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01. Distinctive Features

The University of Rio Grande, founded in 1876 and known for its excellence, creativity and innovative approach to learning, is located in Gallia County in rural southeastern Ohio. A **safe and beautiful** university town with great amenities, Rio Grande is small enough for students to feel a sense of belonging to the community. The campus is friendly, casual and cosmopolitan, and includes acres of rolling lawns, expansive athletic fields and attractive facilities. The two nearest large cities are Chillicothe, Ohio (approximately 50 miles northwest) and Charleston, WV (approximately 50 miles southeast).

Deeply rooted in Appalachian history, both institutions are committed to encouraging effective written and oral communication skills, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, personal and professional growth, and life-long learning to students from the southeastern Ohio area, the state, the nation, and the world.

Of 88 Ohio counties, 29 in the southern and southeastern part of the state are identified as Appalachian. The four counties (Gallia, Jackson, Meigs, and Vinton) which comprise the Rio Grande Community College district are described as 79% **rural** compared to an Ohio average of 13%.

These same four counties and four of the six counties contiguous to the Community College district are also ranked in the top 10 poorest counties in the state with poverty rates ranging between 17-33%.

02. Educational Scope
The University of Rio Grande/Rio Grande Community College provides programs in the liberal arts, sciences, business, teacher education, fine and performing arts, nursing, and technologies.

The Academic division consists of two colleges, each with four schools. A graduate program is also attached to the College of Professional Studies.

Granting associate, bachelor and master’s degrees, our diverse curriculum offers a range of educational opportunities with open access at a reasonable cost. Students can choose from 130 degree and certificate programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>Associate</th>
<th>Bachelor or Minor</th>
<th>Certificate or Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SocialScience</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL PROGRAMS</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

03. Student Base

The University reports an average annual enrollment (2005-2007) of 2400 students yielding an average Full-Time Equivalent 1889 students. RGCC supports 65% of students enrolled while the University sustains 35% (23.3% baccalaureate and 11.6% graduate). The distribution of FTE student enrollment increases to 69.7% RGCC with 30.3% URG (25.9% baccalaureate and 4.4% graduate).

Most students are in the traditional age group with 78% of undergraduates age 24 or under. Eighty-three percent of full-time students commute.

04. Collaboration

The interdependence of the University and Community College is reflected in a thirty-three year history of developing responsive educational programs that meet regional needs and provide a foundation for continuing degree work. Many professional programs, such as teacher education, nursing, social work, business, and allied health have strong service learning components that benefit from the numerous cooperative agreements the University has with agency and business work sites.

The main campus also serves as a center for cultural and community events in the region. Music and fine arts programs, political and discussion forums, training, conference meetings, athletic events, festivals, and celebrations all take advantage of the building and accommodations that the University can provide.
The University is also engaged in the life cycle of the community as the site of wedding receptions, high school graduations, and memorial services.

05. Faculty and Staff Base

University faculty are well-qualified and dedicated to teaching and community service. Although research is not required, a significant number of faculty are active in state and national professional groups, publish articles, and are involved in collaborative projects with support partners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>URG/RGCC</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>47 (50%)</td>
<td>19 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>42 (45%)</td>
<td>54 (56%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>4 (4%)</td>
<td>23 (24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Across the classification of employees (FT/PT faculty, administrators, hourly employees), the University presents an average 5.4% ethnic minority profile, ranging from 2% of hourly employees to 8% among administrators. The Faculty Association is the only recognized bargaining unit on campus.

06. Facilities, Equipment, Technologies and Regulatory Environment

In addition to a numerous classroom facilities with a range of technological capabilities, the campus also has a library, social centers, five residence halls and a performing arts center. A number of recreational and sports facilities such as tennis, squash and racquet courts, an Olympic size pool, basketball courts, soccer and football fields, aerobic and many other physical training facilities also attract student activity. Established in 1998, the University of Rio Grande and Rio Grande Community College Meigs Center makes access to higher education more convenient for the residents of Meigs and Mason Counties.

RioNET is a network which offers services to persons having a user account and provides access to computer login privilege, e-mail login, WebCT login and the Internet. ResNet is a network connection for each room in the residence halls at Rio Grande.

The Ohio Board of Regents is the governing authority for both private and public institutions of higher education in the state. Six programs offered by the University are also reviewed by external national accrediting agencies. Other program graduates must also pass state licensure examinations to qualify to practice in the state.

07. Competitive Environment

In the past decade, we have responded similarly to the extension of most of our competitors in the region. Ohio University (OH) has several branches in surrounding counties, Marshall University (WV) expanded course offerings at a site in a neighboring county and Shawnee State University (OH) has grown from a Community College to a four-year state supported institution.

Colleges/universities with over 2000 students nearest to Rio Grande:

- **MARSHALL UNIVERSITY** (about 32 miles; HUNTINGTON, WV; Full-time enrollment: 12,361)
- **OHIO UNIVERSITY-MAIN CAMPUS** (about 36 miles; ATHENS, OH; FT enrollment: 18,721)
- **SHAWNEE STATE UNIVERSITY** (about 40 miles; PORTSMOUTH, OH; FT enrollment: 2,849)
- **HOCKING TECHNICAL COLLEGE** (about 41 miles; NELSONVILLE, OH; FT enrollment: 4,050)
- **WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY AT PARKERSBURG** (about 64 miles; PARKERSBURG, WV; FT enrollment: 2,306)
- **WEST VIRGINIA STATE COLLEGE** (about 70 miles; INSTITUTE, WV; FT enrollment: 3,688)
08. Opportunities and Vulnerabilities

Opportunities:

The history of responsive academic programming resulting from the partnership between the University and Community College will continue to be a major asset developed by its sponsoring community. Transforming accessibility into opportunity is a reputation that drives the University’s strategic plan.

