Systems Appraisal Feedback Report

in response to the Systems Portfolio of

LAKE FOREST GRADUATE SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

October 9, 2014

for

The Higher Learning Commission
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Elements of Lake Forest Graduate School of Management’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 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 widespread 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 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 institution 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 Lake Forest Graduate School of Management

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.

Lake Forest Graduate School of Management (LFGSM) is an independent, private, not-for-profit business specialty educational institution that offers MBA and non-degree business management education. The school enrolled 832 part-time graduate students in 2012-2013 and employs 45 full-time staff members, 5 part-time staff members, and 113 part-time faculty members. Programs are offered at its main campus in Lake Forest, Illinois, four satellite locations in the Chicagoland area, and online. For 2012-2015, LFGSM’s has two strategic goals which are growth and being the business school that delivers business impact.

The following are summary comments on each of the AQIP Categories crafted by the Appraisal Team to highlight Lake Forest Graduate School of Management’s achievements and to identify challenges yet to be met.

• Consistent with the institution’s mission, vision, values, and business acumen, LFGSM leverages its connections with the community to design programs and courses that are relevant and responsive in a highly-competitive environment for graduate business programs. Practitioner-faculty impart business knowledge from an employment market perspective that addresses emerging business challenges.

Process question responses suggest the beginning of a systematic approach to the design, deployment, and assessment of teaching-learning. The narrative generally identified what the school did, but did not clearly articulate how the processes were designed, by whom, who they serve, what they do, how they are deployed, or why they are necessary. The Systems Portfolio Guide notes that, where possible, institutions should show how a process operates by tables and flowcharts, providing
needed explanation in text.

Results were generally not aligned with processes and the responses presented suggest confusion between the use of an instrument and a measure. Limited longitudinal results were presented, thus decreasing the opportunity for reviewers to provide actionable feedback. No comparative or competitive results from peer and/or aspirational institutions within or outside the educational arena were provided. LFGSM has an opportunity to go beyond claiming that its improvements are data-driven and show how some of its reported improvements were directly driven by specific analyses of performance results.

The appraisal team also had some concern over the implications for program development, assessment, and governance in the absence of having full-time faculty members at the institution.

• LFGSM has made many improvements in Category 2 Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives including using the Net Promoter Score, adding a manager of alumni relations, and the creation of additional alumni feedback channels. Although the improvements themselves were described, the processes for determining need and designing tools to meet those needs were often not discussed. Comparative data were not provided. As a graduate specialty school, LFGSM has some unique qualities and mission-related values that it may not be systematically addressing. Analysis of related data could assure a growing foothold in the school’s competitive marketplace.

• In Category 3, Understanding Students’ and Other Stakeholders’ Needs, LFGSM uses a number of processes to identify the changing needs of students and stakeholders, along with a high-touch approach at multiple points to build and maintain relationships with its students. While improvements have been made in this category, no methods of prioritization or feedback are described to show that the improvements are systematic, comprehensive, or the direct result of specific analyses. Future portfolios can be enhanced by identifying several things including the needs and expectations of students and constituents, the processes for meeting or exceeding them, the key performance indicators of the processes, and comparative performance results. LFGSM has an opportunity to strengthen how it builds and maintains relationships with its students by clearly defining the role of academic advising, creating a
structure in which students participate on high-level committees, offering feedback on the student experiences, and ensuring that activities are incorporated into repeatable processes that form a system. The institution has an opportunity to determine how these processes may vary by different student groups, such as degree-seeking and corporate training participants.

• LFGSM strives to create a supportive environment where employees are retained and have the opportunity to develop professionally in a high performance culture that the institution acknowledges is built through its office of Human Resources (HR).

The role of HR in training and developing employees at LFGSM is unclear as is an indication of a systematic approach to choosing the participants for these opportunities. It is also unclear how the HR function identifies credentials for staff and administrative positions or how the job responsibilities, competencies, and desired outcomes align with strategic objectives at LFGSM.

An opportunity exists to incorporate the organizational competencies into the faculty evaluations and to incorporate peer and customer feedback into employee evaluations in order to create a more integrated and mature evaluation process. The school declares that it sets objectives against which faculty members are measured, yet there is an absence of mention of formal reviews for faculty members. It is also unclear how the faculty mentoring program aligns with the new employee orientation.

• LFGSM links its strategic plan with its mission, vision, and values and aligns these with annual goals and initiatives. Cross-functional, cross-representative teams, and task forces include employees affected by their decisions in its decision-making processes. The institution’s yearly review cycles encourage promotion from within. Communication occurs across all levels, yet processes of information gathering are not explained well or are missing. It is not clear how data are analyzed and, thus, there are no conclusions drawn from analysis. The institution is missing an opportunity to learn from its results, as well as to benchmark with peer and aspirational institutions within and outside of higher education.

• Student and other stakeholder needs are identified multiple times each year, engagement surveys and performance reviews identify needs of faculty and staff, and the institution is moving toward a culture of systematic data development. Reports of improvements are consistently cited but process details and key performance results are weak or missing. LFGSM’s focus on the development of
data-driven decisions needs to move beyond the data to create and systematize processes to understand results, benchmark them against previous years’ information, and compare them to other institutions. In doing so, the institution has an opportunity to operate from a position of real knowledge, which can help to keep it agile and competitive.

- Over the past several years, LFGSM has placed considerable emphasis on improving its systems for Category 7 Measuring Effectiveness. LFGSM has an opportunity to routinely evaluate whether these systems provide the data and information necessary to support institutional operations. Additionally, the institution may take these systems to the next level of maturity by going beyond collecting and distributing data to systematically analyzing and using the data to support decision-making. There is a general lack of alignment between the processes, measures, results, and improvements in this category. For example, LFGSM has installed a new dashboard but does not describe how it determines the data needs of users or how it analyzes institutional data. Furthermore, the institution provides few results for this category even though it has described its Dashboard with multiple metrics. By evaluating and systematically reinforcing the alignment between process, evaluation, and results, LFGSM may ensure that the investments it makes have the desired impact.

- LFGSM uses a structured and inclusive strategic planning process and creates alignment from its mission, vision, and values through to its strategic plan and associated action plans. For several processes, the institution refers to prior Systems Portfolios or its recent Quality Checkup rather than providing specific descriptions of the processes. LFGSM has an opportunity to explicitly define how it accomplishes several processes for Category 8 Planning Continuous Improvement including specific steps, participants, and criteria. Some examples of these processes are its development of action plans and linking resources to them. There is a general lack of alignment across this category among the processes, measures, and results presented. For example, LFGSM provides information about its planning processes but little information about the specific results for the effectiveness of these processes or how evaluation of results leads to improvements in its planning system.

- The portfolio listed a number of established collaborations, along with a few new ones both inside and outside the educational arena. Especially impressive was the
leverage of the Business Advisory Council. What is not fully described is how these relationships contribute to the school’s mission or how they are effectively being evaluated.

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

Strategic Challenges for Lake Forest Graduate School of Management

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 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 Lake Forest Graduate School of Management 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:

1. *Process Descriptions Lacked Detail*: Process responses should describe how the school does what it does and identify the parties involved. For many responses, the purposeful activities of taking resources, adding value to them in order to deliver programs, courses, and services were not described. The school will probably find that a careful review of pages 8-9 in the AQIP Systems Portfolio Guide to be helpful as it works to clearly describe its many processes.

2. *Lack of Quantifiable Data*: Results, where provided, were not longitudinal. Little-to-no comparative data were presented and results were frequently not aligned with the processes described in the portfolio. While such data may exist, they were typically not presented. Where benchmarking may have been referred to in the narrative, actual results were generally not provided as evidence. The lack of quantifiable data, if not addressed, could elevate this to an accreditation concern.

3. *Confusion of Means and Measures*: The frequent confusion between an instrument
(NSSE, NPS) and a measure (student engagement, satisfaction) was apparent throughout the portfolio. While this may appear to be a matter of semantics, it shows a lack of clarity in understanding basic quality principles and practices.

