3, O. WNMU has a number of initiatives to support the collection, storage (e.g., Banner) and accessibility (e.g. Mustang Express) for data. However, it is not clear if WNMU has processes for determining the needs for collection, storage, and accessibility. Intentional planning could assist with determination of what, how, and when data is to be collected, what storage is required, and how and to whom specific information is available thereby generating proactive and repeatable processes.

7P4, O. WNMU describes some specific instances of analyzing data but not an overall comprehensive process for how data is analyzed regarding overall performance. A more systematic approach could improve data management to better support continuous improvement and increase the effectiveness of data usage.

7P5, O. WNMU describes some examples for determining the needs and priorities for comparative data and information. These examples appear reactive and an opportunity exists to further systematize these processes. Proactively determining what data is needed and what is the best collection method could streamline collection and result in a more cohesive and comprehensive outcome.

7P6, S. WNMU has created an Institutional Research Office that gathers, analyzes, and ensures consistency in the information collected. The Vice Presidents in their respective areas oversee alignment and unit plans.

7P7, S. WNMU has comprehensive processes in place for ensuring timeliness, reliability, accuracy, and security of data.

7R1, S. WNMU provides a variety of sources used to measure the performance and effectiveness of its system for information and knowledge management.

7R2, O. It is not evident that WNMU has a systematic and repeatable process to measure how effectively its information and knowledge management system is meeting the institution's needs for accomplishing its mission and goals. Implementing such a process may help the institution strengthen its evidence regarding performance and more clearly align the actions of each

organizational unit to the institution's mission and goals.

7R3, OO. WNMU acknowledges difficulty in identification of appropriate comparative data. By providing relevant comparisons for institutional improvement, the institution may improve the knowledge and understanding of its information and knowledge management system by setting benchmarks of effective performance for data tools and processes.

7I1, S. WNMU describes some recent accomplishments and appears to have comprehensive and systematic processes in place.

7I2, O. The institution is changing from an institution that was less reliant on data-driven decision making to one that expects data-driven decision making to be the norm. A systematic approach to collection and use of data for measuring effectiveness, as well as target setting, could provide a more comprehensive picture of where the University needs to focus its efforts for improvement.

AQIP Category 8: Planning Continuous Improvement: This category examines the institution's planning processes and how strategies and action plans are helping to achieve the institution's mission and vision. It examines coordination and alignment of strategies and action plans; measures and performance projections; resource needs; faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities; analysis of performance projections and results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Western New Mexico University** for Category 8.

*The transition to a new planning process provides WNMU with numerous opportunities for better planning, implementation, assessment, and modification of its processes. The beginnings of a systematic evaluation and improvement process and some organizational learning processes are evident. In the Results area, the institution reports few performance results. Limited evidence, mostly anecdotal statements, is provided for showing how effectively its planning system is meeting institutional needs. The institution could benefit from focusing on measures for assessing the effectiveness of these. **Reacting***

8P1, S. WNMU describes the new planning process that was put in place by the new President and vetted by the community. The plan includes midway assessment of the process and capability to change the planning based on this input.

8P2, S. The Strategic Plan is driven by the strategic challenges identified under the SWOT analysis performed and analyzed by the strategic planning team. Short- and long-term goals are

developed by the Strategic Planning Team. Goals are selected based on how effectively they address strategic challenges, opportunities to innovate, extent of reinforcing the core competencies, and adaptability to market shift.

8P3, O. Until recently, action planning was an informal process. WNMU reports more formalized planning will occur within departments under the guidance of area Vice Presidents. An opportunity exists to follow through with formalized planning. The development of these formal processes by which action plans are created could lead to systematic continuous improvement.

8P4, O. The institution is still developing the formal process for coordinating and aligning planning processes. Formalized processes could ensure that all levels are receiving the same message and have appropriate opportunities for input.

8P5, O. WNMU is in the midst of implementing a new process that will help define objectives, select measures, and set performance targets. The institution recognizes the inherent opportunity and has plans in place to maximize the best outcome of the process.

