September 24, 2012

Richard Helton
President
Vincennes University
1002 N. First St.
Vincennes, IN 47591-1504

Dear President Helton:

Enclosed is a copy of Vincennes University's *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*. It begins with a concise Executive Summary, intended for those general readers that do not require a high level of detail. Your Systems Appraisal Team of quality experts provided extensive detail in the full report by identifying nine distinct groups of what they view as your institution's *strengths* and *opportunities for improvement*, one group for each of the nine AQIP Categories. We are also emailing your institution's AQIP Liaison a copy of this full *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*.

To receive maximum benefit from your Systems Appraisal, you and your colleagues should plan to invest substantial time in discussing it, considering the team's observations and advice, and identifying which actions will best advance your institution. The enclosed *After Your Appraisal* details what lies ahead and how to use your Feedback Report most effectively, and explains when and how to register for your next Strategy Forum.

To comply with federal requirements, we need the CEO of the institution formally to acknowledge receipt of this report within the next two weeks, and to provide us with any comments you wish to make about it. Please read the enclosed *After Your Appraisal* suggestions *before* you decide how to respond. Limit your acknowledgement and comments to a maximum of two typewritten pages, and understand that your response will become part of your institution's permanent HLC file, to be shared with future peer reviewers who review your institution (including the next Systems Appraisal team, the next Quality Checkup visit team, and the next Reaffirmation of Accreditation panel). Email your response to AQIP@hlcommission.org.

We know you will gain real value from the Systems Appraisal Feedback and the activities it will stimulate within your institution, and we are proud to be working with you as you continue along the never-ending path to improvement.

Sincerely,

Mary Green
Accreditation Services

SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

VINCENNES UNIVERSITY

SEPTEMBER 24, 2012

SYSTEMS APPRAISAL FEEDBACK REPORT

In response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

VINCENNES UNIVERSITY

Academic Quality Improvement Program

The Higher Learning Commission NCA

September 24, 2012

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR VINCENNES UNIVERSITY

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

Category 1 – Helping Students Learn:

- Although Vincennes University has articulated a commitment to develop systems and processes to 1) assess student learning, 2) share the assessment results widely throughout the university, and 3) use the results to improve and assist student learning, much of the work seems incomplete. Many of the processes described in this category rely on the implementation of the Strategic Plan (SP). The SP lists timeframes for the majority of the goals and objectives to occur in 2010 – 2011, yet the Portfolio describes many of these processes as beginning in the future. The March, 2012 Strategic Planning Progress Report shows several of these processes have not even begun, and that the majority are only 25 – 50% complete. The AQIP portfolio allows for a description of the current processes, and then a description of improvements to those processes. This category did not contain a very thorough description of the current processes, which resulted in few improvements being articulated. Vincennes University appears to be at a critical time where renewed energy may be needed to instill a culture of assessment and quality improvement within the institution.

Category 2 – Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives:

- Although VU has made improvement of its key non-instructional processes a priority, the inconsistent quality of its data collection efforts may limit its ability to make improvements in this area. A strong, continued commitment to an effective assessment program should result in improvements in both data collection and analyses: information useful for increasing the quality of VU's non-instructional programming.

Category 3 – Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs:

- The VU processes and results for data collection and making quality improvements regarding student and stakeholders' satisfaction are limited.

Recently, VU hired an Interim Director of Institutional Effectiveness and an Interim Director of Institutional Research. The addition of these two key positions, along with increased commitment of University leadership to the quality improvement process should result in more effective listening approaches and programs for student and stakeholder groups in the future.

Category 4 – Valuing People:

- VU seems to have adequate processes in place to recruit, hire, and retain employees, as well as a praiseworthy process of mandatory new employee orientation.   Although VU has begun to collect data on valuing people through its *Climate Quality Survey* and its evaluation process, it has not created processes for the analysis or the use of the data. Moving forward, VU has an opportunity to create direct measures of valuing people that align with institutional strategic directions.

Category 5 – Leading and Communicating:

- With the support of its Board of Trustees, VU's leadership has recently focused efforts on building a culture of learning assessment with the hiring of an Interim Director of Institutional Effectiveness, release time for faculty liaisons, the *Learn in Order to Serve* Action Project, and activities to enable the faculty to work with underprepared students. These efforts should generate a body of data and information that can be analyzed and used to improve learning at VU. In order for this to happen, the communication and continuous quality improvement structures that have been (or will be) put into place need to integrate with the assessment processes that have begun.

  Although Vincennes University has begun to collect data on leading and communicating, it has not created processes for the analysis of or the use of the data. As of the writing of this portfolio, VU had collected data from the *Culture Quality Survey*, but had not yet analyzed, shared, or followed up on this data.

  A considerable amount of time and effort seems to be focused on communicating important initiatives to the University community; however,

much of that communication is reported to be done through administrative channels in the traditional "top-down" fashion. This model of communication could inhibit the active participation by employees in VU quality improvement efforts.

Category 6 – Supporting Institutional Operations:

- VU recognizes that it lacks specific measures of support service processes. The new Director of Institutional Effectiveness is addressing this by conducting audits in 47 areas. This review should yield the appropriate data to analyze and develop a set of data measures to collect on a regular basis. Both the *Culture Quality Survey* and CCSSE results show that VU compares less than favorably with other institutions of higher education in terms of employee satisfaction with administrative services, and that levels of student satisfaction declined on CCSSE from the 2009 administration to the 2011 administration. There appears to be no activities at the university to analyze or address declining student and stakeholder satisfactions with VU support services. Without addressing these satisfaction levels, VU may not be able to successfully face its key challenges of state-level budget issues and declining enrollments.

Category 7 – Measuring Effectiveness:

- The development of VU's culture and infrastructure for measuring effectiveness is in its early stages. As VU begins its systematic measurement of quality indicators, it needs to also develop the appropriate systems to effectively collect, analyze, and disseminate the information needed to drive improvement. VU notes that its staff recognizes the limitations of its current processes for measuring, analyzing, and sharing the effectiveness of its data and information systems as compared to other 2- and 4-year institutions. The appraisal team's concerns for this category are reinforced by the number of Outstanding Opportunities (OO) presented in the results sections of both the past and present System Appraisal Feedback Reports.

Category 8 – Planning Continuous Improvement:

- VU has made limited progress in its planning processes with its efforts to monitor those processes and directly assess student learning. The next steps in evolving its continuous quality improvement culture involve setting up processes tied to key university strategies and goals in ways that are repeatable and regularly evaluated to determine if there is sustained improvement over time. However, given the number of years that VU has spent developing many key processes, especially its student outcomes assessment plan, more attention and resources need to be given to their completion. This observation is reinforced by the number of Outstanding Opportunities (OO) expressed in the results sections of both the past and present System Appraisal Feedback Reports.

Category 9 – Building Collaborative Relationships:

- VU's commitment to building and maintaining collaborative relationships is apparent in the many examples of these partnerships; its Strategic Plan Goal 6 is evidence of current VU emphasis on developing collaborations. However, there does not appear to be a formalized process for developing and prioritizing partnerships to ensure they are not being developed on an ad hoc basis. The opportunity exists to assess VU partnerships through quantitative data. It is in every institution's best interest to regularly measure all relationships to ensure they are beneficial for all parties.

Accreditation issues and Strategic challenges for Vincennes University are listed in detail within the Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis section of the Appraisal Feedback Report.

ELEMENTS OF VINCENNES UNIVERSITY'S FEEDBACK REPORT

The *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* provides AQIP's official response to your *Systems Portfolio* by a team of readers trained in evaluation. After appraisers independently reviewed your document, the team reached consensus on essential elements of your institutional profile, strengths and opportunities for improvement by Category, and significant issues for your

institution. These are presented in three sections of the Feedback Report: Accreditation Issues Analysis, Critical Characteristics Analysis, and Category Feedback. These components are interrelated in defining context, evaluating performance, surfacing critical issues, and assessing institutional performance.