Vulnerabilities:

Future demographics suggest that competition for students in higher education will increase.

State support for higher education will require greater accountability and value-added evidence of achievement.

Academic programs must be sensitive to the general economy.
Category #1: Helping Students Learn

The University is committed in providing accessible quality programs of higher education to students, the community, and other stakeholders. Processes and programs are in place to support faculty and students. Participation in AQIP structures the opportunity to engage all faculty in designing and developing appropriate assessment activities to assess student learning. Campus wide strategic priorities will further refine the University’s efforts to develop a more systematic assessment process at the course and program level.

Context

1C1 Student Learning Outcomes

The University of Rio Grande provides programs in the liberal arts, sciences, business, teacher education, fine and performing arts, nursing, and technologies. URG has a diverse curriculum and offers a range of education opportunities with open access at a reasonable cost. URG grants associate’s, bachelor’s and master’s degrees. Rio Grande Community College offers a variety of credit and non-credit courses, seminars, workshops, and events as part of life-long learning and enrichment. Historically, URG’s primary focus has been students from the Appalachian region. URG is now more cosmopolitan with enrollments from states outside the region and foreign countries.

The University provides non-discriminatory educational opportunities for the pursuit of academic excellence. The educational experience provides opportunities to develop a balance of intellectual, aesthetic, social, and physical qualities that characterize the total human experience, and challenges students thinking and abilities. The University emphasizes learning and prepares students for the many occupations and professions necessary to live and work in a global community.

The University’s General Education Program emphasizes outcomes related to the following goal areas:

1. Demonstrate effective communication skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
2. Demonstrate a scientific knowledge of human behavior and acknowledge cultural diversity of different peoples of the world.
3. Use an understanding of the historical and philosophical development of current cultures to demonstrate respect for human values and perspectives.
4. Demonstrate and value individual thinking, self-awareness, and ethical behavior in civic and community responsibility.
5. Demonstrate appropriate technological literacy and skills for personal and professional use.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of behaviors that best promote personal health and psychological well-being.
7. Identify and appreciate artistic expressions from historical, philosophical, and cultural perspectives.
8. Use appropriate critical thinking skills to solve problems.
9. Demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental concepts of mathematics and science, analytical ability, problem-solving capacity, and the use of the scientific method.

These nine General Education goals, along with specific Major Program goals identified by individual programs intend to assure that students receive a quality education in their chosen programs at the University. Each major program shares the Institutional Philosophy of preparing students for life-long learning, personal and professional growth, as well as developing critical
thinking and problem-solving skills, and effective written and oral communication skills. The specific learning outcomes for each program can be seen on the Student Success Website at http://www.rio.edu/stsuccess/.

1C2 Aligning Learning with Mission, Vision, and Philosophy

New programs, course additions to, deletions from, or changes in the curriculum move through a review process by the Academic Affairs Committee. An overview of the comprehensive curricular and program development and revision process can be found in Academic Affairs Policies and Procedures.

Plans are underway to review the viability of all programs as part of the Academic Strategic Plan. As part of the review, each program must show how it fits into the University’s mission. Expectations are that after the initial review of all programs, a periodic program review schedule will be established.

Additionally, Ohio Board of Regents (OBR) mandates that all programs offered at private universities in the state are related to the University’s mission. New programs must show their alignment with not only the University mission, but also the School mission before OBR approval is granted.

Various academic committees, with membership drawn from faculty and administrative staff, function in their own capacities to serve as gatekeepers that instructional activities and learning outcomes align closely with the mission and vision. Departments and schools participate in this process through the governance process, program review, and University and community-wide planning efforts. All URG academic programs are part of a program review cycle. Course learning outcomes are aligned with common student learning objectives.

1C3 Key University Programs

The University reports an average annual enrollment (2005-2007) of 2400 students yielding an average Full-Time Equivalent 1889 students. RGCC supports 65% of students enrolled while the University sustains 35% (23.3% baccalaureate and 11.6% graduate). The distribution of FTE student enrollment increases to 69.7% RGCC with 30.3% URG (25.9% baccalaureate and 4.4% graduate).

The University’s largest majors programs by enrollment (Fall Semester 2006) are:

1. General Studies- Associate (177)
2. Early Childhood Pre-K through 3 (169)
3. Nursing (133)
4. Nursing Technology Application (107)
5. Allied Health (99)
6. Fine Arts-Master of Education (103)

In addition to regular face-to-face classroom teaching, the University also offers web-supported classroom courses, web-enhanced courses (partly online, partly classroom), and fully online courses. Currently, the university also offers the following programs in a hybrid manner with partial online format:

- **Nursing** (Advanced Placement Track LPN to RN)
- **The Graduate Program**

The University’s Graduate Program offers the Master of Education in Classroom Teaching designed for teachers and others who are interested in using an interdisciplinary approach to teaching, learning, and student support. The program is based on Howard Gardner's "Theory of
Multiple Intelligences" and emphasizes the arts throughout the curriculum as a catalyst for engaging multiple intelligences and encouraging learning and understanding. This program is given in a series of four-week summer sessions with courses made available over the Internet during the school year.

Information technology is a very prominent and well-integrated feature of teaching and learning at URG, specifically the Internet and an instructional management system (WebCT), which has been adopted for both classroom-based and fully online programs and courses (see Table 1.1: Web-Based & Web-Enhanced Courses at Rio, 2003 & 2006).