4. **Faculty Credentials**: Of the 113 all-adjunct faculty, no information is provided for how degree equivalency is determined for individuals who do not possess a doctoral or terminal degree. Based on the evidence provided, LFGSM may not be in compliance with the Commission’s assumed practice that, “…instructors possess an academic degree relevant to what they are teaching and at least one level above the level at which they teach, except in programs for terminal degrees or when equivalent experience is established.”

### 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 institutions 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 Lake Forest Graduate School of Business for Category 1.

*LFGSM is committed to incorporating real-world experiences in the classroom. It emphasizes a*
business education that focuses on competencies to deliver business impact and has de-emphasized grades as evidenced by making all elective courses pass/fail.

1P1, O. The actual process of setting objectives was not described. The response does not identify the learning outcomes and ten defined management competencies for the MBA program, how they were developed, and whether or not the non-degree customized leadership development programs for corporations share these same outcomes and competencies.

1P2, O. While LFGSM describes who is involved in defining its program competencies and that they link these to specific course learning objectives, it is unclear what processes or criteria the institution uses to determine specific program learning objectives.

1P3, S. LFGSM relies on its corporate partners for input and data collected from a variety of sources to identify potential courses that facilitate student learning. The school uses a structured PDSA-based approach for program and course changes, provided the changes align with the mission, culture, and values of the institution. Proposals can be elevated and reviewed by the Management Team and board if appropriate.

1P4, S. LFGSM monitors and evaluates learning goals, student career needs, and employability on a regular basis with feedback from student, faculty and alumni surveys, on-site corporate partners, the Business Advisory Council, and analysis of market trends. Assessment is supported with the use of direct and indirect measures, simulations, and reviewed presentations.

1P5, O. While it appears that LFGSM applies logical and timely requirements to prepare students for specific curricula, programs, courses and learning, including a minimum threshold of professional work experience and academic credentials or equivalent for admission, the portfolio discussion does not describe how the school determines the preparation required.

1P6, S. Course descriptions, detailed learning outcomes, and prerequisites for all courses are published on LFGSM’s website and in its academic program catalog. Prospective students can learn about the program through one-on-one discussions with admission advisors. The President, Dean of Faculty Relations and Degree Programs, support staff, alumni, and faculty members address the learning philosophy during the school’s Kickoff event.
1P7, S. Students are directed by advisors and enrolled in either the school’s MBA or iMBA primarily based on the number of years of professional work experience. Degree specializations are determined by student interest, allowing them to select electives in one of five areas. The Registrar and admissions team are prepared to assist students in selecting specializations.

1P8, S. Students who are underprepared may be provisionally enrolled where they must earn a grade of B- or higher in their first two courses. For these and all LFGSM students, voluntary assistance is available with written and oral presentations, math, and Excel. KEYS modules are required of all students to assist with skill development prior to entering core courses.

1P9, O. While the DiSC personality profile tool can provide students with insight into their own and others’ personalities, it does not appear to address differences in learning styles. An instrument that helps students understand their own learning styles, combined with the opportunity to address differences through assignments and coursework, could be beneficial.

1P10, O. Examples indicate that the school addresses the special needs of student subgroups, including a recent action project focused on meeting the needs of working students, as well as LFGSM’s work with publishers of audio textbooks for visually impaired students. However, it is unclear what formal process is in place to identify and respond to the special needs of all student groups.

1P11, S. The school uses course-specific rubrics to define student learning expectations that are documented through aligned course assignments and evaluations. Expectations for effective teaching are defined through position descriptions, measured and documented through interviews, peer mentoring, external training and development activities, as well as through student feedback.

1P12, O. Although LFGSM has an assumed compliance with federal guidelines and active learning management tools, the effectiveness or means to measure effectiveness were not mentioned in the portfolio.

1P13, S. In recent years, the school has added assessment of direct measures and a program assessment cycle to build upon extant AQIP projects and continues to ensure up-to-date effective programming. In addition, the Faculty Bench process uses input from students, professional faculty, alumni, and business experts to evaluate curriculum,
course necessity, and effectiveness.

1P14, S. The Faculty Bench and Curriculum Council review the curriculum and individual courses annually using several student feedback sources. In this process courses may be revised or discontinued. Faculty members work with the Curriculum Council and Dean to determine the need for course updates, including those prompted by the needs of the business community.

1P15, O. Although the school made a positive move and transitioned successfully from the annual student survey to gain more meaningful data from the Metrics that Matter® and KEYS initiatives, the method that LFGSM uses to determine the learning support needs of its students and faculty is not clearly described and its portfolio response suggests an approach that is neither systematic nor comprehensive.

1P16, S. LFGSM offers practical business-based co-curricular activities for its professional student body including business education forums, career management seminars, panel discussions, and business networking opportunities. The activities are appropriate for the school’s mission and single program.

1P17, O. LFGSM relies on students passing its capstone course to demonstrate that its graduates have met its learning and developmental expectations. The school acknowledges that it is not linking mastery with authentic assessment; however it is working on this with an emphasis on business impact. The institution appears to have an opportunity to explore additional and, perhaps, more valid measures of student learning and development.

1P18, O. The response indicates that faculty members and the Dean work together to determine processes for assessing student learning. How they are designed is not clearly articulated in the portfolio. Course design includes specifying measurable outcomes and creating assignments, but it is not clear how LFGSM assesses outcomes at the program level.

1R1, O. It is evident from the school’s response that it collects and analyzes a variety of direct and indirect measures of student learning. However, the reported results do not align with the common and specific learning objectives described in 1P1 and 1P2 (e.g. the specific measures for the ten defined management competencies should be identified).

1R2, OO. The results reported in 1R2 should align with the performance measures
identified in 1R1 and processes described in 1P1. They do not. While there are indirect measures in place to assess student learning and development, LFGSM notes that this area warrants further attention and is addressing this through an AQIP outcomes assessment project.

1R3, OO. The results reported in 1R3 should align with the process described in 1P2. They do not. Processes were described but results for specific program learning objectives were not provided. Evidence of competency assessment in the Leadership MBA course was provided without analysis or comparison to determine the value or meaning of the data.

1R4, O. The results provide limited evidence (no longitudinal data), that students completing their MBA or non-degree customized leadership development program have acquired the knowledge and skills required by key stakeholders. Only indirect evidence of competency applicability was shared, namely that from student self-evaluations. Other measures were alluded to only. The school appears to have an opportunity to survey employers that have considered hiring recent graduates in order to determine their opinions of LFGSM graduates’ knowledge and skills.

1R5, O. Although the school was able to show, through logs and tables, an increase in utilization of tutoring and mentoring programs, no measures of effectiveness or student satisfaction with the learning support services were reported. The institution has an opportunity to demonstrate how its results are relevant and effect services.

1R6, O. LFGSM provides no comparative results for its processes for Category 1 Helping Students Learn. Since it is in the highly competitive market of graduate business education, comparative results will allow LFGSM to measure its positioning relative to its competitors in terms of student learning. By gathering and using comparative data, LFGSM may identify opportunities to differentiate itself from its competitors.

1I1, S. LFGSM has made a number of improvements in Category 1 Helping Students Learn as presented in the process and improvement question responses. In particular, it has worked on teaching philosophy, HR functions, curriculum, faculty development, and academic policies with a focus on students and enhancements of learning.

1I2, O. Although it is evident that LFGSM is committed to designing and delivering an MBA program that delivers business impact, there is insufficient evidence of a systematic approach for selecting processes for improvement and setting improvement
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 Lake Forest Graduate School of Management for Category 2.

LFGSM focuses on community activism, scholarship fundraising, and local charity support as distinctive objectives.

2P1, O. LFGSM described a number of non-instructional activities but gives little detail about how it designs and operates these processes. For example, the institution mentions that a number of data inputs are used to design and implement alumni relations goals, plans, processes, and budgets but not how the data are used systematically.