It is important to remember that the Systems Appraisal Team had only your *Systems Portfolio* to guide their analysis of your institution's strengths and opportunities for improvement. Consequently, their report may omit important strengths — if you were too modest to stress them in your *Systems Portfolio*, or if your discussion and documentation of them was unconvincing. Similarly, the team may have pointed out areas of potential improvement that are already receiving the institution's attention. Again, the team used its best judgment in identifying improvement opportunities. If some of these areas of potential improvement are now strengths rather than opportunities because of your own focused efforts, that is all to your credit. If the team was unsure about an area, we urged it to err on the side of giving your institution the best possible advice about where investing your efforts might pay off. If some of their advice comes after the fact, after you've already tackled an area, no harm is done.

Executive Summary: Summative statements agreed upon by the Systems Appraisal Team reflecting the reviewers' assessment of the institution's current status in relation to critical quality characteristics: 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 the Category covers. Since institutions are complex, maturity levels may vary from one Category to another.

Strategic challenges for the institution are listed in detail within the Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis section of the Appraisal Feedback Report.

Strategic and Accreditation Issues Analysis: Strategic issues are those most closely related to your institution's ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning, and quality improvement goals. Accreditation issues are areas where you have not yet provided evidence that you meet the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*, or where the evidence you have presented suggests you may have difficulties, now or in the future, in meeting these expectations. If accreditation is essential for your institution then any accreditation issues identified are, by definition, also strategic. The Systems Appraisal Team identified both of these kinds of issues through analysis of your Organizational Overview and the feedback it provided for each

Category, as well as by reviewing the Index to the *Criteria for Accreditation* that you provided along with your *Systems Portfolio*. This list of strategic issues offers a framework for addressing ongoing improvement of processes and systems, serving as an executive summary of the Report's key findings and recommendations.

Critical Characteristics: Your Systems Portfolio's Organizational Overview provides context for the team's knowledge of your institution's identity, mission objectives, strategic goals, and key factors related to improvement. Critical Characteristics are those features most important for understanding the institution's mission, environment, stakeholders, competitive position, goals, and processes. Characteristics having the greatest relevance to each Category are identified in the Report.

Category Feedback: The Report's feedback on each of AQIP's nine Categories specifically identifies 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. Comments, which are keyed to your *Systems Portfolio*, offer brief analysis of each strength and opportunity. Organized by Category, and presenting the team's findings in detail, this section is the heart of the Report.

STRATEGIC AND ACCREDITATION ISSUES

In conducting the Systems Appraisal, the team attempted to identify the broader issues that present the greatest challenges and opportunities for your institution in the coming years. These are all strategic issues, ones you need to grapple with as you identify your institution's strategies for confronting the future and becoming the institution you want to be. The team also examined whether any of these strategic issues put your institution into jeopardy of not meeting the Higher Learning Commission's accreditation expectations.

Issues Affecting Compliance with the *Criteria for Accreditation*. An important goal for the Systems Appraisal was to review your institution's compliance with the Higher Learning Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*. The peer quality experts who served on the team were all trained in evaluating colleges and universities using the Commission's *Criteria*, and the Systems Appraisal process they followed included careful steps to ensure the team used the

Criteria as a major factor in their review. As the team reviewed your presentation of your institution's systems and processes under each AQIP Category, it searched for accreditation-related issues and concerns. In addition, the team used the *Index to the Criteria for Accreditation* that you provided with your Portfolio to perform a comprehensive review of the *Criteria* and each Core Component to ascertain whether you presented compelling evidence that your institution complies with each of these Commission expectations.

The Systems Appraisal team concluded that Vincennes University has presented evidence that it complies with each of the Five *Criteria for Accreditation* and each of their Core Components. Although the Systems Appraisal does not in itself constitute a review for continued accreditation, the team's conclusion upon reviewing your Portfolio against the Criteria will serve as a telling piece of evidence during the Commission's next scheduled AQIP review of your institution for Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

Issues Affecting Future Institutional Strategies. The Systems Appraisal Team identified the following strategic issues to assist Vincennes University in prioritizing and taking action on the important broad challenges and opportunities it faces. From these you may discover your vital immediate priorities, shaping strategies that can lead to a quantum leap in the performance of your institution. Implementing these strategies may call for specific actions, so AQIP's expectation that your institution be engaged in three or four vital Action Projects at all times will help encourage your administrators, faculty, and staff to turn these strategic goals into real accomplishments. Knowing that Vincennes University will discuss these strategic issues, give priority to those it concludes are most critical, and take action promptly, the Systems Appraisal Team identified:

- While VU has focused this past year on program learning outcomes and their assessment, it is unclear what processes will be used to integrate these outcomes with VU's new, institution-wide general education learning outcomes. Currently VU's assessment methods have been indirect (Community College Survey of Student Engagement - CCSSE) or teacher-designed assessments. Third party, nationally-normed assessment of general education outcomes might provide the opportunity for direct, identical, common, reliable, valid assessment that could be mapped to VU's general education learning outcomes. The national comparative data provided by such

assessments can indicate gaps in learning for standards that transcend the University's classroom goals.

- Vincennes University describes its processes for selecting, managing and distributing data as decentralized. Centralization and standardization of data use and analysis can lead to more effective use of data for the determination of needs and priorities, the setting of targets to promote improvement in areas critical to the colleges' competitive strategies, and the measurement of VU's progress towards accomplishing its strategic goals.

- While VU is expanding its means of offering courses by expanding its online delivery, offering courses through four early college environments and its Military Education program, it is unclear what processes the college is using to determine these changes. Without strategic processes for building an effective course delivery system and developing these key partnerships, VU may find it difficult to be successful in its environment of changing state standards and declining student enrollments.

- VU comparison data for CCSSE show student satisfaction levels to be below cohort data satisfaction levels in nearly all items shared in the portfolio. Data for VU from the 2009 and 2011 administrations of the CCSSE show student satisfaction to be declining. It is unclear how CCSSE data is further analyzed for root causes for the low satisfaction levels, or if action plans have been undertaken to address these satisfaction levels. The University's collection of data without acting on it will provide little value to the institution's stakeholders.

- VU's leadership has focused strong efforts on building a culture of assessment recently; such measurements should derive from VU's needs and should provide critical data and information about key processes, outputs and results, and be used for performance management. At this time improvement projects appear to develop from a variety of committee structures and by employee suggestion. VU should direct efforts to develop a culture of data-based decision-making and evaluation infrastructure to select specific processes to improve, determine baseline performance, and set targets for improved performance results.

- Despite the fact that VU has submitted two Systems Portfolios and conducted numerous Action Projects, there does not seem to have been substantive progress made to

address the areas of appraiser feedback concerns since the last portfolio. The institution may want to reconsider its choice of the AQIP method of accreditation.

USING THE FEEDBACK REPORT

The AQIP *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* is intended to initiate action for improvement. It is therefore important that the Report produced by the Systems Appraisal Team stimulate review of organizational processes and systems. Though decisions about specific actions are each institution's, AQIP expects every institution to use its feedback to stimulate cycles of continual improvement. At the next Strategy Forum an AQIP institution attends, its peers will examine in detail how it is using the feedback from its Systems Appraisal.

An organization needs to examine its Report strategically to identify those areas that will yield greatest benefit if addressed. Some key questions that may arise in careful examination of the Report may be: 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. Based solely upon an organization's *Systems Portfolio*, the Report reflects a disciplined, external review of what an organization says about itself. The report should help an organization identify ways to improve its *Systems Portfolio* so it functions better to communicate accurately to internal and external audiences. But the Report's chief purpose is to help you to identify areas for improvement, and to act so that these areas actually improve. These improvements can then be incorporated into an updated *Systems Portfolio*, guaranteeing that future Systems Appraisals will reflect the progress an institution has made.

Within a year following the Systems Appraisal, an institution participates in another AQIP Strategy Forum, where the focus will be on what the institution has learned from its Appraisal (and from its other methods of identifying and prioritizing improvement opportunities, and what it has concluded are its major strategic priorities for the next few years. AQIP's goal is to help an

institution to clarify the strategic issues most vital to its success, and then to support the institution as it addresses these priorities through Action Projects that will make a difference in institutional performance.

CRITICAL CHARACTERISTICS ANALYSIS

The purpose of this section is to identify what team members understood to be the critical and distinguishing characteristics of your institution. They are the shared understanding of the most important aspects of Vincennes University, its current dynamics and the forces surrounding it, and its internal momentum and aspirations, at least as team members understood them. This section also demonstrates that the Systems Appraisal Team recognized and knew what makes Vincennes University distinctive. Should you find some characteristics that you think are critical and missing from this list, you may want to clarify and highlight these items when you revise your *Systems Portfolio* and other literature explaining your institution to the public.