8P6, OO. Although the portfolio provides information about the budgeting processes, it is unclear how strategy selections and action plans are linked. Development of processes that specifically link strategy and action plans could ensure continuity and consistency.

8P7, O. WNMU states that it informally considers risks in the planning process, but it is unclear if this process includes addressing specific items such as financial and market risks through data analysis, market trends, relationships with regional boards and other higher education organizations. A more comprehensive and formal assessment of risks could help the university plan for the future in a more strategic manner.

8P8, O. It is not clear that WNMU has systematic processes in place that link professional development of faculty, administrators, and staff to the Strategic Plan and action plans. Establishing systematic processes could assist with multi-year planning for training of employees who would be better prepared to carry out the changing requirements of the institution's strategic and action plans.

8R1, OO. WNMU does not present formal measures of the effectiveness of its planning processes. Establishing process outcomes could help the university ascertain whether its planning processes are effective and allow the institution to focus its improvement efforts in this area.

8R2, O. WNMU has the opportunity to develop a systematic process for reporting results and linking them to its decision making for short- and long -term actions of continuous improvement. Establishing a consistent reporting approach of performance results that shows trends, benchmarks, comparisons, and future projections for goals and objectives could help the institution identify strengths and weaknesses, and initiate plans for improvement.

8R3, S. Because the Strategic Plan was not complete by the time of the portfolio construction, the institution provided 2013-2014 performance targets for many of its strategic goals and objectives.

8R4, OO. WNMU provides no comparative results for this item. WNMU has an opportunity to establish a data and information reporting process that includes comparisons with peer institutions. Establishing such a process may help the institution gain better insight of the effectiveness of its strategic planning, and provide opportunities to improve this process by observing how other entities perform similar planning functions.

8R5, OO. WNMU refers to other results found throughout the portfolio as evidence that its planning systems work, but without direct measurements or linking those results to strategies and action plans, this connection is weak. Without these connections and measurements, the university cannot be sure what is working. Establishing such measures (with targets and comparisons) could move the university in a positive direction on its quality journey.

8I1, O. WNMU is in the midst of moving into a new strategic planning process, and while it has some examples of recent improvements, this portfolio does not describe a comprehensive or systematic process or set of processes. Implementing a proactive approach could promote better coordination and provide a more global view of planning processes.

8I2, O. As WNMU is in the middle of a move into a new planning process, it is not yet able to tie culture and infrastructure to selecting specific processes to improve or set targets for improving performance. A systematic approach to collection and use of data for *Planning Continuous Improvement*, as well as target setting, could provide a more comprehensive picture of where WNMU needs to focus its efforts for improvement.

AQIP Category 9: Building Collaborative Relationships: This category examines your institution's relationships – current and potential – to analyze how they contribute to the institution's accomplishing its mission. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to identification of key internal and

external collaborative relationships; alignment of key collaborative relationships; relationship creation, prioritization, building; needs identification; internal relationships; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **Western New Mexico University** for Category 9.

*Overall, WNMU has broad and extensive relationships with various external constituencies and stakeholders. The results of the partnership survey are generally positive. However, with the exception of the Partnership Survey, identification of measures, data collection and analysis, and target setting do not yet appear to be systematic or comprehensive. Improvement opportunities exist to develop formalized processes to systematically identify, prioritize, and build these relationships. **Reacting***

9P1, O. Although WNMU identifies many educational partners from which they receive students and explains how they build relationships with them, it is unclear how this is a process. It may benefit the university to articulate how they select these partners, initiate relationships, and prioritize these relationships so that the institution can more closely assess the success of these processes in recruiting students.

9P2, O. WNMU's relationships with educational institutions that depend on the supply of its students are broad and extensive. An opportunity exists to develop systematic and repeatable processes for creating and prioritizing these relationships.

9P3, O. While WNMU summarizes some of its relationships with organizations that provide services to its students (food service, bookstore, and Foundation), it does not explain how the university creates, prioritizes, and builds relationships with these organizations. Developing a more systematic way to do this could help it assess these services and plan for improvements.