2P2, O. LFGSM gives information about who is involved, but gives little detail about how the institution determines non-instructional objectives for its external stakeholders. The institution has an opportunity to advance to the next level of maturity by clearly defining how these objectives are determined in the strategic planning process and regularly evaluated.

2P3, S. LFGSM communicates its non-instructional objectives through its strategic plan, annual plan, marketing plan, budget, as well as through quarterly all-school Town Hall meetings, staff emails and newsletters, and the school’s performance management system (Success Factors).

2P4, S. LFGSM involves key school personnel in the assessment of a variety of measures including surveys, evaluations, return on investment, corrective actions, and data from alumni relations, honors, mentoring, and community enrichment programs to assess the appropriateness and value of its alumni services.

2P5, O. Although it is stated that the needs of staff relative to other distinctive objectives are determined as a part of the annual planning process and strategic planning, faculty
inclusion is not mentioned.

2P6, O. Evaluation and assessment of how processes support objectives are passed down to the local manager level. It is not clear how those managers are able to incorporate the information or how the institution readjusts objectives to support faculty and staff needs.

2R1a, S. Net Promoter Score, event participation, giving, volunteerism, and school participation are all analyzed by Alumni Relations and the human resources manager. An opportunity for LFGSM to learn from this information, possibly in conjunction with other available data, should serve to further the college. This can be especially important in such a competitive segment of higher education.

2R1b, O. LFGSM identifies several instruments, including surveys, for collecting information but does not identify the specific measures within them that are analyzed.

2R2, O. The institution’s overall performance on accomplishing its other distinctive objectives is unclear. Many results are missing, those that are available lack longitudinal results, and there is no discussion of performance relative to targets. Additionally, a majority of the alumni-related data presented does not appear to be tied to meeting alumni needs.

2R3, O. The school has an opportunity to compare how it serves its external stakeholders with others inside and outside of education. Examples might be a peer comparison of Net Promoter Scores or analyzing specific components involved in the Companies that Care decision-making process.

2R4, S. It is reported in the portfolio that the school has built visibility and brand awareness as a result of its efforts to serve its external stakeholders.

2I1, O. Although the school has made many recent improvements in this category, including infrastructure and a focus on measures such as the Net Promoter Score, the information presented in the portfolio did not make clear how these are either systematic or serving its community enrichment and other external stakeholders’ objectives.

2I2, S. The determining, setting, and integrating of alumni objectives during the strategic planning and budgeting processes, as well as the cascading responsibility for implementing suggest a culture and infrastructure that facilitates targeted process improvement yielding high returns on resource investment.
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 Lake Forest Graduate School of Business for Category 3.

The school’s key stakeholders are its degree-seeking students, corporate training participants, employers, and alumni. LFGSM measures its stakeholders’ needs through a variety of methods such as surveys of students and corporate training participants, as well as reverse presentations to gauge employers’ needs.

3P1, S. The school uses a number of processes to identify changing needs of students including student surveys, faculty feedback, alumni, area employers, focus groups, analyses of attrition and its causes, events, presentation, and market research. The newly formed Research, Development, and Innovation department is charged with gathering this collected data and analyzing them through use of trends and even consultants.

3P2, SS. The school takes a high-touch approach at multiple opportunities to build and maintain relationships with its students, using print and electronic media, calls and seminars, one-on-one sessions with faculty and staff, student life events, focus groups, and celebrations. This represents a mature, integrated process.

3P3, O. LFGSM identifies stakeholders’ needs using storyboards, reciprocal relationships, a variety of meetings, assessments, hosting Business Education Forums and other open events. However, there is no information about the process of analyzing the needs and, more importantly, the changes that may happen over time in stakeholders’ needs, particularly the parties involved, the parties responsible, frequency of analysis, and how decisions are made.

3P4, S. The school builds and maintains relationships with key stakeholders by engaging them in group activities like hosting Business Education Forums, and Business Learning Seminars. These programs also help in the recruiting of prospective MBA students. Media such as its website, onsite programming, and LinkedIn inform
stakeholders about events. Storyboarding of these groups enables the school to analyze effectiveness.

3P5, O. LFGSM has an opportunity to create processes to determine whether to target new student and other stakeholder groups. It has used processes and data in the past as driven by the 2009 Strategic Plan, but these appear to have been one-time efforts rather than sustained processes. Given the competitive market in graduate business education, creating sustained processes to target new student and stakeholder groups could allow LFGSM to proactively identify new market opportunities.

3P6, O. While the school uses different methods to collect information and to address issues and complaints raised by students, its process of systematically analyzing complaints is not clear. There is no information to show if there is a similar process of dealing with other stakeholders.

3R1, OO. While suggesting that the school has results related to student, corporate, and faculty satisfaction, learning, and behavior, the institution does not discuss its analysis of Net Promoter Score results and any other metrics that it may analyze. The opportunity exists for LFGSM to administer other engagement surveys (i.e. Noel-Levitz, National Survey of Student Engagement, etc.) and to provide trend data for NPS scores in future portfolios.

3R2, OO. While ten student complaints from the 2010-2014 Student Complaint Log were reported, it is not clear how Net Promoter metrics are set and what analysis of performance results is performed by the school relative to targets or goals. While complaints may be an indirect measure of satisfaction, the institution appears to have an opportunity to validate the metrics and/or measures that it uses for student satisfaction. Additional student complaint measures to be considered should align with the stated purpose of an outside review (e.g. documenting response time, fairness and attention to concerns, and patterns identified in 3P6).

3R3, O. Table 6 provides a headcount for participants in the mentoring program from June to December and student referrals increased 44% from 2013 to 2014. However, the performance results reported in 3R3 should align with the measures identified in 3R1. Participation is not a robust performance measure for building student relations. Without trend data, reviewers cannot provide actionable feedback.

3R4, O. Although the school presents some positive results related to faculty and
alumni, LFGSM has an opportunity to present results related to its other stakeholders, particularly its corporate stakeholders.

3R5, O. Although steps have been taken to build relationships with faculty and corporate clients, the school does not present any results for its performance in building relationships with its key stakeholders. Perhaps the accomplishments that are listed here would be better discussed as recent improvements in 3I1.

3R6, OO. While it is stated in the portfolio that “Focus groups and other internal data gathering indicates that LFGSM does a better job of understanding and responding to student needs than other similar organizations,” there is no defined list of peer institutions (or a comparative group due to its unique status as stand-alone graduate institution) or benchmarks used for comparing results.

3I1, S. Several improvements have been reported by the school (e.g. improvements in collecting and analyzing student; faculty and client data using the Metrics that Matter system; changes to assignments, textbooks, curriculum flow, delivery mode, and instructors based on the feedback from students and corporate participants; creation of the iMBA; creation of Dashboard system, and; developing online offerings using Quality Matters and Sloan-C rubrics to assure best practices). The implementation of an unsuccessful daytime MBA program shows initiative in seeking to attract an underserved student market.

3I2, O. While LFGSM reports inputs (such as SMART goals, Balanced Scorecard and Dashboard data) used in identifying improvements for meeting students’ and stakeholders’ needs, little information is given as to how the institution actually selects processes and targets for improvement. Systematic processes to evaluate current activities and processes to identify opportunities for improvement may help the institution avoid investing in change programs that may not necessarily lead to the desired performance improvement.

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 Lake Forest Graduate School of Management for Category 4.

All of Lake Forest’s 113 faculty members are adjunct and 45 of its 50 staff are full-time employees. Full-time staff members are eligible for bonuses based on their achievement of strategic planning goals.

**4P1, S.** Job competency requirements are based on position and curriculum needs. These are reviewed with staff and administration every year and updated at that time if needed. They are also benchmarked against educational institutions and similar-sized businesses.

**4P2, S.** LFGSM has a structured, multi-step, and very inclusive hiring process that places emphasis on a candidate’s experience, cultural fit, and willingness to expend discretionary effort.

