Criterion 5. Leading and Communicating

CONTEXTS (C)

5C1. Leadership and Communication Systems

Leadership
The Institutional Overview provides organizational charts for JJC. The college’s leadership groups and responsibilities include:

- ICCB, which has the responsibility to administer the Public Community College Act in a manner that maximizes the ability of the community colleges to serve their communities, promotes cooperation within the system, and supports accountability to the students, employers, lawmakers, and taxpayers of Illinois.
- An elected Board of Trustees, composed of seven members and a student trustee, which meets twice a month for a workshop and meeting along with the President’s Cabinet and other senior staff members to discuss policy and college strategies, planning, and other college issues.
- The President’s Cabinet, which includes the President, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Student Services, Vice President for Business Services, Associate Vice President for External Campuses, Director of Community Relations, and Director of Human Resources. They meet on a weekly basis to discuss college strategies, planning, issues, departmental updates, and information.
- The Administrative Council, which consists of about thirty five administrative leaders including the President’s Cabinet, deans, and directors, meets once a month for educational activities for leadership, team building, sharing of information, planning, departmental updates, and other issues. A larger group of administrators that includes this group also meets quarterly for incorporating information from the Administrative Council.
- The Department Chairs for the twelve academic departments meet bi-weekly with the Vice President and Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs to transmit information for the departments, propose capital improvements and new faculty, review budget, review data on enrollments and staffing, and discuss curriculum.
- Academic departments also meet monthly for committee reports, departmental issues, plans, and strategies, and also to integrate information through the flow of leadership groups named above.
- College bargaining units represent faculty, police, clerical staff, food service employees, and buildings and grounds employees. They meet according to their constitutions, but at least once per semester. During contract negotiations, meetings are more frequent.
- Numerous standing committees and task forces are also involved with planning, strategies, recommendations, and dissemination of information. Standing committees include TPC, Academic Standards, Curriculum, QSLL, Academic Assessment, and Tenure Committees. Many of these committees and task forces include representation from all sectors of the campus community, including students.
Communication Systems
Besides the integration of information through various meetings, the college disseminates information through a President’s newsletter, faculty-staff newsletters, a weekly on-line news briefs, and other email communication. Formal employee orientation, public folders, the JJC Website, and various other publications, including departmental newsletters, provide targeted information as well. The college also promotes communication by hosting specific events. These events include the President’s many addresses and all-inclusive campus programs such as front-line training, strategic planning focus group projects, and risk management series. All are opportunities for verbal exchanges of ideas.

5C2. Aligning Practices and Views
In order to align the practices and views of all stakeholders, JJC follows a strategic plan and campus master plan. The college also participates in a performance system of establishing and carrying out metrics and objectives in line with strategies. The availability of Board Policies, Board Procedures, Board meeting minutes, Employee Handbooks, and other communication pieces ensures that the practices of the leadership system are available to all levels of the institution.

5C3. Institutional Values and Expectations
The Board has adopted a strong ethics policy and has appointed an ethics officer to act as ombudsman to employees. The college promotes its mission and goals through various communication methods listed above. JJC also promotes its Core Values through recognition programs, visuals such as banners and posters, and inclusion of its performance management system. Community service is encouraged and practiced at all levels of the organization through personal achievement and volunteer roles and through organized, campus-wide volunteer programs. Some of these include a campus-wide community service project for staff and students that has lead to over 5,000 hours of community service time and volunteer support opportunities such as United Way and the Emergency Student Fund. Other community service projects are part of the outreach of the Diversity Committee, the OSMA, the Administrative Council, and numerous clubs which raise funds and support community service.

PROCESSES (P)

5P1. Aligning Mission, Vision, and Values with Performance and Development
The directions for alignment are set through using the process of metrics and objectives through (1) PAS; (2) the tenure process and post-tenure review of full-time faculty; the budget process; (3) programming for staff development, workshops, and speakers on campus; (4) other professional development opportunities; institutional memberships including CQIN, League of Innovation, and CASE; (5) the New Faculty Seminar; (6) faculty and staff orientation and workshops; and (6) adjunct faculty workshops and programs. The campus community and external stakeholders are included overall in strategic planning. Much of these processes are defined in Sections 8P7 and 8I1.
5P2. Guiding the Institution toward Future Opportunities and a Learning Environment

Leaders guide JJC through strategic planning, modeling its Core Values, and using the process of metrics and objectives which requires leaders to think innovatively and globally. The budget process affords JJC the opportunity to review the organization and put resources toward emerging trends that focus on student learning and initiatives. Leaders are constantly challenged at Cabinet to evolve operations through input and recommendations. The OIE serves a key role in the dissemination of reports that show institutional trends and information that promotes future opportunities. Faculty committees which address assessment and retention (student success) provide all internal stakeholders with the data necessary for informed planning and, with the help of OIE, recommended action based on data.