### Web-Based & Web-Enhanced Courses at Rio (2003 & 2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sections</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the four year period 2003-2006, course enrollment increased 48.5%. (See Figure 1.1: Online Course Offerings (2003 & 2006))

### 1C4 Design and Delivery of Learning Options

#### Student Diversity

The University full-time student population is mostly female (60%) and commutes (82%). The commuting population is nearly 2:1 female (65% v 35%) but the resident population of 18% is more likely male (55% v 45%). Reporting racial/ethnic identity is voluntary and 24% of students do not report. Of those who report (Fall 2004), the total racial minority attendance is 5.6%, a group which is 79% African-American. 68.8% of students attending URG claim residence in the four-county community college district. (See: Table 1.2: Fall 2004 Enrollment by Gender/Race/Ethnicity).

#### Table 1.2 Fall 2004 Enrollment by Gender/Race/Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity Known</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Full-Time</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident Alien</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fully 71% of the University’s enrollment is made from full-time students (See: Table 1.3: Fall 2004 Enrollment by Gender and FTE Credit). Of the additional 29% of students who are enrolled part-time, 74% are women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>White, Non-Hispanic</th>
<th>508</th>
<th>89.3%</th>
<th>767</th>
<th>95%</th>
<th>1275</th>
<th>92.7%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Known</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>806</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1375</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Race/Ethnicity Known</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>806</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>1375</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Race/Ethnicity Unknown</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>723</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1075</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1798</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1.3** Fall 2004 Enrollment by Gender and FTE Credit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrolled for Credit</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time</td>
<td>723</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>1075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-Time</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Status</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>1620</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Ohio 29 of 88 counties make up part of the national Appalachian region. All are rural counties located on the southeast border near the Ohio River. These counties have the state’s highest poverty rates but the lowest population count compared to other parts of the state. The University of Rio Grande is embedded in this region and 83.1% of students attending come from this region (See: Table1.4: University and Appalachian Enrollment 2004-2005).

**Table 1.4** University and Appalachian Enrollment 2004-2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gallia, Jackson, Meigs, Vinton Counties</td>
<td>1559</td>
<td>68.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Ohio Appalachian Counties</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Ohio Non-Appalachian Counties</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of State</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>2266</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students attending the University have little appreciation for their own ethnic heritage and are generally unaware of a more diverse cultural community. An Office of Multi-Ethnic Affairs was established in 1991 to provide direction for programs and interests geared toward minority and international students attending the University. The Crossroads Program is the JOBS Opportunities and Basic Skills Student Retention Program on the campus and serves disadvantaged students from lower socioeconomic strata. Participating students must meet eligibility requirements in order to take advantage of the benefits.

With the past academic year, the Jenkins Center has increased services to students with disabilities, and the University made a dedicated effort to make the majority of buildings handicapped accessible.

**Women**

Within the four-county region, 14% of all families live in poverty, but when there are female heads of household with children under 18 years of age, it increases to 48%. For females age 16 and
over, 50% are in the civilian workforce in low paying jobs. When comparing the median earnings of male and female full-time year-round workers in the four-county area, women earn only 70% when compared to men (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).

Education

According to the 2000 Census (see Table 1.5: RGCC District Educational Attainment (percent)), the percentages for educational attainment in the four-county region for persons age 25 years and older are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>No Diploma</th>
<th>High School Diploma</th>
<th>4yr College Degree</th>
<th>Graduate Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gallia</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meigs</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vinton</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above information shows that each of these counties graduates less than half of their students. The state of Ohio has 83% of the population age 25 and over with a high school diploma. The same age group in the United States has a high school graduation rate of 80.4%. As for persons with a bachelor's degree, the state of Ohio has a rate of 21.2% and 24.4% for the nation. In the four county region, less than 10% of the population has at least a bachelor's degree.

Rural

Of 88 Ohio counties, 29 in the southern and southeastern part of the state are identified as Appalachian. The four counties which comprise the Rio Grande Community College district are described as 79% rural compared to an Ohio average of 13% and these same four counties are ranked in the top 10 poorest counties in the state (4. Meigs, 5. Vinton, 8. Gallia, 10. Jackson). Four of the six counties contiguous to the community college district are also ranked in the top 10 poorest counties in the state with rates ranging between 17-33%. (Ohio Poverty Indicators, 2000)

Religion

Appalachian culture intertwines fatalism with religion. Fatalistic religious attitudes have preserved the traits of individualism, self-reliance, and traditionalism necessary for survival in an industrial society. Religion contributes to, and enhances, strong values such as neighborliness, sense of belonging, honesty, and self-respect. The four-county area comprising the community college district has a predominance of Christian Churches and Churches of Christ followed by Baptist and Methodist denominations (URG Social Work Community Study, 2003).

Gallia County  - 31,069 population  - 115 churches
Jackson County - 32,641 population - 50 churches
Meigs County   - 23,242 population - 132 churches
Vinton County   - 12,806 population - 75 churches

Cultural Resources

Within the Appalachian region, there exists a wide range of socioeconomic, cultural, and educational differences. The geographic boundaries that were once less permeable and fostered isolation, have surrendered to the accessibility created by an interstate highway system, communication technology, and migration patterns. The preservation of identity is reflected in the
patterns of activity marked by celebration in local communities and common to this region, county fairs.

One contribution of the Social Work Program has been to define and map the dynamics of the local community. A major research component includes updating an ongoing community study of the four-county (community college district) region. In addition to trend analysis of census data and social problem profiling, the study also notes the persistent life cycle events that are marked by season (i.e., Fall) or date (i.e., July 4). Local diversity may be reflected by event (Emancipation), geography (River Recreation), heritage crafts and entertainment (Bob Evans Farms), or past economy (Coal Festival) (See Table 1.6: Southeast Ohio Events and Festivals). Some persistent and new events are listed below.