Note: The first item below (OV) refers to the Introduction section of the Overview.

Item   Critical Characteristic

OVa   Vincennes University (VU) is a comprehensive two-year institution offering more than 150 associate degree programs and seven baccalaureate degrees.

OVb   In addition to the Vincennes campus, the University has a second campus at Jasper, and major extension sites at the Indianapolis International Airport and the Indiana Schools for the Deaf. VU has expanded higher education for military members by tripling the number of bases that offer classes. They have also increased access for high school students by offering dual credit instruction at 150 high schools and operating the VU/Ben Davis University High School early college.

OV1a The State of Indiana is moving toward a unified 30-credit hour core of general education courses that will be transferable across all state institutions of higher learning. In addition, the number of credit hours earned for an associate degree at a state institution will be capped at 60.

OV1b Vincennes University has a current priority to develop systems and processes to 1) assess student learning, 2) share the assessment results widely throughout the

university, and 3) use the results to improve and assist student learning. As evidence of this priority, VU has hired an Interim Director of Institutional Effectiveness to focus on the use of results to improve and assist student learning.

OV5   The University recognizes its need for systematic processes for institutional assessment of its leadership, strategic planning approaches, and its methods of communication.

OV6   VU identifies significant investment in its infrastructure and physical plant since 2008 to address its strategic planning goal of being a "Premier Learning Institution". These investments include millions of dollars spent on 11 projects for new facilities and renovations.

OV7   The University's current AQIP Action Project entitled "Learn in Order to Serve" focuses on identifying what data is collected and how it is distributed at the university, and developing a student profile and a data warehouse for key student data.

OV8   The state funding formula has changed from inputs to outputs, including degree completion, at a time when Vincennes University's enrollment is declining. This enrollment decline is also causing a decline in the number of students who can graduate. The University recognizes the need to increase technology use and distance education offerings.

CATEGORY FEEDBACK

In the following sections, each of which deals with strengths and opportunities for improvement for one of the nine AQIP Categories, selected *Critical Characteristics* are again highlighted, those the Systems Appraisal Team believed were critical keys to reviewing that particular AQIP Category. The symbols used in these "strengths and opportunities" sections for each Category stand for *outstanding strength* (SS), *strength* (S), *opportunity for improvement* (O) and *pressing or outstanding opportunity for improvement* (OO). The choice of symbol for each item represents the consensus evaluation of the Systems Appraisal Team members, and deserves your 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

Helping Students Learn identifies the shared purpose of all higher education organizations, and is accordingly the pivot of any institutional analysis. This Category focuses on the teaching-learning process within a formal instructional context, yet also addresses how your entire institution contributes to helping students learn and overall student development. It examines your 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.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Vincennes University that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 1, Helping Students Learn:

Item Critical Characteristic

OV1a The State of Indiana is moving toward a unified 30-credit hour core of general education courses that will be transferable across all state institutions of higher learning. In addition, the number of credit hours earned for associate and bachelor degrees at state institutions will be capped at 60 and 120 respectively.

OV1b Vincennes University has a current priority to develop systems and processes to 1) assess student learning, 2) share the assessment results widely throughout the university, and 3) use the results to improve and assist student learning. As evidence of this priority, VU has hired an Interim Director of Institutional Effectiveness to focus on the use of results to improve and assist student learning.

OV5 The University recognizes its need for systematic processes for institutional assessment of its leadership, strategic planning approaches, and its methods of communication.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Vincennes University's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 1, Helping Students Learn.

Item   S/O   Comment

1P1   S   Vincennes University (VU) has faculty structures in place to develop its curricular and co-curricular learning outcomes (the Curriculum and Academic Affairs Committee and the General Education and Assessment subcommittees). Although the completion of the *Implementing VU's Vision of a 21st Century Education* Action Project has been delayed because of the new statewide requirement to develop a 30-hour transferable core, the fact that VU's General Education Committee has drafts of both liberal and general education outcomes ready for discussion is evidence that progress has been made to define common learning outcomes at VU.

1P2   O   VU involves faculty from all campuses, advisory committees, and external accreditation organizations when setting program learning outcomes, but it is unclear exactly what processes are used to validate its learning outcomes. Without a clear, well-articulated process in place, learning outcomes may not keep pace with transfer and industry requirements.

1P3a   S   VU describes a variety of processes to develop new competitive programs that reflect industry needs and best practices. New curricula are developed using a variety of inputs: advisory committee interaction, specialized accreditation requirements, common practice of other colleges and universities, and articulation agreement needs. One of the University's Action Projects assists with this since it is focused on "educating for the 21st century graduate".

1P3b   O   Although VU involves many stakeholders when designing new programs, VU does not mention how the need for new programs is identified since program advisory committees would not be in place before the need has been identified. VU appears to have a foundation in place for designing new curricula and courses; however, based on information on the institution's website, it appears the processes may have stalled. The Educational Futures Task Force (EFTF) last Action Project Update in 2008 stated there was a five-year implementation plan (http://www.vinu.edu/sites/vinu.edu/files/AP_Update_08_-_Education_for_the_21st_Century_-_Reviewerxs_Response.pdf), yet the

Portfolio discusses the work of this project in the future tense. The membership of this committee (as listed on the VU website) shows the terms have all expired. The review processes called for in the Strategic Plan under Goal 1, Objectives 1-8 and 1-9 have yet to be started according to the March, 2012 Strategic Planning Progress Report (http://www.vinu.edu/sites/vinu.edu/files/strategic%20plan%20progress%20 20report%2C%203-12.pdf).

1P4	O	Although VU involves many internal and external stakeholders when designing responsive academic programs, it doesn't mention involving students in the process. Involving students in the process can help VU understand how current programs are meeting their needs, and what their future needs may be. Also, VU has plans to develop additional measures to evaluate new program needs that complement its quantitative analysis, but these processes are not yet underway. Having these processes in place will help VU meet and anticipate student needs during program revision and development.
1P6	S	VU has a variety of methods to communicate expectations to students and other external stakeholders. These methods include program brochures and fact sheets, orientation sessions, tours, academic advising, degree audit software, course syllabi, and meetings with faculty.
1P7	S	VU has developed a number of programs to assist students in the selection of programs and courses. These programs include the PreVU program for prospective students and their families, and START VU for new students. A pilot program in Fall 2011 involved General Studies majors and included career cruising projects, guided division tours, a community project, and career-focused presentations in an effort to assist students in choosing a major. According to a survey, participants in the pilot program felt the course was valuable. The institution also uses a number of tools to help students connect with a career, such as the Accuplacer computerized placement, Do What You Are, PEPS Learning Styles Inventory, and general studies advising.

1P8	S	VU uses mandatory placement for all students based on Accuplacer, SAT, or ACT results. VU also offers free tutoring and mentoring and has begun using supplemental instruction. VU has implemented the TAPS early warning system and has created a blog to offer faculty tips for dealing with underprepared students. VU's TAPS committee is evaluating the early-warning system's use to create a more systematic, holistic process that incorporates best practices to address at-risk students.
1P9	O	Although VU describes its processes for working with high achieving students and those with disabilities, it appears that there is an opportunity to look at the learning styles of all students to more effectively engage them in learning. Learning styles and needs for accommodations are much different topics. Helping students identify the learning style (or mix) that works for them will help them be more successful. Understanding this will aid faculty in designing learning activities that help all students.
1P10	O	VU provides services to address the needs of a wide range of students, including those with special needs, underprepared students, international students and honor-level students. Although the needs of online students have been identified and are in the process of being addressed, nothing was reported to be in place. The institution also has an opportunity to more clearly articulate what it hopes to achieve through all of its services and determine if there are other groups in need of support.
1P11a	S	The Teaching and Transformation Academy (TTA) offered 15 workshops to help 149 faculty develop enhanced teaching and learning effectiveness. The institution commits professional development funds to support teaching and learning, and a new faculty evaluation process has been developed, which the institution believes clearly articulates teaching and learning expectations.
1P11b	OO	Although VU has placed a lot of emphasis on the development of processes to improve teaching and learning, the majority of measures for those processes are indirect. The institution has an opportunity to develop some direct measures to assess its processes. It is also unclear how the

Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) results are used to define and communicate VU's expectations for effective teaching and learning to full- and part-time faculty.