**4P3, S.** For the past eight years in a row, the school has received the *Companies that Care* recognition, which helps it attract qualified candidates for employment. Beyond initial hiring, it places emphasis on supporting employees in their career development and also provides an array of compensation through competitive salaries, benefits plans, tuition reimbursement, and alternative work options.

**4P4, S.** LFGSM introduces its mission, vision, and values during interviews and the formal orientation of employees that are reinforced during all meetings. Starting in 2014, all new faculty members will also participate in its new Digital Literacy Key Elements of Your Success (KEYS) module.

**4P5, O.** The school acknowledges that gaps in succession can create challenges and so it may be more vulnerable to gaps in employment because all faculty are contingent. There is an opportunity for LFGSM to proactively develop succession planning strategies.

**4P6, O.** LFGSM has the opportunity to design and implement a proactive, systematic process to contribute to organizational effectiveness and employee satisfaction. It may leverage the employee engagement measures already in place to measure the effectiveness of work process design.

**4P7, O.** LFGSM may have an opportunity to develop a disciplinary process for
employees who violate policy or ethical expectations. Faculty and staff are required to sign code of conduct, ethics, confidentiality, and conflict of interest agreements. There is no evidence provided that a process is in place (i.e. whistle-blower policy, compliance officer, etc.) for how the institution ensures that employees act ethically.

4P8, S. Faculty training needs are determined based on student evaluations and feedback, institutional needs, and current best practices which are all addressed through conversations and workshops. Employee training needs are determined when setting annual performance goals and are institutionally determined in the school’s organizational planning processes.

4P9, S. LFGSM provides professional development opportunities for all faculty, staff, and administrators in support of their current and potential roles within the school. This is done through professional association memberships, serving on committees and teams, training for newly-acquired and required skills, and leadership opportunities.

4P10, S. The school has an employee evaluation system that is aligned to school goals and objectives. It evaluates its personnel in terms of organizational, functional, and job-specific competencies.

4P11, O. The response implies greater rigor and potential for staff reward, recognition, and compensation than for faculty. Given that all faculty at LFGSM are adjunct there is an opportunity to design recognition, rewards, compensation, and benefits that are inclusive of the faculty.

4P12, S. Faculty and staff are surveyed annually to measure employee satisfaction, communication, commitment, and concern. Results are evaluated, benchmarked, and potential improvements are identified. Performance goals are tied to individuals’ annual performance reviews.

4P13, O. There is an opportunity to continue this evaluation into the health and safety programs performance review. Employee satisfaction is evaluated on the results of a biannual Employee Engagement Survey and a Mini Employee Engagement Survey; an employee task force makes recommendations related to the improvement of employee satisfaction.

4R1, OO. LFGSM uses both Faculty and Employee Engagement surveys on a regular basis along with exit interviews and measurement of employer turnover rates. The institution does not identify the metrics/measures that it collects from the surveys, other
sources of faculty engagement information, or exit interviews.

**4R2, O.** LFGSM has an opportunity to carry its analysis of results further by drawing broader, overall conclusions that show the implications of its results for the school’s efforts in Category 4 Valuing People. The school supplied limited data to demonstrate that the performance results are tabulated and used for future decision-making.

**4R3, O.** Limited trend data was provided in the portfolio. Based on the analysis of its employee survey, LFGSM is able to conclude that it is meeting its goals for employee productivity and effectiveness. It is unclear how those goals were determined or how long-term trend data is acted upon over time.

**4R4, O.** No comparative data are provided for the measures reported, although the institution mentions benchmarking in 4R1.

**4I1, S.** Recent improvements in Category 4 Valuing People include the development and implementation of the Work Realignment Process, upgrades to the database system allowing for real-time data dashboards, and Metrics that Matter. The school is encouraged to build on these and other successes.

**4I2, O.** While LFGSM identifies some infrastructural and culturally-related improvements along with their benefits, there is no mention of how the school’s culture and infrastructure are being leveraged to determine which processes should be targeted.

**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 Lake Forest Graduate School of Management for Category 5.

*LFGSM is led by a president and CEO and governed by a board of directors, which sets direction for the school through its board committee structure. The organization conducts annual strategic planning, governance, and talent development processes. The Research, Development, and Innovation department (RDI) was created in 2010 to support planning and*
process improvement.

5P1, O. It is not clear what specific processes LFGSM uses to define and review its mission and values. An opportunity exists to include a review and validation of the institution’s mission, vision, and values as part of the planning process. LFGSM could benefit from a well-defined and systematic process to review its mission and values in order to ensure that it competes effectively in the graduate business education environment.

5P2, S. LFGSM uses its strategic planning process and resulting strategic plan as the primary mechanism to align strategic direction with mission, values, and a commitment to high performance. The organization uses a multi-step process that translates the strategic plan into objectives, programs, and tactics that are incorporated into the operating budget. The annual strategic plan initiatives cascade throughout the organization and employees’ annual goals are aligned to it.

5P3, O. The school declares that uncovering the needs, wants, and desires of students and prospective students is an ongoing process, but it does not describe how it obtains relevant information from them. No evidence was given in the portfolio to show how strategic initiatives are aligned with students’ or other stakeholders’ needs.

5P4, S. LFGSM’s Research, Development and Innovation group is accountable for actively seeking out opportunities while enhancing a strong focus on students and learning. School leaders engage in dialogue with corporations to gain market intelligence and insights on needed business competencies for its graduates.

5P5, S. Consensus decisions are the goal and norm for the school. LFGSM has defined different types of decisions and has written policies and procedures to assist decision-makers. The school uses cross-functional, cross-representative committees, teams, and task forces to recommend and carry out program and operational decisions using a PDSA-based improvement model (FADE). The decision-making process has representation from those who will be directly affected by their decisions.

5P6, O. Although LFGSM uses data for decision-making processes, it is not clear how the data are analyzed and used for performance analysis. Also, it is not clear how this data helps the stakeholders. Yet, LFGSM has indicated in its Quality Program Summary that addressing prior feedback pertaining to the use of data is a priority.

5P7, S. There appears to be a model of communication at LFGSM that enables the flow
of information among all levels, using technology to create multiple communication channels. From regular board meetings to weekly managerial and departmental meetings, the opportunities to transmit information across campus are abundant. Face-to-face interactions are supported by e-mail and other messaging systems, regular newsletters, alumni mailings, and town hall sessions.

5P8, S. The institution’s mission, vision, and values are highly visible on the physical campus as well as its website. Through the use of the FISH committee, Share Point, and the Dashboard, employees have found multiple avenues to share the vision and to reinforce a productivity level expected in a high performance organization.

5P9, S. LFGSM engages in personal development plans, 360-degree feedback, and yearly talent development reviews for its personnel in order to evaluate leadership competencies and to identify internal managerial candidates for promotion.

5P10, O. LFGSM has a structured succession process for the president and board members to ensure that the school maintains its mission, vision, values, and commitments during transitions. The institution is encouraged to expand the scope of the succession plans to include upper- and mid-level management and other leadership roles.

5R1, O. LFGSM does not identify specific metrics and measures that it collects for analyzing its performance related to Category 5 Leading and Communicating. Much of the discussion provided here relates more to processes than results.

5R2, OO. Though LFGSM identifies several performance measures for leading and communicating, it does not provide results to show how its actual (objective or quantifiable) performance has changed over time, nor has it drawn conclusions from its analysis of data. Without results, it is impossible to evaluate the institution’s performance for this category.

5R3, OO. LFGSM concludes that it compares favorably to the companies against which it benchmarks its Category 5 Leading and Communicating performance, yet it does not identify what information it compares nor does it provide actual values. In light of declaring that it has done benchmarking in 5P10, the school has an opportunity to present those comparative results.

5I1, S. SWOT Analysis and the Strategic Planning processes have been improved and the school has developed a formal process for environmental scanning. There is an
opportunity to identify improvements that are more clearly related to this category.