### SOUTHEAST OHIO EVENTS & FESTIVALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Gallia County Emancipation Day Celebration</td>
<td>has been celebrated and honored in Gallia County, Ohio, continuously since 1863 and is reported to be the longest continuous running celebration of its kind in the United States. As many as 2,500 people have attended this oldest continuous celebration in the county. In recent years, visitors have come from as far away as California to join in this special event. In fact, Emancipation is often thought of as a &quot;homecoming&quot; for Gallia County and the surrounding communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Bob Evans Farm Festival</td>
<td>in Rio Grande, Ohio, features bluegrass and country entertainment, food, 150 heritage craftspeople and demonstrations; Appalachian clogging, square dancing, and camping in mid-October.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sternwheel Riverfest</td>
<td>The last weekend in September, Pomeroy (Meigs County) is host to the &quot;Rally by the River.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The Annual Celtic Folk Festival</td>
<td>at the University of Rio Grande/Rio Grande Community College provides an opportunity for area residents to learn about Celtic cultures and see fabulous entertainers. The Celtic Folk Festival has evolved over the last 14 years, adding different events and improving the activities. The idea of the festival is to give the people of the area, many who come from Celtic heritage, a better understanding of the richness of the Celtic cultures. People from all backgrounds enjoy the festival, whether they are attending it to learn about a culture or just to see the entertainment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The Jackson County Apple Festival</td>
<td>It is known and revered throughout Ohio and beyond, the perfect fall festival, the quintessential homecoming event. The Jackson County Apple Festival has been welcoming people into Jackson from near and far for 64 years and become one of the largest and most respected festivals in Ohio. While there have been many changes over the years, still there are many things that are the same, the reason why so many Jackson natives who have left the home of their youth come home every year the third week in September so they and now their families can enjoy the Apple Festival once more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Wellston Coal Festival</td>
<td>is held the Tuesday through Saturday after Labor Day on the streets of downtown Wellston, Ohio, to celebrate Wellston's rich coal mining heritage. The Festival features a motor coach tour of an actual working coal mine, a Karaoke Contest, Lawnmower Races, Coal Miner Olympics, two parades, a Visiting Queen's Luncheon, free nightly entertainment, Baby and Toddler Contests, a Car and Antique Tractor Show, Youth Day activities, line and square dancing, and much more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Ridgetop Music Fest. Vinton County Airport</td>
<td>This is a day long event which features local and regional musicians, airplane rides, great food, crafts, and much more. This annual event has become a huge Vinton County tradition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Wilkesville Bean Dinner</td>
<td>This event began as a reunion for Civil War veterans shortly after the war ended and has continued as a much loved Wilkesville tradition. The meal is prepared much the same way as the founders prepared it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Rural Ohio Appalachia Revisited (ROAR) DAY</td>
<td>R.O.A.R. Day is a special celebration of Appalachian Culture, including arts, crafts, music, food, and fun. Many local artisans are showcased as they demonstrate and display their talents and offer their products for sale. This is the largest annual event held at Lake Hope State Park (always the last Saturday in October) and attracts up to 2500 people every year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Gallipolis River Recreation Festival</td>
<td>Gallipolis, Gallia County, Ohio. This festival runs over a 4-day period on the banks of the Ohio River Historic Gallipolis Riverfront Area and features a fireworks extravaganza on July 4.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All course syllabi are required to provide an ADA statement, and accommodations are available through the Accessibility Office to students who complete an application. A written authorization is sent to the instructor of a course in which the student making the request enrolls and the
instructor upon receiving this letter will work together with appropriate student support services areas/offices to provide needed help.

1C5 Intellectual Climate
A climate characterized by intellectual and academic freedom is celebrated and protected for students, faculty, and all members of the University community. Academic freedom in teaching and research and the responsibilities to academic integrity on the parts of both the University and individual faculty members are specified and guaranteed in the Faculty Contract and the Policy and Procedure Manual. The guarantees in place are consistent with the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) “1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, with 1970 Interpretive Comments” (AAUP, Policy Documents & Reports, Ninth Edition [Wash., D.C., 2001] pp. 3-7). All research conducted by faculty members, administrators or students is subject to regulations governing the protection of human subjects, which is monitored by the Institutional Research and Resources Committee.

Respect for intellectual property is reflected in URG’s Intellectual Property and Electronic Courses policy. This policy affirms that those who create or author a work are the owners of the intellectual property in that work. The University supports fair use of the intellectual property of others through this policy and provides for its implementation through the Library.

Process

1P1 Determining Common Student Learning Objectives
The Ohio Board of Regents is in the process of establishing a Student Success Page on its Website where every higher education institution can publish its learning outcomes by programs. URG/RGCC’s website can be seen at http://www.rio.edu/stsuccess/.

The learning outcomes for online programs are the same as those for their seated/didactic counterparts.

Some of the academic programs (all two-year technical programs and other programs with specialized accreditation) have advisory committees that are involved in the program/curricula review/changes and make recommendations for content to be included and appropriate strategies for assessing the knowledge and skills of the learners.