5P3. Decision-Making Process

Decisions are made through the recommendation of various entities throughout the institution including teams, task forces, committees, bargaining units, and search committees. Many of the recommendations are brought to the Cabinet and Board level for discussion and approval. Decisions are also based on reports and surveys administered by the OIE. The Board changed its decision-making process approximately four years ago and developed a “workshop” style meeting two weeks before the actual Board (decision-making) meeting each month. Administration and other external stakeholders present material in the informal atmosphere of a workshop and assist the Board with informed decision-making. Committees are brought together for specific purposes, such as curriculum review, academic standards review, or technology recommendations. Input from the campus community, including the Campus Conversation Day of March 2004, is also a basis for making informed decisions. Decisions are communicated in the methods identified in Section 5C1.

5P4. How Leaders Use Information and Results to Make Decisions

Leaders make decisions through reviewing the data from feedback reports and surveys such as student surveys, consultant reports, and the annual PQP report. Other information that guides decision-making includes the Student Satisfaction survey, the Faces of the Future report, demographic profiles, performance management goals and mid-year assessments, enrollment and marketing studies, evaluation of course offerings and location enrollment, graduation statistics, occupational follow-up studies and ICCB evaluation and successes. An example of an effective process occurred with the assessment of campus policing. Many at JJC had issues with campus safety, campus policing, and the integration of the sworn officers of the police department in the campus community. The college worked through these issues with the assistance of an external consultant group from IACLEA (International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators). IACLEA has a program whereby the college had three executive level officers from IACLEA-LEMAP (Loaned Executive Management Assistance Program) do a critical analysis of the campus police structure and outreach activities. Included in their work was an evaluation of the possibility of arming the sworn officers. Figure 5.1 is a flow chart of the methods and results of this decision-making process.
5P5. Communication Among Institutional Leaders

From the JJC leadership, the dissemination of communication occurs through the communication tools presented in 5C1 including internal and external publications, electronic media, workshops, staff development workshops, presentations, and events. Communication also occurs from the staff level to leadership through recommendations from committees, task forces, and other groups addressing the Board and President’s Cabinet. Much of this communication is two-way, including planning and vision communicated through metrics, objectives, and performance evaluation and review.

5P6. Communicating a Shared Mission And High Performance Expectations

In addition to communication media addressed earlier, the mission, vision, and goals are also communicated through the day-to-day operations of the college. Recognition programs, multiple print and electronic delivery methods, visuals throughout campus, timely in-person communications, and modeling behavior that embodies high performance expectations are all a part of the life of the college. JJC expects all non-faculty work groups to participate actively in annual goal-setting and performance-based evaluation. Although relatively new, integrating college, departmental, and personal goals will be a transforming activity for college employees.
5P7. Encouraging and Communicating Leadership and Best Practices

Leadership abilities are promoted throughout the campus and include numerous opportunities through internal and external professional development, Leadership Education including Joliet Chamber of Commerce Leadership School, the Chair Academy, Administrative Council meetings, AQIP training, and CQIN. Acknowledgement of accomplishments is made personally and through publications, newsletters, team dynamics, media, and the Web. The Core Values awards given monthly recognize employees who exemplify the best in core institutional practices.

5P8. Leadership Succession and Planning

The college does not have formal leadership training or a succession plan, but promotes mentoring and the attainment of leadership skills through opportunities identified in 5P7. Search criteria for specific positions, Board policies, and job descriptions also serve as guides. In 2004, the President of JJC announced his retirement for 2005, and the Board is actively engaged in developing a schedule and professional needs to institute a search. While the leadership succession plan is not a formal part of the institution, the reality is that a number of important administrative appointments have come from internal candidates, such as the current President, Vice President and Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs, Director of Human Resources, Dean of Student Development, Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid, and Director of Financial Aid.

5P9. Collecting Measures of Leading and Communicating

Measures of leading and communicating are collected through a variety of sources including department chair evaluations, performance management and evaluation metrics and objectives, and a variety of surveys, including student, retention, graduation, and marketing. Although quality processes are often driven by management-by-fact, the leading and communicating area leaves open an opportunity to access inferential and random information. Most employees are also district residents and their “eyes and ears” are important feedback tools. Qualitative research is an important tool for college administrators.
RESULTS (R)

5R1. Leading and Communicating Process Results

The results of the Campus Conversation Day were compiled, published, and distributed in Spring 2004. A team for future planning and feedback was formed under the leadership of the Dean of Institutional Effectiveness. The Board of Trustees completes an evaluation of the President each year. Part of the information used in this process is the President’s goals for the year. The President shares those goals with internal stakeholders. In turn, the President expects each member of the President’s Cabinet to establish and evaluate personal goals for the year. Individual reviews, such as the department chair evaluation, are completed biannually by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The chair evaluation system, new in the 2003-2007 faculty contract, is a shared, face-to-face meeting with the appropriate Vice President and provides a structure for individual professional development of leadership skills. The PAS, in which all non-faculty employees undergo evaluation and receive recommendations for further professional development, includes some measurements for leadership. Supervisors are asked to address professional development needs with their employees.