5I2, OO. While LFGSM reports several areas of focus for future improvements, little information is given as to how the institution selects processes and targets for improvement. Systematic processes to evaluate current activities and processes to identify opportunities for improvement may help the institution avoid investing in program changes that may not necessarily lead to the desired improvement.

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 Lake Forest Graduate School of Management for Category 6.

Support processes include the Admissions and Student Financial Services, Educational Programs and Solutions Department, Information Technology Department, the Shared Services Department, and the LFGSM Facilities Team.

6P1, S. LFGSM identifies student and other stakeholder service needs multiple times a year through a new surveying system, Metrics That Matter, as well as the Surge direct student interface, admissions interviews, monitoring of student and alumni requests, and benchmarking against other area MBA schools and online.

6P2, S. LFGSM administers engagement surveys, annual performance reviews, departmental meetings and trouble tickets to assist school leaders in identifying support needs of its faculty and staff. Additional sources of information include midterm and post-course student evaluations, periodic Certificate Council and Faculty Bench meetings. Administrative needs are processed by the Vice President of Educational Programs and Solutions. The school identified Shared Services as an area for expansion.

6P3, O. The institution discusses its mechanisms for providing safety and security but does not discuss how it designs, maintains, and communicates its key support processes for individuals’ safety and security.
6P4a, S. Student, administrative, and institutional support teams and departments meet weekly to review performance data and report issues in order to coordinate responses. Institutional support goals are tied to key performance indicators and are integrated into the reviews of key staff and departments.

6P4b, O. LFGSM identifies the parties responsible for reviewing issues related to various supporting services (such as facilities, copiers, IT, communication) yet, aside from meetings, it does not identify what managerial practices are in place to ensure that they address the intended needs. Perhaps there is an opportunity to implement mechanisms for acquiring additional information and follow-up with interested parties to ensure that matters are resolved satisfactorily.

6P5, S. LFGSM has begun using flowcharts to document student support processes such as in Admissions and Student Financial Services. Cross-representation at weekly departmental meetings provides opportunities to share knowledge across functional areas. There appears to be a developing, broad institutional approach to process documentation in order to facilitate knowledge sharing, innovation, and empowerment throughout the school.

6R1, O. LFGSM identifies the reports containing its tracked measures, but does not identify what measures it collects and analyzes for Category 6 Supporting Institutional Operations.

6R2, O. Although LFGSM presents results on some shrinkage and attrition as well as showing an improvement in career services, the institution has an opportunity to discuss and to draw conclusions about its supporting operations based on the raw data presented in this discussion.

6R3, O. The school presents limited objective results for Blackboard support services May 2013-April 2014, yet it does not show how those data have changed over time or discuss implications.

6R4, S. LFGSM has made a number of recent improvements in a variety of student support service feedback mechanisms to identify service gaps and opportunities for improvement in order to empower teams and departments to take corrective action.

6R5, OO. In 6P1 LFGSM states that data on competitive MBA schools in the Chicagoland area are compiled and analyzed annually. Yet, no mention was made in 6R5 of benchmarking any of the previously mentioned metrics of administrative support
services with other institutions inside or outside of education. LFGSM has an opportunity to assess its performance for Category 6 Supporting Institutional Operations, using that information to strengthen decision-making.

6I1, O. Although LFGSM reports improvements in the area of supporting institutional operations, such as meeting invitations, portals, dashboards, surveys, evaluations, assessments, databases and IT/online support, it is not clear how systematic and comprehensive the institution’s processes and performance results are. For example, results are missing for several of the measures identified for institutional operations.

6I2, S. LFGSM’s culture supports a data development process that prioritizes strategic planning initiatives, department and individual performance goals, cross-functional teams, and continued emphasis on data development to help it set targets and to improve. These processes show evidence of an institution that is migrating toward a culture and infrastructure of support for data-driven decision-making.

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 Lake Forest Graduate School of Business for Category 7.

Four action projects have been pursued by LFGSM in order to enhance the institution’s ability to measure operational and academic effectiveness which it describes as “emerging”. The projects have to do with implementing an institutional dashboard, outcomes assessment, student retention, and faculty engagement.

7P1, O. While LFGSM gives numerous examples of how it manages and distributes data and performance information to support instructional programs and services, it is not clear what processes the institution uses to select and evaluate performance information. The institution has an opportunity to go beyond describing what data it collects and distributes to clearly define how it selects performance measures.

7P2, S. LFGSM installed a new student information system that integrates all of its
databases, enables data access to departments, and displays its Dashboard showing student registration data, departmental financial information, and prospective student information. This upgrade which came out of an AQIP Information Systems project has enabled LFGSM to move from a decentralized to a centralized data system.

**7P3, O.** LFGSM has implemented a Dashboard to provide information to departments across the school, but it is not clear how the institution determines the needs of its departments and units related to the collection, storage, and accessibility of performance information. Now that LFGSM has an integrated system for this information and associated data, it has an opportunity to routinely evaluate whether the system is providing the needed data and information to support its operations.

**7P4, O.** LFGSM does not articulate its approach to analyzing data and information regarding overall performance. Although the portfolio stated that data are analyzed, it was not explained how or who determines if performance levels are acceptable, particularly when poor performance levels dictate further investigation and possible corrective action. LFGSM has an opportunity to build on its new student information system that enables the distribution of data and information to appropriate stakeholders.

**7P5, O.** Although LFGSM cites different sources for collecting comparative data and information, no process or criteria for determining needs and priorities are presented.

**7P6, O.** The institution focuses on its availability of data rather than detailing its processes and mechanisms to ensure that the data are systematically analyzed. LFGSM has an opportunity to build on its recently integrated systems to analyze data at the organizational level. Given the institution’s priority on the use of data, this will be a critical area to address so that the significant investments in data systems have the desired impact on organizational performance.

**7P7, S.** LFGSM has developed procedures to ensure the security and integrity of its data systems as well as the determination of student identity for online and face-to-face classes. LFGSM uses its Dashboard to provide timely data. Departments are able to review data weekly, reporting discrepancies to the CIO and CFO. Data are stored in industry standard management systems (Jenzabar and Blackboard). Daily backup and off-site storage of data help to assure security.

**7R1, O.** LFGSM describes the readily-available data accessible to faculty and staff but does not describe a cycle for the collection and analysis of this information. LFGSM has
an opportunity to define and analyze measures of effectiveness for its knowledge management system. Future Systems Portfolios may be enhanced by collecting and reporting system performance (such as accuracy, integrity, reliability, timeliness, security) and key indicators (such as downtime, penetration, and vulnerability assessments).

7R2, O. LFGSM does not provide evidence as to results for its system for Category 7 Measuring Effectiveness in accomplishing its mission and goals. The institution has an opportunity to evaluate the accuracy of its metrics and measures to ensure that they are indeed valid measures.

7R3, OO. The institution provides no comparative results for its processes for Category 7 Measuring Effectiveness, although it identified several comparative measures in 7P5. If higher education comparisons are not readily available, it may find comparisons outside of higher education. Assessing its comparative performance may be critical to LFGSM given the competitive nature of graduate business education and the institution’s emphasis on use of data and associated systems to support the execution of its strategic plan.

7I1, S. LFGSM presents evidence to suggest that it has used the feedback from the previous Systems Appraisal, Quality Checkup, and Action Projects to make improvements in knowledge management; the performance dashboard is an example. The institution is encouraged to delve deeper into processes that could improve its analytics and fact-based decision-making to take the current institutional processes to the next level of maturity.

7I2, O. While several improvements for Category 7 Measuring Effectiveness were presented, it is unclear whether systematic methods were used to select areas for improvement. LFGSM implies that its analysis of data and information has led to improvement, yet it does not demonstrate how specific improvements are the direct result of analyses. The institution has an opportunity to be more explicit about processes and criteria used for identifying improvement opportunities and for measuring the effectiveness of those improvements.

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 Lake Forest Graduate School of Business for Category 8.