1P12   O   VU involves many people in the institution to create the course schedule, uses SMART technology in classrooms, and employs Blackboard for distance education. It is easy to see how these components address organizational requirements, but it is unclear how they address students' changing needs. Even as VU is expanding its means of offering courses by expanding its online delivery, offering courses through four early college environments and via its Military Education program, it is unclear that the college is developing these changes deliberately and through any defined processes. Without strategic processes for building an effective course delivery system, VU may find it difficult to be successful in its environment of changing state standards and declining student enrollments.

1P13 – 1P14   O   Changes to VU programs may be initiated by several groups, and metrics are collected annually, but there appears to be no articulated process, cycle, or team to address changes to or the discontinuation of courses or programs. As an example, VU uses financial metrics within the program review process to help identify courses and programs for discontinuance, but according to the March 2012 progress report, the process is only 25% complete and lacks specifics. Without cyclical, defined processes, VU may not be able to deliver programs that address changing student and employer needs or make most efficient use of its resources.

1P16   O   VU has identified its goal of providing better alignment of curricular and co-curricular activities. As described in the portfolio, there is evidence that the institution is working to create processes that better reflect the alignment.

1P17   O   VU refers to class audits, grades, and certifications as methods to determine that students to whom they award degrees have met learning and development expectations, but has the opportunity to strengthen this

process and link it to their focus on student learning and assessment.
Questions that VU may consider include: What happens if students fail
one of the professional certification tests? How does VU measure other
general education goals, which may not be measured by GPA?

1P18a	S	As part of a recent Action Project, VU conducted an assessment audit of each of its 89 academic major programs to determine the presence of a mission statement, program outcomes, assessment efforts and use of the assessment results. This audit will enable the development of a plan for addressing gaps in assessment efforts going forward. VU has made progress in assessment activities and should keep focus not only on collecting the data, but also on using the results for continuous improvement of its learning processes.
1P18b	O	Currently VU's assessment methods are indirect (CCSSE) or teacher-designed assessments. Third party, nationally-normed assessment of general education outcomes might provide the opportunity for direct, identical, common, reliable, valid assessment instruments that could be mapped to VU's general education learning outcomes. The national comparative data such assessments provide can indicate gaps in learning in the context of standards that transcend the university's classrooms' goals.
1R1	O	Although VU has developed measures of assessment, there may be an over-reliance on CCSSE. VU is making efforts to use a combination of direct and indirect measures to determine that students are learning and developing. As identified in the portfolio, the institution sees its continuing opportunity for improvement in this area.
1R2 – 1R3	S	VU is using assessment within many occupational programs to measure student learning. VU is also using embedded assessments to assess general learning outcomes, and it appears that the institution understands what it wants to collect and analyze. Using the final exam in the college algebra course as a general assessment tool is one way to assess common student learning and development. Additionally, the results for

the examples of direct learning outcome assessment – math, humanities, agriculture – show success rates lower than the standards set for these assessments. These are data that VU can use to improve instructional processes to increase student learning.

1R4	O	VU has the opportunity to assess and monitor the acquisition of skills required by other stakeholders using direct measures such as licensure data, and occupational proficiency assessment as is required of Career and Technical Education programs by the Perkins Act. Indirect measures such as IPEDS graduation and time-to-degree rates, in-class, fall-fall and fall-spring retention rates would provide additional methods to determine how successful VU students are in accomplishing VU learning goals for its students. Using a wide range of these outcomes measures might provide a broader view of VU student learning that could be compared with peer and national institutions.
1R5 – 1R6	O	Although VU provides results of the 2011 CCSSE that compares the institution to the mean of all participating institutions, there remains an opportunity to more clearly articulate a peer group and compare performance to that selected group rather than the broad comparisons that the institution cannot really interpret. Also, VU is collecting indirect measures of processes that help students learn and has identified direct measures. VU should continue to pursue these direct measures. As the assessment process matures, the institution may wish to include benchmarks for effectiveness rather than relying solely on the surveys currently being used.
1I1-1I2	O	There appears to have been a shift in attitudes towards assessment and a commitment by the institution to improve methods of assessment based on the number of Action Projects and Strategic Planning goals. VU has started to use assessment in the classroom, and is planning on expanding to co-curricular activities and non-instructional processes. As the portfolio notes, VU continues in its attempts to create a culture of continuous quality improvement. As this culture forms, it will need to be nurtured until it begins to take hold at the institution.

AQIP CATEGORY 2: ACCOMPLISHING OTHER DISTINCTIVE OBJECTIVES

Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of your institution's major objectives that complement student learning and fulfill other portions of your mission. Depending on your institution's character, it examines your 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.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Vincennes University that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 2, Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives:

Item	*Critical Characteristic*
OV6	VU identifies significant investment in its infrastructure and physical plant since 2008 to address its strategic learning goal of being a "Premier Learning Institution". These investments include millions of dollars spent on 11 projects for new facilities and renovations.
OV8	The state funding formula has changed from inputs to outputs, including degree completion, at a time when Vincennes University's enrollment is declining. This enrollment decline is also causing a decline in the number of students who can graduate. The University recognizes the need to increase technology use and distance education offerings.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Vincennes University's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 2, Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives.

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
2P1	O	Although the Portfolio provides numerous examples of ongoing programs and services sponsored by VU, insufficient information is provided about the University processes used to design, operate, and evaluate these programs. Without such evaluation and results, it is difficult to determine

if the programs are meeting stakeholder needs now and will be able to do so in the future.

2P2	O	Although VU uses its institutional strategic plan to set objectives for its non-instructional programs, most of these programs are developed and carried out at the unit level. It is not clear how the strategic plan is used to provide evaluation metrics for these programs.
2P3	O	Although VU has placed its mission and vision statements around campus, in print publications, and on its online site, there appears to be no methods of communicating its expectations for objectives involving its external stakeholders to its employees or the external communities.
2P4	O	Most VU assessment and review seems to come from surveys of program participants, programs' advisory committees, and other stakeholders. An opportunity exists to develop more formal processes for directly assessing 'quality added' to the participants, other stakeholders, and the University by the non-instructional programs and services VU provides.
2P5-6	O	VU processes to determine stakeholder needs for nonacademic programming seem to rely heavily on staff meetings, stakeholder surveys, and anecdotal feedback. Additionally, it is not clear that any processes exist to use stakeholder needs information.
2R1	O	The methods reported for measuring effectiveness seem overly broad, indirect, anecdotal, and inconsistently used across VU's non-instructional programs. Instituting systematic, cyclical gathering of external constituents' feedback (e.g. third-party community perception surveys) may provide actionable information about areas in need of improvement.
2R2a	S	The information from the VU Foundation regarding the increases in both number of scholarships and dollar-amounts awarded over the years provides good examples of how quantitative data can be used to evaluate program effectiveness.

2R2b	O	Although VU is currently collecting some quantitative data, such as the number of news releases and volunteer hours, VU acknowledges that the new assessment initiative should provide opportunities to better understand institutional processes. This new assessment initiative should also result in increased quality improvements.
2R3	O	VU provides limited results on how it compares to other institutions. Perhaps this is due to the lack of institutional assessment processes, including comprehensive data analyses and valid interpretation of results.
2R4	O	It is unclear how the *Campus Quality Survey* data can be used to increase the quality of specific programs and services designed for VU's external stakeholders. Assessment measures directly related to the objectives of these VU programs are needed.
2I1-I2	O	It is unclear whether a system of processes is now in place to set goals and objectives for external programs, measure their performance, and make needed program improvements.

AQIP CATEGORY 3: UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS' AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS' NEEDS

Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs 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.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Vincennes University that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 3, Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs:

Item   Critical Characteristic

OVb   In addition to the Vincennes campus, the University has a second campus at Jasper, and major extension sites at the Indianapolis International Airport and the Indiana Schools for the Deaf. VU has expanded higher education for military members by tripling the number of bases that offer classes. They have also increased access for high school students by offering dual credit instruction at 150 high schools and operating the VU/Ben Davis University High School early college.