9P4, O. WNMU describes relationships established with organizations that supply materials and provide services to its operational units. It does not, however, discuss how these relationships are organized, prioritized, and structured into a systematic process that is linked to strategic planning, aligned with operational needs, and measured to determine how effectively these relationships are meeting the specific needs of the units involved. The institution has an opportunity to develop a systematic and ongoing process that builds meaningful and strategic relationships with other organizations that could contribute to operational sustainability and success.

9P5, S. Relationships with community partners, agencies, and consortia members are prioritized based on alignment with the Strategic Plan, program strengths, or requirements by governmental

agencies. The institution builds these relationships through continual contact and participation with these organizations in a variety of ways.

9P6, S. WNMU uses Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) to ensure partner relationships meet the needs of those involved. The institution uses a partnership survey to monitor its progress in this area.

9P7a, S. WNMU's small size promotes close internal relationships and opportunities for new relationships. The institution describes relationships that are continually reinforced through various methods such as socials, programs, and interaction.

9P7b, O. While many informal communication avenues are presented, none allow for a systematic evaluation of those relationships. There is an opportunity to improve the formal structure of internal relationship-building activities thereby providing a means for analysis and action.

9R1, S. WNMU conducts a Partner and Stakeholder Survey to measure the success of its collaborative relationships. Other more quantitative measures are also collected to provide insight into the outcomes that were desired.

9R2, O. Although WNMU presents results for some of its relationships, these do not appear to be targeted or benchmarked against performance expectations. Therefore, it is difficult to judge the success of these processes and to plan for improvements.

9R3, S. Results (Figure 9R3.1) of the Partnership Survey conducted by WNMU are positive when compared with nine of its peer institutions.

9I1, O. While WNMU has established a division of External Affairs, hired a Career Services and Leadership Director, and its President hosts at least one annual community event, it does not appear that processes and performance results for *Building Collaborative Relationships* are systematic or comprehensive at this time. Implementing a proactive approach could promote closer coordination among internal and external constituencies.

9I2, O. Although the establishment of the Division of External Affairs could be considered an improvement in this category, it is not evident how WNMU's culture and infrastructure help to facilitate the institution in selecting specific processes and setting targets for improved performance results when building collaborative relationships with external stakeholders.

Addressing this issue may allow the institution to realize the impact of Strategic Objective 7.3

and how effectively it is helping the institution achieve its mission.

ACCREDITATION ISSUES WESTERN NEW MEXICO UNIVERSITY

The following section identifies any areas in the judgment of the Systems Appraisal Team where the institution either has not provided sufficient evidence that it currently meets the Commission’s *Criteria for Accreditation* (and the core components therein) or that it may face difficulty in meeting the *Criteria* and core components in the future. Identification of any such deficiencies as part of the Systems Appraisal process affords the institution the opportunity to remedy the problem prior to Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

No accreditation issues noted by the team.

Criterion 1: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	1A	1B	1C	1D	
		X		X	
	X		X		
Criterion 2: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	2A	2B	2C	2D	2E
		X	X	X	X
	X				
Criterion 3: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	3A	3B	3C	3D	3E
	X	X	X	X	X
Criterion 4: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	4A	4B	4C		
	X	X	X		
Criterion 5: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	5A	5B	5C	5D	
	X	X			
			X	X	

1A. WNMU's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

Adequate, but could be improved

The mission serves as the basis for discussions on strategic issues and was developed based on input from campus discussions. WNMU's mission and values are reviewed regularly whenever a decision is made that impacts its students. During the strategic planning process, the mission is reviewed and redefined, if necessary. The current mission was approved by the Board of Regents in 2008. Currently, the Quality Planning Committee of the University Planning Council has proposed revisions to the mission statement. The Cabinet and President will review these recommendations, and the President will take any proposed change(s) to the Board of Regents for its final approval. Implementation of any proposed revision(s) to the mission statement can provide a more accurate understanding of the mission, and guidance for the institution's educational purpose and operations.

1B. The mission is articulated publicly.

Strong, clear, and well-presented

The institution articulates the mission through its catalogs and brochures, website, institutional profile, and other locations throughout its campus buildings. The mission states the intended region and student population served by the institution. The mission is communicated by the president to external stakeholders such as legislative committees, economic development organizations, and business leaders.