_LFGSM conducts strategic planning on three-year cycles with annual updates. The main participants in the planning process are committees of its board of directors, staff, and the management team._

8P1, S. LFGSM’s structured, integrated, and inclusive planning process begins with an annual review of its mission, vision, and values which rolls into three-year strategic and operational plans that cascade down to individual goals. Participants include committees of the board, management team, and staff. The process links preliminary strategic objectives with institutional goals. Planning is linked directly to budgeting of resources to support strategic and operational plans.

8P2, S. Through the strategic planning process, LFGSM develops long-term strategies every three years. Within the framework of this three-year strategic plan, each department analyzes its operations to determine opportunities. Top management approves these short-term departmental plans. Individuals also develop annual short-term goals.

8P3, O. Although LFGSM indicates that it uses steps and timelines to develop action plans to support organizational strategies, the institution provides little information about the specific steps in the process. By more explicitly translating organizational strategies into action plans, the institution has an opportunity to reinforce the alignment of activity that supports its strategic execution.

8P4, S. LFGSM intentionally seeks departmental staff input into its planning processes in order to communicate clearly, achieve staff buy-in, ensure viability of individual strategies, and to achieve alignment across the institution. LFGSM coordinates its planning processes across organizational levels by creating a direct line from its mission, vision, and values, to its strategic objectives, departmental strategy, and all the way down to individual goals (Chart 12).

8P5, S. LFGSM uses a balanced scorecard approach to identify and select measures and performance targets. This process is incorporated into the strategic planning process and aligns with the institution’s mission and vision.
8P6, O. It is not clear how LFGSM takes into account its levels of current resources and future needs when linking organizational and departmental strategy to action plans. The organization has an opportunity to identify the participants and criteria for making these decisions. Additionally, LFGSM has an opportunity to specify how this process ensures a holistic view of resourcing rather than simply aggregating departmental needs.

8P7, SS. LFGSM addresses risk in its planning process through a risk register for each strategic objective that incorporates a SWOT analysis, environmental trends, internal and external influencers, and mitigation or exit strategies.

8P8, O. LFGSM does not address the question of how its faculty and staff development processes help the organization respond to the changing requirements demanded by its organizational strategies and action plans. It has an opportunity to create specific alignment between its Talent Management processes and the execution of its strategic and action plans.

8R1, O. LFGSM has identified a balance of metrics, targets, and action plans resulting from the planning process, but many are lagging or indirect measures. The institution has identified the broader types (timelines, budgets) and realms (financial, customer, innovation, process, satisfaction) related to metrics, rather than identifying the specific metrics or measures collected and analyzed pertaining to the effectiveness of the planning processes and systems themselves.

8R2, OO. The institution does not address the question and fails to present a discussion of actual values and how they have changed since its last portfolio. For example, without trend data for attrition (measure for main goal #1) or post-course evaluations (measure for main goal #2) it is not possible to evaluate whether LFGSM has made progress.

8R3, O. LFGSM describes its use of projections or targets for its performance of its strategies and action plans but provides no data for these measures.

8R4, O. It is not obvious which results LFGSM is using from the AQIP Action Project Directory in comparing performance with other organizations. LFGSM’s response to this question addresses the concept of review, committees, and processes in general terms but does not address the question. Without objective comparative data, LFGSM’s performance is unclear in relation to other institutions’ results for Category 8 Planning Continuous Improvement.
8R5, O.  LFGSM does not provide results for the effectiveness of its planning system itself. The institution implies that its implementation of Jenzabar and its upgrade to Blackboard Learn are evidence of effectiveness in planning continuous improvement. Although these initiatives may be the by-products of its analysis, no quantifiable analysis of results is presented showing that measurable improvements have been made. Addressing this opportunity may help LFGSM ensure that its many activities and measures are having the desired impact on improving organizational performance.

8I1, O. The institution has an opportunity to demonstrate that systematic analysis of data and results led to the improvements that it reports. For example, it is unclear what specific analysis led to the launch and integration of the Immersion MBA. By creating the department of Research, Development, and Innovation, the organization has an opportunity to make these improvement processes more effective by emphasizing systematic analysis and comprehensive processes in order to identify and implement improvements.

8I2, S. LFGSM’s mission-centric culture, customer-based focus, and culture of inclusion in the selection and improvement of targeted processes are evident. Capitalizing on these aspects of its culture may help LFGSM to take its processes for Category 8 Planning Continuous Improvement to the next level of maturity.

AQIP Category 9: Building Collaborative Relationships. This category examines the institution’s relationships – current and potential – to analyze how they contribute to the institution accomplishing its mission. It examines the institution’s processes and systems related to identification of key internal and external collaborative relationships; alignment of key collaborative relationships; relationship creation, prioritization, and 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 Lake Forest Graduate School of Management for Category 9.

LFGSM’s collaborative relationships center on corporations and organizations for student recruitment, along with several corporations to deliver programs to their employees. The school’s Business Advisory Council allows it to gather information on employers’ needs and to solicit feedback on the school’s performance.

9P1, O. Although LFGSM has a number of relationships, including those with area businesses (the main source of on-campus students), Lake Forest College, and Harvard
Business Publishing, it is not clear how recent or future relationships are prioritized or initiated.

9P2, O. LFGSM prioritizes its continued positive relationships with those who supply students and with those who depend on a supply of LFGSM graduates, yet a discussion about how the relationships are created, built, or prioritized was not addressed in the portfolio. Nevertheless, the creation of the online degree may indicate that this is likely an emerging concern at the school.

9P3-9P4, O. Although the number of trusted partnerships with service vendors is growing and although there exists an internal review process for material vendors, how these relationships are created, including criteria used and conditions required for doing business, was not identified in the portfolio.

9P5, SS. Based on its pursuit of mission and improving students’ experience, LFGSM employs a variety of methods to build relationships with the community that it serves, including civic and social activity and, most notably, the Business Advisory Council which consists of top business executives.

9P6, S. LFGSM uses partner dialogue, student survey feedback, and employee feedback to monitor whether the partner relationship is meeting the needs of the school and its stakeholders. The feedback is voiced in weekly marketing meetings and vendor performance reviews which are ongoing processes at LFGSM.

9P7, S. LFGSM utilizes task force, team, committee, inter- and intra-departmental and other meetings to build relationships among constituents. School-wide forums and “Info-Shares,” along with weekly SharePoint communications enhance cross-departmental relationships.

9R1, O. Although the school collects employee and faculty engagement surveys as well as student evaluations, no specific measures of collaborative relationships from these feedback instruments were mentioned in the portfolio as being regularly reviewed for validity.

9R2, O. The results presented, except for those related to corporate partners’ learning session engagements, were not measuring relationships with collaborators. Although strong satisfaction ratings are alluded to, no specific internal or external data were provided as support.

9R3, O. It appears that the school benchmarks with organizations that supply materials
and services, and it may be possible to leverage relationships formed in the Business Advisory Council to benchmark other relationships. Yet no comparative information was presented, including results mentioned in 9P4. LFGSM is in a position to use this type of information, where available, to differentiate itself from its competitors.

911, S. LFGSM has made several recent improvements including Metrics that Matter, usage of conferencing tools, newly formed relationships, and better use of student and employee feedback.

912, S. The school’s recent emphasis on data-driven decision-making and planning processes has laid some groundwork for setting performance targets, the selection of specific improvement processes, and setting performance targets in Category 9 Building Collaborative Relationships.

Accreditation Evidence Lake Forest Graduate School of Management

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 Core Components, 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.