Currently, the assessment of the General Education Program operates a pre- and post-process format where all incoming freshmen are required to take a placement test, the results of which are used for placing students into appropriate courses, and also provide a threshold level of students’ competencies in several areas of their academic preparedness (reading, writing, and math). Students complete a required senior assessment prior to their graduation. This senior assessment is part of their academic program requirement, but does not constitute part of any course grades. The following assessment instruments have been used:

- **COMPASS**: (from ACT (taken on the computer; about 60 to 80 minutes; every entering new student takes it and it is used for placement purpose; writing, reading, and math); it is administered every academic term. Placement trends of the past six years are described below (See Figure 1.2: Placement Trends (2001-07)).
1. There is an increase for students to be placed into Eng 102 (Read & Learn) over the years reported.
2. There is an increase for more students to take Math 109 (Algebra) over the years.
3. There is a decrease in the number of students needing Math 104 (Math Review), Math 114 (Accelerated Algebra), and Eng 101 (Intro to Writing) over the years reported.
4. Placement into Eng 101, Eng 102, and Math 109 are the top three developmental courses.

- **Academic Profile**: (from ETS; paper/pencil; 30-50 minutes; administered to a randomly selected number of freshmen enrolled LA classes, to collect pre-assessment information as measured in the AP of *reading*, *writing*, and *critical thinking*); it was used during 1998-2000 and 2002 academic years.

- **Writing Assessment**: a writing assessment (ETS; taken on the computer; about 60 minutes) is administered to all graduating seniors through the completion of a writing task in one of the three broad areas: humanities, natural science, and social science. This is a ‘transition’ assessment used for the 2006-2007 academic year as the decision to switch from the use of the Academic Profile to another appropriate assessment instrument is determined.

- **Basic Technology Competency Skills**: a locally developed performance-based assessment for seniors to assess basic knowledge and competencies in computer and Internet technology. (Taken over the internet; 20-30 minutes; administered to a randomly selected number of seniors to measure basic technology competence skills identified as one of the nine goals in the General Education program.); it was used during 2001-2002 academic year.

- **Major Field Tests** from ETS (paper/pencil; 60-80 minutes; administered by major programs); it has been used since 1998 by various academic Schools (among them, the School of Business has been using each year as part of its program assessment; other programs use it periodically depending on the availability of the number of graduates during that particular academic year as a sufficient number of test takers would be required for the test to yield meaningful group information.) *(See 1P11.)*

The University Assessment Committee and the Assessment Director (a faculty member appointed with a supplementary contract) provide advisory support for departments and programs
as they establish and assess achievement of these outcomes. Although systematic, University-
wide assessment of student learning outcomes is still developing, the University Assessment
Committee has collected program-level assessment plans (including expected learning
outcomes) for some programs, and is in the process of collecting information from other
programs. During the process of preparing for the Systems Portfolio, several activities have taken
place in engaging faculty to develop course level assessment activities.

As part of the efforts to develop and nurture a culture of assessment to enhance quality in student
learning, designing and implementing appropriate assessment activities has been coordinated by
the Assessment Director with the help from the Assessment Committee and various Schools. The
following (Table 1.7: Assessment Activities (1998-2007) provides a snapshot of assessment
activities for the past ten years (1998-2007).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMPASS (external measure)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Course Embedded Assessment Activities (internal measure)</td>
<td>COMPASS (external measure)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Profile (external measure)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Program related assessment activities (internal measure)</td>
<td>Academic Profile (external measure)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIR (Student Instructional Report)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Technology Competence Skills (internal measure)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AQIP Mini-Course Assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td>Writing Competence Skills (external measure)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Major Field Tests (external measure)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Student Satisfaction (internal measure)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Academic advising plays a crucial role in helping students to know, understand, and fulfill their
academic requirements. Each student is assigned an academic advisor and a contact person is
appointed for all online students.

Helping students select programs of study begins with the information provided on the
University’s web site. University admissions staff, along with PAC (Personal Advising Coach) Corps, assist prospective students to determine if their learning objectives match academic
offerings. During the New Student Orientations, students are encouraged to explore their options.
Program information meetings help students better understand program requirements and assess
the fit between their goals and the University’s academic offerings. The CARS (Career Advising
Resource Services) Office supports student program selection by offering career interest tests,
occupational exploration, career counseling, career information and resources, job search
workshops, and career connections through the alumni network.

To help students determine if online study is appropriate for them, the University provides
information about Online Learning on the University website. The site provides information about
skills (including learning styles and technology), software and hardware requirements and links
them to a demonstration online course. Students are urged to take the online learning self-
assessment provided at the Ohio Learning Network (OLN).

Faculty provide online courses on WebCT, the instructional management system. Staff in the
Campus Computing & Networking Office provides support for both faculty and students in this
process through training, site administration, and close coordination with Schools and programs.
Currently, there is one individual assigned with the responsibility of providing all WebCT online
teaching and/or designing help.

Student evaluations of faculty are conducted by a uniform system and are supervised by the
Dean of the College. Students use the Student Instructional Report II (SIR II) to comment on the
quality of faculty teaching. Faculty are evaluated annually during their four to five year period of probation and then on an intermittent cycle thereafter. Aggregate data is occasionally compiled in programs with larger numbers of faculty only.

Other measures of student performance that are regularly collected and analyzed include grades, persistence rates, and drop and withdrawal rates for both on-campus and online programs.

1P2 Designing Responsive Academic Programs

URG is proactively engaged in responding to requests from community colleges within the region, such as Hocking College and Washington State Community College, to provide bachelor's degree options for students from these institutions. In the spirit of this vision, the partnership with Hocking College was formed to develop baccalaureate programs in the following fields:

- Archaeology
- Environmental Science
- Public Administration
- Music Business
- Theatre
- Bachelor of Science degree in Wildlife and Fish Conservation and Management.

Washington State Community College’s partnership interests are in the following areas:

- Public Administration
- Social Work
- Fine Arts with Concentration in Graphic Design
- Education
- Nursing.

These programs create opportunities for further education and employment opportunities to the students not currently well served in the local area. The uniqueness of the University's relationship with the Community College makes 2 + 2 articulations easy to extend to other area community colleges.