1C. WNMU understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

Adequate, but could be improved

WNMU's mission statement reflects its commitment to diversity. WNMU's student body on campus is around 53 percent Hispanic. The rest of the student body population consists of African American, Native American, and Anglo students with a growing population of international students. The Multicultural Affairs and Student Affairs program offers activities that promote and celebrate the diversity of WNMU's campuses. Students can participate in the Native American Club, Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán organization, and LBGTD Club. In Gallup, WNMU co-sponsors a Gourd Dance to celebrate its graduates. Addressing how its

processes reflect attention to human diversity within the mission and shared academic objectives for learning and development would highlight the relationship between diversity and mission.

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

Strong, clear, and well-presented

WNMU's mission statement emphasizes the importance of public service and incorporation of formal service learning experiences as part of its regular coursework. WNMU gathers information on the needs of its external stakeholders through regular interaction with advisory groups, individuals, and organizations through partnerships, feedback, and surveys. One of the President's Performance Goals is to align programs to address the needs of the workforce. Faculty and staff are actively involved in the community in a variety of ways, and the institution allows faculty and staff to take a designated number of hours off from work to volunteer for community activities.

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.

Adequate, but could be improved

While WNMU has posited core values that emphasize integrity, a code of conduct, and ethics training, the institution would benefit from identification of processes that ensure ethical behavior in specific areas such as financial, support services, and administrative operations.

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.

Strong, clear, and well-presented

WNMU presents themselves to students and the public through a variety of means such as printed and online resources including departmental and program brochures; Western magazine and W Magazine; online resources including its website and catalog; news releases; billboards; radio ads; and various social media. The institutional website contains information about its programs and majors, accreditations, the costs of attendance, available courses, as well as a list of the members of its Board of Regents. In addition, students have access to a Campus Portal and various web pages that provide current and prospective students with electronic access to the student handbook, degree plans and program specific requirements. Students and advisors have

access to Advising Space, an electronic advising tool that contains degree plans, student test scores, student grades, course rotations, and holds.

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

Strong, clear, and well-presented

The WNMU is governed by a five-member Board of Regents (BOR) whose members are appointed by the governor and approved by the legislature and reflect both political parties in its membership (on a 3-2 split depending on the party of the governor). One member of the BOR is a student with full voting privileges. The terms of appointment of the non-student members of the BOR are staggered terms of six years. The student Regent serves a two-year term. The governor and state superintendent of public instruction are designated as *ex-officio*, non-voting members, and the Presidents of the Faculty and Staff Senates and the Student Body are *ex-officio* non-voting members. The Board of Regents is constitutionally responsible for the control and management of the University. Management and control of the University are vested in the Regents. Its power to control, manage, and govern the institution necessarily includes exercise of wide discretion—including discretion in what actions it takes directly and in what authority it delegates to other persons or bodies within the University. The Board may and quite often does delegate limited powers to certain individuals and groups within the University, but such delegation of specific power and authority on a limited basis does not relieve the Board from its ultimate responsibility for the entire institution. Further, the creation of the University Planning Council enables linkage among WNMU's processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting and opens up the budgeting process to a more diverse and larger group of people.

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

Strong, clear, and well-presented

WNMU is committed to the freedom of expression and pursuit of truth in teaching and learning through the adoption and support of AAUP standards.

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

Strong, clear, and well-presented

The institution has a formal Academic Integrity Policy and follows established practices concerning scholarly practice and ethical use of information. Faculty, staff, and students were involved in the creation of the Academic Integrity Policy that was approved by the Faculty Assembly. The policy covers expectations of research, scholarly practice, and ethical use of information for students in its classes. The University has an Institutional Review Board composed of faculty who understand the demands of research and conduct research. The University has a published copyright policy and provides bibliographic instruction classes to provide guidance in the ethical use of information. Ethics training is required of all employees while student workers participate in the training as needed.