5R2. Comparing Results with Other Institutions

The PAS developed between 2002-2004 at JJC compares very favorably with other Illinois institutions. Part of the work in developing the system included evaluating what others were doing for performance appraisal. While it is too early to evaluate results, the system seems to have the appropriate mechanisms to enhance employee performance. An effective system would make JJC one of the leaders in non-faculty performance appraisal. Faculty evaluation in the tenure process is similar to other colleges. The post-tenure four-year evaluation system negotiated first in the 2001-2003 faculty contract makes JJC an exception rather than the rule in Illinois community colleges. Four years into the process finds the department chairs and academic administrators favorably reviewing the process and the change in “attitude” that it brought to departments. Although based on anecdotes from chief academic officers in annual meetings, the department chairs’ evaluation system may be one of the few of its kind in Illinois community colleges.

IMPROVEMENT (I)

5I1. Improving Current Processes and Systems for Leading and Communicating

Feedback is an important component in improving leadership and delivering services to external and internal stakeholders. Student feedback through course evaluations, technology surveys, satisfaction surveys, and graduation follow-up studies has had a direct impact on the curriculum. Internal delivery of services, such as the Writing Center, access to technology, and open computer labs, has improved. Several administrative and staff positions, such as the Dean of Student Development, Career Services Director, and Internship Coordinator, have been redesigned. Formal, two-way feedback between students and leadership occurs through the Student Government Association.
Faculty/staff feedback is solicited through a series of structured meetings with elected bargaining group representatives resulting in good relationships between various JJC employees and administration at all levels of the organization. Despite the observable good relations, the need for clarity and improvement in campus-wide communications arose as a key issue during the Campus Conversation Day of Spring 2004. The project of improving and centralizing communications will become an AQIP Quality Action Project at JJC for 2005 and beyond. JJC’s strong initiatives in technology since the late 1980s have fostered opportunities for electronic communications for many years. Computers sit on the desks of every faculty member, administrator, and full-time staff person, and frequent training opportunities are offered at no cost to the campus community. The JJC Web site was developed in the mid-1990s and has served as a readily accessible resource for communication for many years. It has been remodeled in 2003 for even greater access to information. The Board of Trustees holds four of its twelve monthly meeting at external sites. At each of these four meetings, members of the community are encouraged to come and address the Board on issues of concerns. Different college administrators are charged with the responsibility to follow up on concerns and report back to the Board and community member, if appropriate, on results. Training leadership through in-service activities on campus, The Chair Academy, CQIN, the League for Innovation, the AACC, and other professional resources allows the participants to continue to learn and bring forth new ideas and innovative procedures to their working units.

512. Setting Targets for Improvement and Communicating Results to Stakeholders

Starting with the President’s annual goals developed with the Board, each employee is expected to set targets for improvement. Budgets are developed around departmental goal-setting and improvement plans. New faculty and staff positions are assigned in areas of targeted need. Innovative ideas brought forth from professional opportunities for leaders may become targets for improvement through the process of communicating with current leadership, such as the President’s Cabinet, the Administrative Council, chairs of standing committees, or department chairs. Emergency needs may be addressed through a rapid response of the President and the Cabinet. For example, an IT emergency was addressed promptly in Summer 2004 through a change of leadership and hiring of consultants to review the Information Technology program. The college quickly organized a team of internal stakeholders to assist with decision-making during this time of technology crisis and rapid response. Results of campus improvement activities are communicated in several specific methods. First, internal stakeholders are made aware of progress and results through written media such as Campus Briefs, email, and formal presentations at opening sessions each semester. Selected external stakeholders receive JJC’s Annual Report, alumni receive the Alumni Newsletter with a column highlighting improvement results from the President, students receive email and printed communications, and the district receives results through newspaper articles, editorials, and printed material delivered to all households. During times of more limited resources, the amount spent on communication may seem frivolous. However, the information is critical to keeping stakeholders informed and up-to-date. The college has made many improvements in its Web site and is using it as a tool for communicating with all stakeholders.