OV1b VU has a current priority to develop systems and processes to 1) assess student learning, 2) share the assessment results widely throughout the university, and 3) use the results to improve and assist student learning. As evidence of this priority, VU has hired an Interim director of Institutional Effectiveness to focus on the use of results to improve and assist student learning.

OV5   The University recognizes its need for systematic processes for institutional assessment of its leadership, strategic planning approaches, and its methods of communication.

OV7   The University's current AQIP Action Project entitled, "Learn in Order to Serve" focuses on identifying what data is collected and how it is distributed at the university, and developing a student profile and a data warehouse for key student data.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Vincennes University's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 3, Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs.

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
3P1	S	VU currently uses multiple surveys, Action Projects and an early warning system to help identify the changing needs of its student groups.
3P2	S	VU is using a number of methods for building and enhancing prospective and current student relationships that continue through graduation. The Alumni Association is active in maintaining institutional relationships with VU graduates.
3P3	O	Although data are collected from a range of surveys, needs assessments and advisory committees regarding the needs of key stakeholders, it is unclear how these results are analyzed or used for improvement.

3P4	S	VU's activities to build stakeholder relationships include community college fairs, a dedicated office for parents of students, alumni activities, and a variety of community activities (e.g., sponsoring the Generations Program and local PBS TV and radio stations, participating in charitable organizations, etc.).
3P6a	O	VU explains the process by which student complaints are submitted, evaluated, and responded to. But important details were not addressed; for example: is the process communicated to students in a proactive manner, and is there a timeline for resolving grievances?
3P6b	O	VU recognizes its opportunity to establish an internal grievance policy for faculty and staff.
3R1	O	Although satisfaction surveys are administered to students, faculty, and staff, it is unclear if the data are being used in a systematic way to determine where improvements are needed.
3R4-5	OO	Although the portfolio provides some very limited data from the *Culture Quality Survey* and the CCSSE, there is an opportunity to provide data on satisfaction and relationships with other stakeholders VU has identified as important.
3R6	O	It is unclear from the portfolio how comparison data from the CCSSE and the Start VU surveys are used to make improvements. For example, how are the survey results evaluated to identify root causes of the dissatisfaction so that appropriate improvements can be made?
3I1-I2	O	Although VU is increasing its overall data collection and quality improvement efforts, these efforts have not yet been applied systematically across all units and services. VU readily admits that although its culture is changing, it needs more time for this change to be completed.

AQIP CATEGORY 4: VALUING PEOPLE

Valuing People explores your institution's commitment to the development of your employees since the efforts of all of your faculty, staff, and administrators are required for institutional success. It examines your 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.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Vincennes University that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 4, Valuing People:

Item   Critical Characteristic

OV5   The University recognizes its need for systematic processes for institutional assessment of its leadership, strategic planning approaches, and its methods of communication.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Vincennes University's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 4, Valuing People.

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
4P1	O	Although VU describes the University Faculty Credentialing Guidelines, new criteria for teaching in Project Excel, and the Premier Learning Institution document as examples outlining credentials for faculty, the processes to determine the specific credentials, skills, and values required for faculty, staff, and administrators are not described. Without such processes in place, it may be difficult for the university to ensure its workforce represents diverse ideas, appropriate abilities, and the VU values.
4P3	S	A rubric with hiring criteria is created by search committees, approved by the Human Resource Director, and used by VU search committees to evaluate job position candidates.

4P4	S	A robust orientation for all employees is mandatory and includes a review of appropriate policies, procedures and benefits, and opportunities for professional support and development. Electronic documents such as the "New Faculty Resource Guide" and the "University Manual" are accessible online. In addition, new faculty members are assigned faculty mentors during orientation program activities.
4P5	O	VU's planning for personnel changes appears to be oriented from the "bottom up", with an operational, resource-driven focus rather than a strategic "top-down" focus that considers the needs of the organization, its community, and its students. In addition to opportunities to improve the processes, there also appears to be an opportunity to plan for personnel changes.
4P6	O	It is unclear how VU designs its work processes and activities to foster an organizational culture that is characterized by open communication, high performance work, and an engaged workforce. VU has an opportunity to create a work environment where people focus their efforts to benefit students, stakeholders, and the university.
4P7	O	Although VU orients new employees to the expectation of ethical behavior, the only process identified to ensure on-going ethical behavior relies on the relationship between the employee and the supervisor. VU has an opportunity to devise grievance procedures in its employee manuals to provide a multi-lateral approach (involving more people than just a supervisor) to ensure ethical behavior while protecting due process rights. While the VU orientation training sets the foundations for the expectation of ethical behavior, ongoing training may be needed to ensure ethical practices.
4P8a	S	VU workshops on such topics as assessment practices, clickers in the classroom, smart classroom, developmental math sequence, and Digital Teaching align faculty training to VU instructional programs and services.
4P8b	O	Although VU appears to have processes in place to identify short-term training needs, there does not appear to be a process to develop long-

term training needs to support the organizational strategic plans.   As the Portfolio notes, the new assessment process could prove very valuable in this respect.

4P9   O   Although some consideration is given to the professional development needs of faculty, particularly as they relate to student learning, the process for ensuring that development occurs seems to be limited to one portion of the evaluation process. The Portfolio does not address the needs for professional development for staff and administration. Without such a system, staff learning needs - both identified by the employee and by their supervisor - may be unmet, and staff performance for the university may be less effective than it could be.

4P10   S   VU has processes in place to evaluate all employees, as well as tracking mechanisms to ensure the evaluations occur. A specific, unique strength is the self-report faculty must complete to self-assess their effectiveness as teachers.

4P11   O   VU identifies awards and compensation, but does not explain how these are aligned with its objectives for both instructional and non-instructional programs and services. Without the alignment of recognition with VU values and strategic directions, it may be difficult to engage employees to achieve organizational and personal goals.

4P12   O   It is clear that all employee groups have input into the direction of VU, and VU has recently employed the *Climate Quality Survey* to gather employee perceptions. At this point it is unclear how VU uses either of these tools to identify motivation issues, or how they are analyzed to select courses of action. As noted in the Portfolio, the opportunity exists to use assessment measures to identify key issues related to enhancing faculty and staff satisfaction, health and motivation to improve institutional quality.

4R1   O   VU has administered the *Climate Quality Survey*, but no mention is made as to how often it will be used in the future. A systematic process to gather employee perceptions will allow VU to identify changes in this category, and may help identify potential changes.

4R3	S	Approximately 40% of VU's faculty have attended the Teaching Transformation Academy workshops since 2000.
4I1 – 4I2	O	VU has begun to collect data on Valuing People, but has not created processes for the analysis of or the use of the data. Because VU has started this process recently, cultural change may not have had a chance to occur yet.

AQIP CATEGORY 5: LEADING AND COMMUNICATING

Leading And Communicating addresses how your institution's leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide your institution in setting directions, making decisions, seeking future opportunities, and building and sustaining a learning environment. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to leading activities, communicating activities, alignment of leadership system practices, institutional values and expectations, direction setting, future opportunity seeking, decision making, use of data, leadership development and sharing, succession planning, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Vincennes University that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 5, Leading and Communicating:

Item   Critical Characteristic

OV1b Vincennes University has a current priority to develop systems and processes to 1) assess student learning, 2) share the assessment results widely throughout the university, and 3) use the results to improve and assist student learning. As evidence of this priority, VU has hired an Interim Director of Institutional Effectiveness to focus on the use of results to improve and assist student learning. (RS, JS)

OV5   The University recognizes its need for systematic processes for institutional assessment of its leadership, strategic planning approaches, and its methods of communication. (LH, LS, RS, DS, JS)

OV6   VU identifies significant investment in its infrastructure and physical plant since 2008 to address its strategic planning goal of being a "Premier Learning Institution". These investments include millions of dollars spent on 11 projects for new facilities and renovations. (LH)

OV8   The state funding formula has changed from inputs to outputs, including degree completion, at a time when Vincennes University's enrollment is declining. This enrollment decline is also causing a decline in the number of students who can graduate. The University recognizes the need to increase technology use and distance education offerings.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Vincennes University's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 5, Leading and Communicating.