3A. WNMU's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

Strong, clear, and well-presented

Each program has specific student learning outcomes for certificate, associate, baccalaureate and graduate majors and programs. Programs are aligned with the University mission statement to educate students “to meet the challenges of a changing world.” The skills and knowledge that students require for their careers in order to be competitive in the job market are determined by consultation and review of WNMU’s programs by employers within the field, advisory councils, employer surveys, survey feedback from students, industry standards, certification exams, and pass rates on licensing exams. Faculty research and conference attendance are encouraged to enable faculty to remain current in their fields. Special care is taken to ensure that students meet the same learning outcomes and are assessed the same way no matter where or in which manner the course or program is offered: instructional television (ITV), online, or face-to-face at the Silver campus or at the learning centers.

Department chairs and instructors are made aware that all dual credit courses must maintain the standards of college level courses. Department chairs review the credentials of all instructors and ensure they are qualified to teach the dual-credit course. Instructors are given copies of the syllabus and textbook and have opportunities for interaction with the faculty in their teaching area.

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.

Strong, clear, and well-presented

The institution has developed and espouses general education goals and corresponding student learning outcomes for its degrees and programs. It's primary learning goal includes: "Provide each student with opportunities for critical thinking and reasoning, communication of ideas and information to others, numerical analysis and decision-making, and ensure personal and emotional well-being." Objectives that all students are expected to achieve include cultural diversity, multicultural perspectives, social responsibility, and environmental responsibility. Scholarship and creative work by faculty and students are encouraged and evidenced by action learning and research projects.

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

Strong, clear, and well-presented

WNMU maintains a 1:16 faculty/student ratio and is committed to long-term professional development of its faculty. The hiring process is multi-tiered and the institution has processes in place to ensure that faculty members are screened for appropriate credentials before they are hired. WNMU has a well-defined, annual evaluation process at the course level that is consistent with the faculty member professional objectives. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry through mandated office hours. WNMU staff members providing student support services are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development through ongoing professional development such as the participation in the National Academic Advising Association annual conference.

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

Strong, clear, and well-presented

The Academic Operational Plan is tied to the University's Strategic Plan and provides a framework for addressing and improving teaching and learning. Expectations for effective teaching and learning are defined, documented, and communicated in various ways: annual department assessment reports; accreditation self-studies; the Academic Affairs Operational Plan; course assessments and evaluations; course syllabi; classroom and online course visits by supervisors, and the evaluation, promotion, and tenure process.

Learning support needs of students are primarily addressed through the advising process that begins at orientation and aims to ensure students select appropriate programs and to support students throughout their program of study. Students in need of tutoring usually self-identify or are identified by the professor of a particular course who then directs them to appropriate tutors. The University uses an Early Alert process and mid-term grades to reach out to students and suggest ways they can access needed support.

Faculty at WNMU are involved in recommending material for library acquisitions. Moreover, WNMU library staff are engaged in an ongoing process for evaluating library holdings and filling any gaps as needed. Faculty using labs for their teaching are actively involved in determining laboratory requirements. WNMU has additional infrastructure and resources to support teaching and learning including wireless and gigabit network connectivity, iPads for select faculty to experiment using these devices in the classroom, and access to clinical site for select programs.

Faculty and staff are encouraged to attend national and regional conferences to benchmark what other institutions are implementing. The faculty within each discipline and department create and update course content and course expectations as well as the structure and content of degree programs.

State and national program accreditation bodies help to determine content expectations and most have an assessment as a part of licensure requirements.

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

Strong, clear, and well-presented

The institution's numerous curricular and co-curricular activities mesh to instill values and develop the necessary knowledge and skills tied to the mission and serve students. Co-curricular programs have objectives that prepare students for life beyond the university experience. Co-curricular programs are a key component of the university's mission and service to the greater region. One example is its Outdoor Program, which focuses on strengthening inter- and intra-personal relationships, development of leadership skills, building community, promoting personal health, strengthening environmental awareness and supporting self-discovery thereby preparing them for life beyond the bounds of the university experience.

4A. WNMU demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

Strong, clear, and well-presented

WNMU only accepts credit from regionally accredited institutions. The transcript analyst reviews course descriptions and syllabi from other institutions when assigning transfer credit and involves discipline faculty when needed. With the exception of Advanced Placement (AP) credit, the institution does not award credit for experiential learning or prior learning.