Additionally, the Graduate Program offers the Master’s of Education in Classroom Teaching to cohort groups at Shawnee State University, Southern State Community College, and on location in various Southern Ohio School Districts.

Requests from local medical providers have led to the recent additions in the field of Allied Health:

- Radiological Technician
- Diagnostic Medical Sonography with Majors in General and Cardiovascular Sonography, and
- Respiratory Therapy (in partnership with Buckeye Hills Career Center)

Online learning has been identified as an area that will be included in the new Academic Strategic Plan. Part of the plan will include implementation of suggestions of a 2006/07 Academic Affairs Subcommittee Report.

To better serve ‘at-risk’ students and assure their success in their college education, URG offers developmental-level courses, which has proved to be of great help for those students to be successful in other college-level courses after they finish developmental courses (see Figure 1.3: Number of Accepted Students).
Accepted students who attended Rio New Student Orientations completed the COMPASS placement test. The placement results indicate a high percentage of those who would need one or more developmental courses (in writing, reading or math). For placement rates in writing, reading, and math over the past six years, please see 1P5.

Students are supported throughout their studies at the University by the Jenkins Center, which provides tutoring and other instructional support in writing, mathematics, and other courses as requested. Students self-refer to the Center for academic assistance (See: Table 1.8: Jenkins Center Self-Referrals) or an instructor can recommend that a student contact the Center.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jenkins Center Self-Referrals</th>
<th>Request Note scrib e</th>
<th>Request Tutoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1P3 Determining the Preparation Required: Specific Curricula, Programs, Courses, and Learning

The need for courses and/or programs is researched. A proposal is drafted for the program to be submitted to the appropriate School for approval. Proposals approved by the School are then submitted to the Academic Affairs Committee for approval and then submitted to the University's Board of Trustees for approval.

Each undergraduate major field and the General Education Program have assessment plans that are reviewed by the University's Assessment Committee.

The University sustains open admissions policies. Application for admission requires a high school transcript or GED. Placement testing may require that students complete developmental coursework and satisfactory academic progress is required to avoid academic probation or suspension. Nine programs have selective admission policies and procedures (Clinical Laboratory Technology, Diagnostic Medical Sonography, Education, Honors, Nursing, Psychology, Radiologic Technology, Respiratory Therapy, and Social Work).

1P4 Communicating Expectations

The Admissions Office is often the first point of contact with many prospective students. Admissions counselors are professional advisors who meet with students discussing goals, interests, and available education options. Information regarding admission to the University,
registration for coursework, payment and financial aid, required coursework and degree requirements are introduced and reviewed in different and multiple ways. Print copies of the University's Course Catalog remain available, but increasingly the University's website (www.rio.edu) is the preferred source of information concerning programs, coursework, and degree requirements.

Recently, the HLC encouraged all AQIP participating institutions to create a web-link that directed the public to the University's assessment efforts. For the past two years the Planning Committee on Higher Learning Accountability and Productivity of the Ohio Board of Regents has worked to present the strategies and best practices of Ohio's higher education institutions by providing clear information about student success. In June, 2007, the Committee will unveil its internet gateway to Ohio public and independent institutions' Student Success Plans.

A Student Success Plan is a clear, public statement of the measurable learning outcomes expected of students attending an institution, published on the institution's own website. The University's has blended this developing portal opportunity at its home page link http://www.rio.edu/stsuccess/ and http://aqip.rio.edu/.

Faculty communicate learning objectives and academic expectations by clearly stating them in all of their course syllabi. A syllabus template outlines minimum information requirements, i.e. office hours, required materials, grading system, expected goals, objectives and outcomes, and ADA statement.

1P5 Selecting Programs of Study

Students learn about the programs available at the University by visiting the University website, attending informational meetings conducted by admissions staff, going to campus open houses, or setting up appointments with admission counselors. All admitted students are assigned to a personal academic advisor. If students decide to change their major, the academic advisor assists in helping the students go to a new advisor in the appropriate department or school. Academic advisors continuously participate in professional development to update their own skills.

Placement testing required by the University serves as a gateway to assure that entering students have the requisite writing and mathematics skills that are needed to achieve academic success. To assure that they have the necessary academic skills and proficiency levels, entering students are required to complete COMPASS testing that provides information on students' reading, writing, mathematics, and basic grammar skills. (Students who have successfully completed appropriate mathematics and writing courses are exempt from these tests.) Based on the results of these proficiency examinations, academic advisors place students in appropriate reading, writing, and mathematics courses.

With an open-admissions policy, a significant number of incoming students to Rio need developmental courses. URG freshmen classes for the past five years (2001-2006) demonstrate a consistent pattern of their lack of college readiness in each of the following three areas: reading ability, writing ability, and math skills, as is indicated in the consistent percentage of the placement into each one of the developmental courses (Figure 1.4: Developmental Course Total Enrollment).
To better serve those students and assure their success in their college education, URG offers developmental-level courses, which, when successfully completed, have proved to be of great help for those students to be successful in other college-level courses.

In addition to individual advising, first-year students are required to take *LA 101: Freshman Success* as one of their first semester courses. In this course, students complete a range of self-assessments, learn how to plan their education, and select a major course of study.

Students with disabilities are referred to Accessibility Services. Staff in the Accessibility Services office work with students to determine what accommodations they need to be successful in their classes. Accommodations depend upon the student's disability and may include services such as taking tests outside of the regularly-scheduled class time, providing interpreting services, books on tape, or note takers.

Student Affairs also offers advising services for specific populations (e.g., African American, Women, and International Students) within the University community.