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
5P1a	S	VU has defined its vision of what it takes to be a premier learning institution in the Premier Learning Institution: Indicators of Success document. These indicators of success are to be used to guide Action Projects, aid in the development of VU strategic plans, and foster an environment of continuous quality improvement at VU. The Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Committee periodically reviews the mission and vision Statements.
5P1b	O	While VU developed its strategic plan involving a wide variety of stakeholders including its Board of Trustees, CQI Committee and individual committee members, and shared it with the greater university community, it is unclear whether student and external community stakeholders were included in the plan's development. Without student and stakeholder input into the strategic plan, it may be difficult to meet the needs of those key groups in the future operations of the college.
5P2	O	While the Strategic Plan Progress Report 2012 presents on a grid what category of progress has been made on each goal in the strategic plan, it is unclear the ways actual activities on the goals are communicated to the VU community of staff and students. Without methods of communication

in place beyond posting on a website, key stakeholders may not be included in the activities, and those not included may feel uninformed about the relationship of the goals to the University's mission, vision, and values.

5P3	O	Although VU has processes for identifying the needs of internal stakeholders, there appears to be an opportunity to look more broadly at the stakeholder groups, particularly the high school cohort, in order to account for the needs of stakeholders in its goals. The existing process might also be improved by setting timelines for data review and future data collection.
5P4	O	While VU has stressed student learning in its strategic plan, it does not describe a systematic process for identifying future opportunities for the institution. Without a systematic process in place, VU may miss out on future opportunities.
5P5	O	An opportunity exists for appropriate units of the University to work with the new Director of Institutional Effectiveness to ensure that important decision-making is done in an inclusive manner and that decisions which are implemented are followed-up to evaluate their effectiveness. This approach should result in involving more employees in quality improvement efforts.
5P6	OO	The exact role of data in VU decision-making is unclear. A major consideration in performance improvement and change management involves the selection, analysis, and use of performance measurement in all areas including student, stakeholder, program, service, and process activities. Perhaps the decision to hire a Director of Institutional Effectiveness will help VU make better use of its data to make decisions.
5P7	O	The description of the various VU communication vehicles indicates a narrow and compartmentalized approach: faculty minutes are distributed to faculty, professional staff notes to professional staff, and so on. Without processes in place to facilitate horizontal communication as well as the vertical communication, staff members are likely to believe they are left

out of critical decision processes and do not receive valuable institutional information.

5P8	S	VU leadership communicates a shared mission, vision, and values, along with a commitment to continuous quality improvement, through the formation of teams, university presentations, professional development, convocations, external speakers, release time, and the establishment of a new Office of Institutional Effectiveness.
5P9a	S	VU professional development is accomplished by team and project assignments, professional development workshops, departmental special activities, and performance evaluation processes.
5P9b	O	Although VU describes several opportunities for professional development in its units and committee structures, it appears that the institution may have an opportunity to think more strategically about leadership development at the institutional level. Also, no mention is made of how leadership knowledge or skills are shared throughout the organization.
5P10	O	VU notes that a succession plan does not exist and there are a significant number of planned retirements in the next five years. If developed soon enough, a succession plan could ensure smooth transitions in key positions.
5R1	O	There appears to be limited measures cited in the portfolio to measure leading and communicating beyond mention of the CCSSE and *Campus Quality Survey*. It is unclear how CCSSE data measures leadership and communication among the organization's internal stakeholders. Without the *CQS* survey instrument, or the complete set of data it yielded, it is difficult to determine the actual measures used to assess leadership. VU has the opportunity to establish an effective leadership system, which includes additional mechanisms for the leaders to conduct self-examination, receive feedback, and improve.
5R2a	S	The Assessment Committee surveyed 110 faculty who participated in the assessment process to determine their perceptions of the effectiveness of

the leadership of the assessment processes; cyclical repetition of this survey could monitor the changes, if any, in the leadership and effectiveness of these processes.

5R2b	O	VU is in the very early stages of collecting data on its leadership effectiveness, and as such has an opportunity to determine the kind of results that will best help the institution close its feedback loop.
5R3a	S	VU compares favorably to its peer group and to 4-year institutions in areas such as faculty and staff understanding the mission and value of the institution, pride in their work, and support of continuous quality improvement concepts.
5R3b	O	The *Campus Quality Survey* comparative results point to communication - especially of the VU mission, purpose, and values - as an area that is an opportunity for improvement for the leadership at all the VU campuses.
5I1-I2	O	For the most part, the initiatives described in the portfolio do not directly relate to how VU has chosen and improved upon its leading and communicating processes.

AQIP CATEGORY 6: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS

Supporting Institutional Operations addresses the variety of your institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive. It examines your 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.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Vincennes University that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 6, Supporting Institutional Operations:

Item   Critical Characteristic

OV1b Vincennes University has a current priority to develop systems and processes to 1) assess student learning, 2) share the assessment results widely throughout the university, and 3) use the results to improve and assist student learning. As evidence of this priority, VU has hired an Interim Director of Institutional Effectiveness to focus on the use of results to improve and assist student learning.

OV5 The University recognizes its need for systematic processes for institutional assessment of its leadership, strategic planning approaches, and its methods of communication.

OV6 VU identifies significant investment in its infrastructure and physical plant since 2008 to address its strategic planning goal of being a "Premier Learning Institution". These investments include millions of dollars spent on 11 projects for new facilities and renovations.

OV8 The state funding formula has changed from inputs to outputs, including degree completion, at a time when Vincennes University's enrollment is declining. This enrollment decline is also causing a decline in the number of students who can graduate. The University recognizes the need to increase technology use and distance education offerings.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Vincennes University's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 6, Supporting Institutional Operations.

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
6P1	O	While VU gathers data on the support service needs of its students and other external stakeholders through surveys, meetings, committees, and planning processes, the processes and structures used to identify and prioritize specific needs are not described. Gathering data is important to understanding stakeholder support needs, but the processes to analyze and prioritize those needs are key steps to begin to address them.
6P2	O	VU gathers faculty, staff and administrator support service needs through a variety of avenues, including surveys, meetings, committees, and planning processes; however, how that information is analyzed and prioritized for the development of improvement projects is not described.

Such processes would allow VU to prioritize the competing needs identified through the data-gathering instruments.

6P3   O   While VU identifies a systematic process for communicating safety and security concerns with campus stakeholders, the Portfolio does not explain how the processes used by the institution are selected and defined. Proactive responses might include using student survey results about their perceptions of campus safety, changes in state and federal law, and higher education best practices to design processes such as annual programming and notifications to ensure everyone's physical safety.

6P4   O   Although the Portfolio describes how goals for support services are developed through the strategic plan and who has overall responsibility for these services, and documents several processes for encouraging knowledge sharing and collaboration, the Portfolio does not explain how the institution plans to measure the results of these processes. There is an opportunity for VU to develop direct and indirect measures it plans to use to assess its performance in this area. Without the use of these work process inputs, it may be difficult to ensure that standardized approaches are in place and that internal and external stakeholder needs are met.

6P5   O   VU appears to recognize the documentation of its support processes is scattered, taking many forms. The development of the Institutional Effectiveness website has the potential to become the central warehouse for this documentation.

6R1   O   While the Portfolio states that VU regularly collects and analyzes measures of student and administrative support services, no measures are defined. The opportunity exists for VU to identify measures of support services, and to collect and analyze them in order to improve its student and stakeholder services.

6R2   OO   Although VU is beginning to focus on the results it is deriving from its surveys, there remains the need to add direct measures to its numerous indirect measures of satisfaction or opinion. The audit being conducted

by the DIE may yield the appropriate data to analyze and develop a set of data measures to collect on a regular basis. The opportunity exists for VU to use the data it has collected from the CCSSE to target and improve key student support services.

6R3	O	VU provides data indicating that its support processes need improvement. The VU *Culture Quality Survey* indicate low employee satisfaction with the administrative support services of communication, employee training and recognition, parking, research and planning services, and the recruitment and orientation of new employees (results given in 4R2). The areas provide opportunities for improvement that should be addressed by the university.
6R4	OO	Other than the use of committees and task forces to identify and implement improvements on an ad hoc basis, there does not appear to be a systematic method of using results to drive improvements. The opportunity exists for VU to use data it has collected to improve its student support services.
6R5	O	VU provides data showing that VU compares less than favorably with other institutions of higher education on both the CCSSE and *Culture Quality Survey*. VU notes that an opportunity exists to use its recently acquired benchmark data to help identify gaps in its student support services and determine how to improve them.
6I1-I2	O	VU has made individual improvements in several support areas. However, systematic institution-wide processes for identifying the areas in most need of improvement don't seem to have been developed or implemented yet.