Specialty accreditations ensure that programs are up-to-date and effective. WNMU maintains specialty accreditations at the national and state levels.

Western conducts an annual employment survey of all graduates asking if they are employed in an area related to their degree and their salary level. It also tracks whether graduates pursue additional education. Individual programs keep track of student success.

Program reviews, done on a five-year cycle, involve an internal process of review by the department. In some departments, a process of external review is done in consultation with employers and agencies that hire graduates to supplement the internal department review. The five-year program review cycle requires each department to evaluate the currency and effectiveness of classes and programs using data on enrollment, student learning outcomes, and region wide demand.

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

Strong, clear, and well-presented

WNMU has processes in place for the ongoing assessment of student learning outcomes. These processes involve a number of stakeholders including program faculty, university-wide assessment committee, and college deans. The assessment process, which is faculty driven, includes feedback loops, i.e., demonstrating how programs use the information gained from assessment to improve student learning. The assessment processes reflect good practice particularly regarding faculty participation, triangulation of results, and incorporation of state of the art practices and guidelines from accrediting bodies.

The institution uses the externally-based Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) as an assessment tool for all degree programs. The institution has a process whereby SLOs are assessed and the resulting data used to change and improve programs. Faculty committees are involved in developing, assessing, and responding to SLOs.

4C. WNMU demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

Strong, clear, and well-presented

WNMU has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are appropriate to its mission and defined in the President's list for performance goals for 2013-14. The program review process and the Program Prioritization Process call for data and analysis of student retention, persistence, and program completion.

The Persistence Plan, put into operation in fall 2011, builds from analysis of data regarding factors contributing to attrition at the university. The Persistence Plan provides evidence of how data on student persistence retention and completion is used to make improvements. While First Year Experience continues to use the current Persistence Plan to address student retention issues, the University Planning Council Enrollment Management and Retention Committee will be updating the plan to reflect new issues and areas where improvement is needed and will be more inclusive of faculty advising in the academic department levels.

Triggers for follow-up action of at-risk students include such activities as developmental studies placement; monitoring class attendance; and special interventions for students who are admitted or register late, receive academic warning or probation receive financial aid warning or probation. For each group, there is an identified action to be taken, frequency of action, responsible staff member, and a metric identified for monitoring that particular risk factor.

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

Strong, clear, and well-presented

The institution has processes in place for managing and monitoring budgets, supported by annual audit reports. The institution describes processes which support that it has the resources and infrastructure to support its operations and programs in all modes of delivery and all locations. The university is adequately funded to meet its mission and institutional needs.

WNMU has recently completed a program prioritization process to reallocate resources in accordance with its strategic priorities. Fiscal resources are monitored in accordance with state guidelines and standard auditing practices. Infrastructure and deferred maintenance issues are

addressed through the budgeting process, and personnel issues are addressed in accordance with current practices outlined in the mission, vision, and statements.

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

Strong, clear, and well-presented

As a public institution, WNMU operates under the State of New Mexico Board of Regents (BOR). The BOR Handbook provides specific duties and responsibilities expected of the President and the faculty. Staff duties and responsibilities are defined in the Staff Handbook and in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) for those employees who are subject to the CBA. Overall, WNMU enables the involvement of administration, faculty, staff, and students in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through the functioning of various senates and committees as outlined in the faculty, student, and staff handbooks and as approved by the Board.

The cabinet and various council and committee meetings are often the first place where institutional analysis begins. Most often the Vice President includes key office(s) involved in the improvement process being monitored either on a recurring or a case-by-case basis depending on the circumstances. Recently, the Quality and Planning Committee was charged to monitor the strategic planning and the strategic planning process with respect to timelines, goals, and metrics. The Quality and Planning Committee looks across colleges and divisions to provide a more integrated campus-wide view of performance improvement and makes recommendations to the University Planning Council (UPC) and through that body recommendations flow to the Cabinet and the President.

5C. WNMU engages in systematic and integrated planning.