Of the 21 core components listed in the table below, LFGSM provided strong, clear, and well-presented evidence of meeting 11 of the components. Seven were addressed adequately, but could be improved. The remaining 3 were, in the judgment of the Systems Appraisal Team, either unclear or incomplete in providing sufficient evidence for meeting those components. Two of the three have to do with HLC Criterion 2 Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct (2D freedom of expression, and, 2E acquiring, discovering, and applying knowledge) while one dealt with the assessment of student learning (HLC Criterion 4 Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement, 4B). In the future, the institution will need to present more objective, quantifiable, and complete information that specifically addresses these components.
### Criterion 1: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio

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<thead>
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<td>Adequate but could be improved.</td>
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<tr>
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### Criterion 4: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio

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<th>4B</th>
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### Criterion 5: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio

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</table>

### 1P1 & 1P2. HLC Core Component 3.B. 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.

**Adequate, but could be improved**

The mission of LFGSM is to improve the competence, confidence, and ability of working professionals to make significant business contributions that lead to outstanding and measurable results. This mission has resulted in strategic goals that have to do with enrollment growth and graduating students that impact business.

The institution’s Business Advisory Council provides input about the program and its faculty members and annually reviews course goals and session objectives with competencies assigned to courses. Its curriculum mapping links competencies to courses and specific session objectives.
All of the school’s faculty members are part-time, non-tenured, working business professionals. This is intended to allow them to bring their years of experience and real-life work experiences into the learning environment, enabling the school to keep its curriculum current.

1P2 & 1P18. HLC Core Component 4.B. The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

Unclear or incomplete

The school’s program review process includes Quarterly Bench meetings to review student course evaluations and faculty feedback. LFGSM has added another level of course review with its Curriculum Councils, assuring that the goals, objectives, assignments, and assessments are designed in a way that students demonstrate mastery of course competencies. Course objectives are linked to competencies and program outcomes. Each course is mapped to the school’s MBA competencies.

LFGSM students serve as consultants in its Global Practicum courses and the school uses simulations in many courses, including its capstone in which LFGSM student scores are compared with the scores of other students from other institutions using the same simulation.

While the institution measures some student learning outcomes, it is unclear whether these efforts have been sustained over time. The institution’s specific processes and methodologies to assess student learning are often unclear.

1P4 & 1P10. HLC Core Component 1.C. The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

Adequate, but could be improved

In addition to making special accommodation to individual needs as they arise, LFGSM has made all of its locations handicapped accessible and complies with all ADA requirements.

LFGSM maintains close relationships with its core corporate clients, members of its Business Advisory Council, onsite partners, and the general corporate community in order to maintain awareness of current trends in industry, the market, and the competencies that students need in order to advance in their careers.

LFGSM students participate in consulting projects through the school’s Global Practicum and Focus courses, which gives them the opportunity to present their recommendations to global companies.
1P4 & 1P12. HLC Core Component 3.A. *The institution’s degree programs are appropriate to higher education.*

*Strong, clear and well-presented*

The School requires a minimum threshold of professional work experience and academic credentials or equivalent for admission.

LFGSM monitors and evaluates learning goals, student career needs, and employability on a regular basis with feedback from student, faculty and alumni surveys, the Business Advisory Council, and market trends. Harvard Business School Publishing has mapped the courses and competencies against its professional library.

Students participate in consulting projects and make recommendations to global companies in the school’s Global Practicum and Focus courses. In several LFGSM courses, students are often required to make presentations of what they have learned to panels of external subject matter experts who judge their presentations. The program’s capstone course simulates the business environment, requiring students to integrate their learning and demonstrate their mastery of business-related competencies developed through the program. Their results are compared with those from other institutions participating in the same simulation exercise.


*Strong, clear and well-presented*

LFGSM monitors and evaluates learning goals, student career needs, and employability on a regular basis with feedback from student, faculty and alumni surveys, the Business Advisory Council, and market trends. Learning goals are aligned with employment market and student career needs by engaging corporate partners.

LFGSM designs its program by engaging its practitioner faculty in the process. The use of Faculty Benches is a practice that engages faculty members in their areas of expertise to evaluate and enhance the quality of LFGSM’s educational programs. Faculty regularly review student course evaluations, instructor feedback, teaching materials, course descriptions, course goals, alignment of learning objectives, assignments and assessments, and student materials.

LFGSM has an AQIP action project to improve its assessment by including direct measures and to implement a program assessment cycle with faculty training.
1P6. HLC Core Component 2.B. **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*

LFGSM communicates its mission, vision, and values to its publics through postings in public areas of its buildings, on its website, and in its academic catalog.

Kickoff sessions include participation and presentations by alumni and faculty.

The institution presents itself through a variety of means including its academic catalog, website, and personal interactions with admissions representatives. Required preparation and learning and development objectives for the MBA program are communicated through various print and electronic media and mandatory pre-admissions interviews. Course descriptions, learning outcomes, prerequisites, and specializations are published in the school’s academic catalog and on its website.

1P7 & 1P15. HLC Core Component 3.D. **The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.**

*Adequate, but could be improved*

Students are directed by advisors and enroll in either the MBA or iMBA based primarily on the number of years of professional work experience. Students have the option of adding a specialization to their degree and the Registrar and Admissions team assist students in selecting specializations.

LFGSM has added Web Conferencing, enhanced its ProQuest Business Library, and upgraded its student portal (for accessing academic and financial information). A Student Support Services function was added to the existing Registrar and Admissions Team. LFGSM embeds tutors in courses that students customarily have difficulty learning. Student feedback resulted in the school extending its tutoring to include workshops in Excel.

Evaluations from the school’s new KEYS program enabled it to determine the kinds of interventions that students need to be successful at LFGSM.

There is no discussion, and therefore no evidence regarding support for effective teaching here. There is some evidence pertaining to the school’s support for effective teaching discussed elsewhere (4P2, 4P10).
1P11. HLC Core Component **2.D. The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.**

*Unclear or incomplete*

Expectations for effective teaching are defined through position descriptions and measured and documented through student feedback and performance reviews. LFGSM relies on corporate and faculty practitioners to ensure alignment of content with competencies.

There is no clear evidence of freedom of expression and truth in teaching and learning since there is no related discussion presented in the systems portfolio.

1P11. HLC Core Component **2.E. The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.**

*Unclear or incomplete*

The school has an academic honesty policy, complies with copyright law, and trains faculty and students on proper licensing and use of materials.

LFGSM supports faculty, students, and staff in acquiring, discovering, and applying knowledge responsibly through its Academic Honesty policy, compliance with copyright law, and Digital Literacy KEY training.

No evidence was provided that the institution provides oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of scholarly research (i.e. IRB policies and procedures).

1P16. HLC Core Component **3.E. The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.**

*Strong, clear and well presented*

As evidenced in one of its declared strategic goals, LFGSM is committed to designing and delivering an MBA program that delivers business impact.

LFGSM sponsors Business Education Forums, career management seminars, and panel discussions to enhance learning for its students beyond the classroom.

LFGSM encourages student networking with business professionals through events held at the Executive Club of Chicago, events with Business Advisory Council (BAC), and First Fridays that enable alumni, BAC members, and board members to interact with one another.
3P1. HLC Core Component 4.C. **The institution 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*

Admissions representatives interview all prospective students to determine student expectations and their individual barriers to degree completion.

The school’s Manager of Student Services is responsible for improving retention by working with students who are identified by faculty as at-risk. With a view to addressing trends, LFGSM recently put into practice a “win back” marketing campaign to encourage the return of students who leave the program. LFGSM interviews withdrawing students and administers a written questionnaire to them in order to determine why students withdraw from its MBA program. This was devised after analyzing student retention rates.

The institution tracks and later analyzes information related to student success (and lack thereof) through its Jenzabar student information system. These data are shared across the campus with faculty, staff, and administrators leading to educational program changes and improvements.

3P3 & 3P5. HLC Core Component 1.D. **The institution’s mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.**

*Adequate, but could be improved*

LFGSM targets new student groups and stakeholders for its educational offering based on three criteria: consistency with its vision, mission, and values; its ability to serve the market with a viable product, and; its ability to prove success within two years. Work done with the Research Development and Innovation (RDI) department identified early career professionals who were suitable and interested in online learning, and thus a fit for its iMBA program.

Corporate partners are a key stakeholder group for the school and the institution has responded effectively with onsite delivery and partner involvement in advisory groups and committees.