AQIP CATEGORY 7: MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

Measuring Effectiveness examines how your institution collects, analyzes, and uses information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to collection, storage, management, and use of information and data – at

the institutional and departmental/unit levels; 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.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Vincennes University that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its Systems Portfolio section covering Category 7, Measuring Effectiveness:

Item   Critical Characteristic

OV1b   Vincennes University has a current priority to develop systems and processes to 1) assess student learning, 2) share the assessment results widely throughout the university, and 3) use the results to improve and assist student learning. As evidence of this priority, VU has hired an Interim Director of Institutional Effectiveness to focus on the use of results to improve and assist student learning.

OV5   The University recognizes its need for systematic processes for institutional assessment of its leadership, strategic planning approaches, and its methods of communication.

OV7   The University's current AQIP Action Project entitled "Learn in Order to Serve" focuses on identifying what data is collected and how it is distributed at the university, and developing a student profile and a data warehouse for key student data.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Vincennes University's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 7, Measuring Effectiveness.

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
7P1-2	O	UV's processes for selecting, managing and distributing data are characterized as decentralized. The Portfolio gives some examples of limited forms of centralization and standardization of data use. Better analysis of VU data may lead to more effective use of data for the determination of needs and priorities, the setting of targets to promote improvement in areas critical to the colleges' competitive strategies, and the measurement of VU's progress towards accomplishing its strategic goals.

7P3a	S	VU has several processes in place for determining the needs of its departments for the collection, storage, and accessibility of Information that attend to both department and institutional needs; VU's *Learn in Order to Serve* Action Project should enable the university to centralize student records from which reports can be generated.
7P3b	O	Although some units within the institution have effective data collection/management systems for planning and implementing improvement efforts, no overarching, university-wide system for coordinating that process is in place. A centralized system would ensure consistency of data definitions, values, etc. and facilitate comparison of data across units of the university.
7P4a	S	Institutional Research and MIC analyze broader institutional performance through several reports that are completed each semester or annually. The information is prioritized by leadership and then communicated through appropriate channels. A notable improvement in the communication process is the use of the new Institutional Effectiveness website which now allows assessment plans and improvement plans to be available online.
7P4b	OO	While the portfolio provides one example of data analysis in External Relations, VU appears to have a fragmented process where each division seems to analyze and present its own data. It is not clear how other departments and the university itself analyzes data to guide VU's process management towards the achievement of key organizational results and strategic objectives. VU has an opportunity to create a cross-divisional process for analyzing and presenting data. A cross-divisional process could allow for better analysis, and better solutions to problems.
7P5	O	VU has several processes for collecting comparative data and information; however, it is unclear what methods and criteria are used to determine the needs and priorities for that comparative data or what process is used to determine which comparative data sources VU should

adopt. A clear set of methods and criteria could produce comparative results that are more meaningful.

| 7P6 | O | VU acknowledges that an opportunity exists to align unit data collection and analyses with overarching institutional goals, including the University's strategic plan. |

| 7P7a | S | VU uses software to ensure the reliability and security of its Information Systems. |

| 7P7b | O | VU describes a process for ensuring the accuracy of data input; however, it is unclear how VU verifies the data itself is accurate other than relying on external entities questioning the output. Inaccurate data may not necessarily be detected through this method and could easily lead to poor decisions. |

| 7R1 | O | There appears to be no measures for the performance and effectiveness of VU's information and knowledge management system. VU notes that an opportunity exists to develop a centralized data warehouse that would serve the institution better than the decentralized processes currently in use. |

| 7R2 | O | While VU has put numerous processes into place for collecting and analyzing data to inform program decisions, there were no results or evidence that the system for measuring effectiveness meets the institution's needs in accomplishing its mission and goals. VU recognizes that its processes have not yet matured enough to provide results over time that will allow data-informed decision making. |

| 7R3 | O | In the one result provided (*Culture Quality Survey*), VU recognizes it will be able to use this feedback to improve its efforts to measure effectiveness. VU lags behind similar institutions and has an opportunity to identify additional comparative measures. |

| 7I1 – 7I2 | O | VU has documented several improvements that will result in more useful data to make decisions in the future. VU is working to create a data-warehouse, but without a systematic way to share and analyze data, the |

warehouse could be of little use. Throughout this portfolio, VU states that it is creating many different systems and processes to address its opportunities for improvement; it is imperative that VU dedicates appropriate resources to these efforts so that they are achieved in a timely manner. VU recognizes the opportunity to further develop its culture and infrastructure to set targets for improvement.

AQIP CATEGORY 8: PLANNING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Planning Continuous Improvement examines your institution's planning processes and how your strategies and action plans are helping you achieve your mission and vision. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to institutional vision; planning; strategies and action plans; coordination and alignment of strategies and action plans; measures and performance projections; resource needs; faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities; measures; analysis of performance projections and results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Vincennes University that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* **section covering Category 8, Planning Continuous Improvement:**

Item   Critical Characteristic

OV1b Vincennes University has a current priority to develop systems and processes to 1) assess student learning, 2) share the assessment results widely throughout the university, and 3) use the results to improve and assist student learning. As evidence of this priority, VU has hired an Interim Director of Institutional Effectiveness to focus on the use of results to improve and assist student learning.

OV5   The University recognizes its need for systematic processes for institutional assessment of its leadership, strategic planning approaches, and its methods of communication.

OV6   VU identifies significant investment in its infrastructure and physical plant since 2008 to address its strategic planning goal of being a "Premier Learning Institution". These investments include millions of dollars spent on 11 projects for new facilities and renovations.

OV8   The state funding formula has changed from inputs to outputs, including degree completion, at a time when Vincennes University's enrollment is declining. This enrollment decline is also causing a decline in the number of students who can graduate. The University recognizes the need to increase technology use and distance education offerings.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Vincennes University's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 8, Planning Continuous Improvement.

Item	*S/O*	*Comment*
8P1	O	It appears that the goals of the VU Strategic Plan were developed by the VU Board of Trustees and refined by senior leadership; it is not clear if inputs such as strategic challenges and opportunities, organizational competencies, student and stakeholder needs, and external climate factors were considered in its development. Without considering these components, it may be difficult for VU to strengthen its overall performance and meet its future challenges.
8P2	O	Although VU uses goal committees within the strategic planning process to identify short and long-term strategies, it is unclear how these strategies are selected. Without a clear process and criteria for selection, the most effective and efficient strategies may not be determined.
8P2-4	O	The VU strategic plan projects are developed in various ways: arising from senior leadership, through goal committees formed to identify specific activities to meet each of the five strategic goals, within the Continuous Quality Improvement Committee, through the recently created proposal process, by way of groups such as the Educational Futures Task Force and the Foundation of Excellence Committee, and at the unit and program level. How projects that emerge through these various ways are evaluated, developed, and coordinated is unclear. Without VU action plans development processes that have alignment, coordination and cycles of evaluation and improvement, strategic goals may not be attainable.

8P5	OO	While VU has selected measures for its goals and objectives, it does not appear to set targets for its performance relative to those action projects or strategic objectives. Without targets, it will be difficult to assess progress made on the plans relative to what is needed to keep the institution successful in meeting internal and external challenges such as state-level budget issues, declining enrollments and changing state funding formulas.
8P6	O	The processes described in the portfolio explain how program and department budgeting is conducted, and strategic plan initiatives are prioritized by senior administration; however, it is not clear how individual action projects' resource needs are determined or allocated. Unless resource allocation is aligned with strategic goals' short and longer term action projects, it may be difficult to accomplish those projects.
8P7	S	VU has identified and is managing the key financial risk factors for its continued success: state funding and economic instabilities, a high reliance on state funding, rising health costs, competitive salary structures, increasing instructional technology needs, facilities needs, and enrollment instability.
8P8	S	VU has implemented a variety of professional development opportunities for faculty as a result of its 2007 Strategic Goal IV and its recent focus on assessment. Examples of these opportunities include the Teaching Transformation Academy and an annual Professional Development week for all VU faculty and staff. VU will be planning additional professional development activities in response to the Campus Quality Survey.
8P8	O	VU provides professional development funds for faculty and staff, but it is unclear how this is aligned to the organizations changing needs. For example, it is not apparent that VU has any comprehensive processes in place for developing non-academic staff capabilities to adjust to a culture of quality planning, assessment and improvement.
8R1-R2	O	Because most quality-driven measures of the effectiveness of VU's planning process are so new, with some still in the development phase, a

comprehensive evaluation is premature at this time. However, what could be very helpful is the development of a single document that contains a compilation of the steps, time lines, etc., used in each key planning process to measure effectiveness, similar to the one developed for the strategic planning process.