Adequate, but could be improved

The recent creation of the UPC could enable better linkage among the processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting, and it opens up the budgeting process to a more diverse and larger group of people. The University Planning Council's Budget Committee may create the link that ensures financial support aligns to needs identified in the assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, and planning. Its charge is to inform the UPC on the status of the current budget, engage in budget forecasting, development and review, and ensure that resources are available to support recommended plans for continuous

improvement.

Resources are allocated in alignment with mission and priorities as a step in the annual strategic planning process. Priorities within the Strategic Plan are identified by the Strategic Planning Team in a January meeting and communicated to the Budget Committee. The Vice President for Business Affairs and other members who serve on both groups report back to the Strategic Planning Team in July regarding final budget decisions.

The newly updated planning process could ensure that a diverse, cross-institutional dialogue occurs with appropriate representation. Each September, an environmental scan is conducted and reevaluated. It explores external opportunities and threats, feedback from the community, legislative and other regulatory bodies, and accrediting agencies.

The current President charged the Building Capacity and Capability Steering with developing a vision of the future that recognizes the dynamic impact changing roles of faculty, technology, pedagogy, work environments, and other relevant factors may have on WNMU's ability to effectively address the needs of current and future students.

5D. The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

Adequate, but could be improved

WNMU has established measures of effectiveness (MOEs) tied to its Strategic Plan as a means of monitoring progress. Information is disseminated and analyzed through the institution's committee structure. The implementation of processes is new, so effectiveness remains to be determined. WNMU learns from operational experience and applies that learning to improve institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability as evidenced by its recent effort to prioritize academic programs and services. While a culture of continuous improvement is relatively new at WNMU, the institution provides evidence that they are working to systematically improve its performance. This is apparent through the development of performance dashboards and the work of various committees and councils.

QUALITY OF WESTERN NEW MEXICO UNIVERSITY'S SYSTEMS PORTFOLIO

Because it stands as a reflection of the institution, the *Systems Portfolio* should be complete and coherent, and it should provide an open and honest self-analysis on the strengths and challenges facing the organization. In this section, the Systems Appraisal Team provides Western New Mexico University with

constructive feedback on the overall quality of the portfolio, along with suggestions for improvement of future portfolio submissions.

WNMU's portfolio is uneven in quality of presentation. While portions of the portfolio are strong, others are unclear. Sometimes the question is simply not answered, which is frustrating for the reader because it is not known if the institution really doesn't do something or if it didn't understand the question. Future editions should focus on responding to what is requested and tailoring the presentation of results to the processes delineated.

The Portfolio contains typographical errors and organization is lacking. It is inconvenient when the reader is told to look at a figure and the wrong number was given or the figure wasn't there (4R4.2), or when the reader is directed to follow a link, such as page 32, and there was no link. The Strategic Plan, which is labeled 2011 draft, was referenced often but no link was provided. Further, the Vision is referred to on page 67, but only Mission and Values are given; the Vision is on page 1 in the portfolio.

The categories appear to have been written by individuals or groups, but it does not appear that the final product was edited for accuracy, consistency, or voice. Doing so would better demonstrate an institutional approach to AQIP and related principles.

USING THE FEEDBACK REPORT

AQIP reminds institutions that the Systems Appraisal process is intended to initiate action for institutional improvement. Though decisions about specific actions rest with each institution, AQIP expects every institution to use its feedback to stimulate cycles of continual improvement and to inform future AQIP processes.

Some key questions that may arise in careful examination of this report may include: How do the team's findings challenge our assumptions about ourselves? Given our mission and goals, which issues should we focus on? How will we employ results to innovate, grow, and encourage a positive culture of improvement? How will we incorporate lessons learned from this review in our planning and operational processes? How will we revise the *Systems Portfolio* to reflect what we have learned? How an organization interprets, communicates, and uses its feedback for improvement ought to support AQIP's core values, encouraging involvement, learning, collaboration, and integrity.

AQIP's goal is to help an institution to clarify the strategic issues most vital to its success, and then to support the institution as it addresses these priorities in ways that will make a difference in institutional performance.