**1P6 Documenting Effective Teaching and Learning**

The University uses a variety of methods to document the effectiveness of teaching and learning. The faculty also assesses student academic achievement at the program-level, in order to inform curricular development and instructional practice. For example, since 1995, the School of Business has been using the Major Field Test (from ETS) as part of its program assessment. The results have been analyzed and used to generate information for assessing program goal achievement. The chart (See: Figure 1.5: Overall Class Average Performance on MFT) below reports overall performance on the Business MFT test over the past 13 years.
1P7 Building the Course Delivery System

In the Fall 2001, the University implemented its conversion to a semester schedule. After decades of maintaining a quarter system, the University spent two years studying the advantages and disadvantages of either remaining with the quarter system or converting to a semester schedule. In the end, the conversion decision revolved around two perceived advantages; 1. Increasing the length of time (i.e., 16 semester weeks vs. 11 quarter weeks) a student would remain in a single course which would allow greater opportunity for learning, and 2. A financial advantage would result by reducing registration and grade posting processes (i.e., two vs. three times). The entire preceding academic year 2000/2001 focused on developing conversion assurance guidelines that would maintain the integrity of current program curriculum and require course scheduling so that students could complete declared program majors in a projected standard time period. No student who had declared a course of study and maintained good progress suffered a delay in completing his/her degree requirements and graduating on time.

The academic integrity also assures that the design of individual courses and the formats in which they are delivered to learners is a fundamental faculty role and is based at the department/program level. The approval of courses and programs is part of the faculty academic governance structure and takes into account the demand for content areas on the parts of students and professional/employer groups associated with the respective disciplines. Enrollment potential is part of decisions to create or discontinue course offerings, as well as the most efficient use of the University’s instructional space, balanced with student interest in alternative formats (e.g., online learning). The requirements of students whose learning styles and academic support needs vary widely are also part of decisions on course offerings and instructional formats.

1P8 Monitoring Curricular Effectiveness

Current student program enrollment patterns reflect the degree of interest the public has for the area of study and the relative success of graduates of those programs. This past academic year, plans to discontinue the English major were reversed after the curriculum was revised and marketing plans were developed. Due to an insufficient number of students and lack of demand for employment in local hospitals, the Associate Degree Program in Clinical Laboratory Technology was suspended in Fall, 2005. However, renewed interest from local health care providers may stimulate its reactivation. Responding to appeals from American Electric Power (AEP), a new Power Plant Technology program was developed and graduated its first class (12) this year. Last year a large group of Teacher Assistants (43), supported by local school district funding, completed a specially developed Associate’s Degree program. Although only six enrolled this year, the project is considered an example of the responsiveness of the University’s curriculum development process.

The pending Strategic Plan cites a goal to develop a Program Viability process which will allow the University to more systematically rank the strengths, resources, and risks of our current programs and make data-based planning decisions.

1P9 Determining Learning Support Needs

Current learner support services monitor use patterns and conduct intermittent needs assessment to encourage student success. Through academic advising and job placement, Career Advising Resource Services provides an information flow to students and alumni who incorporate academic advising and/or career advising for the purpose of occupational guidance and job placement. The Campus Computing & Networking website provides general and technical information and services to support the Rio Grande faculty, staff, students, and affiliates.
The Jeanette Albiez Davis Library has holdings in excess of 539,000, including 92,839 volumes, 443,590 units of microforms, and 2,397 audiovisual materials. Davis Library subscribes to 319 current periodical titles and maintains a collection of approximately 25,000 federal government documents as a selective U. S. Government Documents Depository. During the regular academic year, Davis Library is open seven days each week for a total of 73 hours each week.

Davis Library is a member of OhioLINK. Through OhioLINK, Rio students have online access to the library collections of virtually every college and university in Ohio. Students are able to request materials from these libraries and receive these materials within a few days. OhioLINK also offers Rio students access to over 90 online research databases as well as its Electronic Journal Center and Digital Media Center. Rio students may visit and use participating OhioLINK academic libraries throughout the State simply by presenting their valid student ID card.

Additionally, as a charter member of the On-Line Computer Library Center (OCLC), an international bibliographical database, and OHIONET, a statewide network of OCLC participating libraries, Davis Library can provide students, faculty, and staff with access to virtually anything they may wish to use for their research through its traditional interlibrary loan service. Davis Library strives to facilitate the retrieval of information, in any form, and provide resources and services in support of the academic programs of the University and Community College.

1P10 Co-Curricular Goals

The University understands that a learning environment is socio-academic and that learning occurs in a context. In addition to constructing models of learning and teaching, crafting support services and a schedule of social activities that engage the immediate and broader community is a developmental challenge. As the local resident population has declined and the current commuter student population has increased, the campus is conscious in designing events and activities that encourage students to stay or return to campus for activities and events that foster social engagement 'near the classroom'.

Increasingly, students have complex demands on their time, i.e., employment and family responsibilities. It is also easy for academic majors to become isolated in buildings where a majority of their classes are scheduled. Creating a balance between an efficient course schedule and socially diverse interaction is an ongoing issue.

1P11 Determining Student Assessment Processes

Assessment of student learning and achievement is primarily a responsibility of the faculty. Assessment standards, methods, and measures for individual degree programs are determined by the faculty at the department/program level (See Figure 1.6: Participation in Major Field Test ('95-'07)). Assessment of student learning in the General Education Program is currently performed by the Assessment Committee, in collaboration with the academic departments that teach courses that are approved to satisfy general education requirements. The Assessment Committee serves as an advisory role to provide relevant assessment information and suggestions for faculty.
1P12 Preparation for Further Education or Employment

A past practice of alumni follow-up to determine employment success and/or post-graduation education was only recently renewed. Results are pending.