8R3a	OO	The Portfolio did not articulate any measures of projections or targets for performance of the VU strategies and action plans for the near future. Measures and indicators of projected performance might include changes resulting from significant anticipated innovations in programs and services, redirection of resources, market shifts, improved performance of administrative and other support functions, and improvements in safety.
8R3b	OO	Although VU states that it has made, "tremendous progress on meeting the assessment strategic plan goals," a review of the Assessment Progress Report, suggest that most goals were not met successfully. Since assessment has been a priority for VU for many years with limited progress to date, it may be necessary to focus first on looking for possible obstacles existing in the campus culture that might seriously impede movement toward assessment and quality improvement.
8R4a	S	VU's IPEDS graduation and first-year retention rates are above both its peer institutions and similar Carnegie institutions. These measures are appropriate process - as opposed to outcome - indicators for VU's challenge to increase the number of its graduates in the future as necessitated by changing state funding formulas.
8R4b	O	VU recognizes its continuing opportunity to benchmark its planning processes to other institutions.
8R5	O	Although VU collects data related to its goals, the portfolio response suggests that the institution does not routinely analyze the processes it uses to collect data to determine if those processes yield data that answer the most important planning questions.
8I1	S	Several initiatives, such as the use of the *Campus Quality Survey*, the CQI Proposal process, and the *Learning in Order to Service* Action

Project outcomes should enable VU to set up systematic, data-driven processes to assess student needs and monitor improvement efforts.

8I2	O	Although VU documents its commitment to improvement through the actions it has taken in process development and beginning data collection, it is too early to determine that sustainable institutional change has taken place.

AQIP CATEGORY 9: BUILDING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Building Collaborative Relationships examines your institution's relationships – current and potential – to analyze how they contribute to the institution's accomplishing its mission. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to identification of key internal and external collaborative relationships; alignment of key collaborative relationships; relationship creation, prioritization, building; needs identification; internal relationships; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas.

Here are the Key Critical Characteristics of Vincennes University that were identified by the Systems Appraisal Team as most relevant for its interpretation of its *Systems Portfolio* section covering Category 9, Building Collaborative Relationships:

Item   Critical Characteristic

OVb   In addition to the Vincennes campus, the University has a second campus at Jasper, and major extension sites at the Indianapolis International Airport and the Indiana Schools for the Deaf. VU has expanded higher education for military members by tripling the number of bases that offer classes. They have also increased access for high school students by offering dual credit instruction at 150 high schools and operating the VU/Ben Davis University High School early college

OV5   The University recognizes its need for systematic processes for institutional assessment of its leadership, strategic planning approaches, and its methods of communication.

OV8   The state funding formula has changed from inputs to outputs, including degree completion, at a time when Vincennes University's enrollment is declining. This enrollment decline is also causing a decline in the number of students who can

graduate. The University recognizes the need to increase technology use and distance education offerings.

Here are what the Systems Appraisal Team identified as Vincennes University's most important strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to processes encompassed by Category 9, Building Collaborative Relationships.

Item	S/O	Comment
9P1a	S	The VU Strategic Plan includes specific goals to explore strategic partnerships with secondary school and universities receiving VU graduates (under Goal V), which establishes an institutional priority for building relationships with other educational institutions. Several items under this goal in the strategic plan have "A" designations in the 2012 Strategic Plan Progress Report, indicating that there is an annual report showing ongoing planning, program or funding processes.
9P1b	O	Although VU has identified strategic partnerships as a goal in the strategic plan, and the Portfolio provides ample evidence these partnerships have a priority and are being developed, a formalized process for developing and prioritizing academic partnerships would ensure they are not being developed on an ad hoc basis. As resources become scarcer, it is imperative that institutions be able to prioritize its partnership relationships.
9P2a	S	Evidence of a process for building relationships with entities that depend on VU's supply of students can be found in the strategic plan and new marketing efforts of the Alumni Office and the Foundation based on three different annual calendars: a "touch calendar," an "event calendar," and a "campaign calendar." Through each of these efforts, the offices are able to have positive relationships with other educational institutions and the employers who are looking to hire its students.
9P2b	O	An opportunity exists to use annual data collected on: 1) the total number of graduates who gain employment following graduation and their places of employment, and 2) graduates who transfer to four-year institutions of higher learning. Program of study data would be especially helpful in

determining where collaborative relationships should be developed or strengthened.

9P3	S	The VU Foundation works with alumni, the public and area companies to raise money for over $1 million scholarships annually. The Foundation is in or near the top of the top 10 national two-year colleges in assets.
9P3-9P4	O	VU lists many partnerships with institutions that provide student and institutional support services to the institution, but does not define a process for creating and prioritizing these relationships. It is important that institutions be able to prioritize these relationships in order to be most successful in growing them.
9P5	O	An opportunity exists to develop a process for measuring the value that each of VU's important, long-term external relationships provides to its students, the institution and its region. Such a system would prove useful in determining how best to allocate limited resources and what new relationships should be considered.
9P6a	S	Project EXCEL processes include a VU program faculty mentor that regularly visits high school classes, and requires professional development participation by high school instructors.
9P6b	S	In addition to standard methods of ensuring relationships are meeting both parties' needs (such as the use of contracts), VU uses a variety of other methods including advisory committees. It is notable that almost all occupational programs and 70% of academic programs have advisory committees that provide feedback to VU.
9P6c	O	VU recognizes the need to assess external partnerships to determine how well they meet partner needs and has begun to emphasize this across all areas of the college. The assessment of satisfaction levels of its external partners is the first step to determining areas for the improvement and the strengthening of those VU relationships.
9P7a	S	During the 2011-2012 school year, VU granted release time to some members of the Assessment Committee to act as liaisons between the

divisions, faculty working on the plans and the Assessment Committee. Among their charges, the liaisons are to ensure stronger lines of communication for VU assessment activities.

9P7b	O	The VU Culture Quality Survey results suggest that the campus communications processes are perceived by the survey respondents as problematic. The Portfolio notes that an opportunity exists to follow up on this finding by collecting additional information that could identify more specifically where problems exist.
9R1a	S	VU's EXCEL program's National Alliance for Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) accreditation attests to the fact that there are VU processes in place to ensure 1) the quality of its concurrent curriculum, 2) the qualifications of its concurrent faculty, 3) that learning assessment is conducted, and 4) that evaluation of the EXCEL program is undertaken regularly.
9R1b	O	A major focus of Goal V of the VU Strategic Plan is to provide a comprehensive set of outcome results regarding major collaborative efforts. While 9P6 makes mention that VU assesses its community relationships through surveys, participation counts, and informal comments, no results are provided for these assessments. An opportunity exists to begin generating quantitative data that would directly assess collaborative outcomes and begin to identify areas needing improvement so that limited resources can be used to support the collaborative efforts that prove to be most valuable.
9R2	S	Data presented on the success of partnerships with high schools and on annual increases in scholarship funding are two examples of how quantitative data analyses can be used to measure program improvement. It will also be important moving forward for VU to determine whether its partners' needs are met as well.
9R3	O	The Campus Quality Survey comparative results point to VU's staff's low ratings on all items concerning internal collaborations and communications. VU recognizes the need to drill down further into the

staff perceptions through focus groups and follow-up surveys to determine specific areas of dissatisfaction so they may be addressed.

9I1 – 9I2   O   VU has a history and culture of building relationships, but most assessment that is being done seems to be focused on how these relationships benefit the institution, and not on how they benefit VU partners. True collaborative relationships require that both partners benefit from the relationship. VU has an opportunity to use its newly revised assessment process to incorporate some of the recommended changes.