LFGSM’s hosting Business Education Forums, other open events, and sponsorship of Business Learning Seminars are examples of how the institution understands and serves its publics. LFGSM values community involvement as evidenced by its 2008 “Write Your Own Future” essay competition offering 50 full scholarships.

4P2 & 4P10. HLC Core Component 3.C. **The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.**
Adequate, but could be improved

The institution uses hiring and evaluation processes to ensure that it has the faculty and staff needed for high-quality programs and student services. Senior recruiters review faculty candidates’ resumes and applications for minimum qualifications and deans make final hiring decisions. Final transcripts are submitted at the point of hiring; the process for verifying them is not discussed.

Its performance evaluation model includes a Plan-Do-Check-Act model to identify and act on opportunities for employee performance improvement.

With its unique model of a fully adjunct faculty, LFGSM has invested in mentoring and support processes to support them in providing a quality educational experience for LFGSM’s students. Adjunct faculty are evaluated (student course evaluations, peer feedback, Bench & Certificate Goal performance, classroom observations), but the institution does not discuss regularly scheduled, formal evaluations of faculty.

4P7. HLC Core Component 2.A. *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

Employees are required to sign that they understand and will abide by the school’s code of conduct, ethics statement, confidentiality agreement, and conflict of interest statement. Although it may be discussed elsewhere, there is no evidence discussed here of policy and practices related to ethics for the institution’s board of directors.

An annual financial audit at LFGSM scrutinizes its financial practices and includes interviews with the school’s management that focus on ethical practices.

Faculty members review the school’s Faculty Handbook and sign a faculty agreement annually.

4P7. HLC Core Component 2.E. *The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.*

Unclear or incomplete

LFGSM expects students and faculty members to follow its Academic Honesty and Plagiarism Policy.

5P1 & 5P2. HLC Core Component 1.A. *The institution’s mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.*
**Strong, clear and well-presented**

The mission of the organization has been stable since its inception in 1946 and is communicated through multiple means, including the school’s web site and in its academic catalog in order to ensure guidance for institutional operations. LFGSM’s mission and values are included in handbooks for its Board of Directors, Management Team, faculty, staff, key vendors, and Business Advisory Council. The strategic plan is the principal method through which the institution aligns its mission with plans, programs, budget, and structure.

The mission of the organization is part of the Board of Directors’ by-laws. The Board of Directors sets strategic direction in alignment with the institution’s mission through its board committees, whose charters align with the mission.

Results of its biannual Employee Engagement Survey indicate that the school’s staff embrace and understand the institution’s mission. (5P3)

**5P2 & 5P6. HLC Core Component 5.C. The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.**

**Strong, clear and well-presented**

The institution’s three-year strategic plan is updated annually along with an annual budget supporting it. In the last annual update of its strategic plan, LFGSM identified two strategic goals, namely to return the school to growth and to become the business school that delivers business impact from its programs and solutions. LFGSM identifies the steps that it uses in order to translate its strategic plan into objectives, programs, and tactics.

LFGSM has implemented a dashboard system to provide data on organizational performance to staff for use in departmental planning. Information Summits are held six times a year to provide staff members the opportunity to evaluate data pertaining to new student profiles, student outcomes, and experiences.

The School’s Board of Directors sets the institution’s direction through committees aligned with functional areas using the strategic plan. The Board of Directors delegates authority to the school’s president for institutional strategic planning and is responsible for approving its annual budget, monitoring financials, and establishing policy affecting assets; responsibilities cascade down through the President, Management Team, staff, deans and faculty. Six critical success factors have been identified and are evaluated regularly to measure performance.
5P2. HLC Core Component 2.C. The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

Strong, clear and well-presented

LFGSM includes its mission and values in its handbook for members of its Board of Directors.

As defined by the Board of Directors’ by-laws, the governing board is autonomous. The members of the Board of Directors follow a Conflict of Interest Disclosure and Action process. Board members are assigned to specific parts of the school’s mission and oversee related portions of strategic decision-making in the school. The president is responsible for the management team, reports to the board, and is evaluated by the board chair. Executive sessions are prescribed by its by-laws to ensure the integrity of board decisions.

The Board of Directors is purposefully composed of senior business executives from organizations who provide students, senior leaders, school benefactors, and organizations that represent LFGSM’s constituents.

5P3 & 5P8. HLC Core Component 1.B. The mission is articulated publicly.

Strong, clear and well-presented

The school has posted its mission statement in the lobbies of buildings on its Lake Forest campus and Schaumburg location in order to communicate it to visitors.

Intended for its external publics, LFGSM posts the mission statement on its public website, in handbooks for faculty, staff, and students, and in the academic catalog.

The annual Employee Engagement survey includes a question about whether employees of LFGSM understand and embrace the mission.

5P5 & 5P9. HLC Core Component 5.B. The institution’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

The governing board, composed of senior business executives, is knowledgeable about the institution and its programs and provides oversight for the institution’s fiscal and academic practices.

Promoted by the Board of Directors, consensus decision-making is at the fore of the school’s
culture. LFGSM utilizes cross-departmental task forces, AQIP action projects, process improvement teams, committees, and project teams that report their results in writing to the responsible management personnel.

LFGSM has a dedicated Research, Development, and Innovation (RDI) department that works with other departments at the institution. RDI is responsible for developing key processes and improving them by reducing barriers and reducing cycle times, as well as enhancing processes.

The school evaluates staff members’ leadership competencies and plans for development as a regular part of their annual performance reviews. Optional 360-degree feedback for selected employees can be included as a part of the employee performance review process.


Strong, clear and well-presented

LFGSM develops documents, and shares evidence of performance in its operations through Town Hall meetings, faculty meetings, an enterprise system faculty portal, and an internal SharePoint intranet.

In 2010, the institution installed a new student information system that now integrates all of its databases, enabling each of its departments to access data more readily. LFGSM’s recently implemented its Dashboard that includes registration, revenue, expense, and prospective student information. These data system improvements indicate that the institution learns from its operational experience and HLC feedback.

8P6. HLC Core Component 5.A. The institution’s resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

Adequate, but could be improved.

The institution uses a process to allocate resources for the action plans supporting its strategic objectives. Steps 11 and 12 of its Strategic Planning Process (8P1) include resource assessment and estimates of investments to accomplish the strategic plan.

LFGSM allocates financial resources based on its ability to pay, the expected financial growth, and return on investment. Human resources at the institution are allocated based on projected time requirements.
No specific evidence is provided that the institution has sufficient fiscal resources, human resources, and the technological infrastructure sufficient to support its current educational offerings and to strengthen its future quality.

Quality of Systems Portfolio for Lake Forest Graduate School of Management

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 Lake Forest Graduate School of Management with constructive feedback on the overall quality of the portfolio, along with suggestions for improvement of future portfolio submissions.

*LFGSM can enhance the effectiveness of the presentation of its efforts in continuous quality improvement and the evidence that it meets the criteria for accreditation by directly addressing the questions. It should make certain that every discussion provided for any given question, specifically answers the question as stated. While this is problematic at any point in the portfolio, it becomes particularly so for the questions that are used to demonstrate that the institution meets the criteria for accreditation. At times, this resulted in the team having to conclude that LFGSM’s evidence for meeting a given criterion was unclear or incomplete. In other places in the portfolio, the school included discussions that would have more appropriately addressed questions elsewhere in the portfolio. In other words, LFGSM provided relevant information, but in the wrong place. For example, there were misplaced discussions where LFGSM listed its recent accomplishments under questions where it should have detailed its actual process. Misplaced discussions make it extremely difficult for the Systems Appraisal Team to find the evidence that the school has provided and to acknowledge its work in continuous quality improvement.*

Using the Feedback Report

The AQIP Systems Appraisal process is intended to initiate action for institutional improvement. Though decisions about specific actions rest with each institution, the Commission 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.

The Commission’s goal is to help an institution 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.