1P13 Measures of Student Performance

In addition to course grade and cumulative grade point average data that are available from the Records Office, the University collects and analyzes student performance data related to Placement, Persistence to Graduation, Retention, Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress, and Academic Standing.

The University has maintained a posting of department and program-level assessment plans on its website since 1998. Participation and report updates have been irregularly monitored and programs with specialized accreditation have been more likely to maintain a schedule of postings.

Results

1R1 Results for Student Learning Objectives and Program Learning Objectives

Placement results:

With an open admission policy at Rio, the number of admitted students (See Table 1.9: Placement Tests Administered) yields a high percentage of students who need to take one or two developmental courses (See Figure 1.7: Developmental Course Total Enrollment by Placement), as determined by the placement results, in reading (36.6%), introduction to writing (51%), or a math course (8% for MTH 104; 46% for MTH 109; 29% for MTH 114).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total # of Student</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01-02</td>
<td>737</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02-03</td>
<td>791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03-04</td>
<td>829</td>
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<tr>
<td>04-05</td>
<td>776</td>
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<tr>
<td>05-06</td>
<td>866</td>
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<tr>
<td>06-07</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Graduating Senior Assessment Results:

Graduating seniors were asked to complete an exit assessment (Academic Profile during 1999 through 2000, technology competence skills in 2001, and a writing in 2007).

Academic Profile: Performance in those skill areas varies each year. Among the results are two main trends: as a whole group, Rio graduating seniors performed below the national level of liberal arts colleges; however, there is evidence for value-added growth in those skill areas of reading, writing, math, and critical thinking from sophomore to senior. This growth from sophomore to senior reflects the efforts that Rio has invested in providing developmental education to remedy the deficiencies of those who come to Rio through the open admission policy, and desperately need such help to be successful in their college-level courses.

The following figure (See: Figure 1.8: Rio Academic Profile 2003-2005) provides information indicating the growth as reflected in the performance from sophomore to senior (this information of the break-down of performance by class rank is provided from ETS only for 2003 through 2005). The results for the junior group may not be statistically accurate in representing the intended performance because the sample was too small and relied on self-reported identity. Therefore, the value-added comparison examined between the two groups of sophomores and seniors which did have sufficient sample size and were more likely to have statistical significance.
Notes:
- Sophomore group: students who completed credit hours between 30-60;
- Junior group: students who completed credit hours between 61-90;
- Senior group: students who completed credit hours above 90;
  (All three groups identified above were based on self-reported identity even though a sophomore could have been an Associate Degree candidate.)

Mean Scores represent the total institutional mean scores of the three Rio groups’ performance on Academic Profile in 2003, 2004, and 2005. This information was not available for previous sample years.

Observations:
- Rio seniors performed above the national norm (mean scores) in 2003 and in 2004, but below the national norm in 2005;
- Rio seniors performed higher than sophomores in the same year over each of the three years of 2003-2005;
- Performance by each of the three groups was lower in 2005 than that of 2003 and 2004.

Technology Competence Skills:
As part of the Rio General Education Program goals, technology competency is assessed through a university-developed assessment activity which is performance-based with self-reporting of select technology skills (See: Figure 1.9: Assessment of Technology Productivity Minimum Competence). Graduating seniors rated themselves in the following five areas:

“I am able to_____ (check those that apply)…”
- **E-mail**: “use e-mail to perform tasks of sending and receiving messages”; [92%, 137/149]
- **Attachment**: “send a text-file as attachment through e-mail”; [69%, 103/149]
- **Maintain**: “perform basic maintenance of organizing received e-mail messages, deleting e-mail messages”; [90%, 134/149]
- **Text Edit**: “use a word program for tasks of typing, saving, retrieving, using common functions for editing, transferring a text-file from one folder to another folder, organizing text-files in folder format”; [84%, 125/149]
- **Internet Search**: “use internet to do basic research, downloading internet materials and transferring such materials either through e-mail or by saving them in a folder (in C: Drive) and/or disks”. [91%, 136/149]
Depending on the types of academic programs, program assessment activities vary in their scope and coverage. Academic programs that pursue external accreditation (specialized accreditation) tend to utilize both internal and external assessment measures. In contrast, academic programs that do not have external accreditation tend to rely more on internal assessment measures.

At Rio, the Major Field Test (from ETS) is one of the external assessment measures used by the following programs (See: Figure 1.10: Number of Programs Using Major Field Test by Year):

- Chemistry (1995-1996)
- History (1996)
- English (literature) (1995)
- Physics (1996-1998)

Among the above programs, the Business program has been utilizing the Major Field Test as part of its program assessment plan since 1995. The test bank provides comparable information for both individual and group performance with other institutions. The Business program is also the only program that has persevered with the use of the instrument beyond four years.

Other programs choose the MFT for various reasons: attempting to find a fit between the MFT and the coverage of the program, the need to get a glimpse of peer group norms, and the availability of graduates to complete the MFT for a group performance analysis (the MFT requires a minimum number of people to take the MFT for program summary information). Results from the Major Field Test have been more significant due to the larger sample size each year (See: Figure 1.11: Participation in Major Field Test ('95-'07)).
**1R2 Evidence of Achievement**

A number of academic programs have earned specialized accreditation from a national association (See Table 1.10: Programs with Specialized Accreditation).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Specialized Accreditation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursing (AD,RN)</td>
<td>National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC), (1987; 2008), Associate; BSN Program: Candidate, pending.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE); (2007; 2009), Initial and Advanced Level Preparation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiology</td>
<td>Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT), (2005 applicant: pending)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic Medical Sonography</td>
<td>Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP), Associate; (2007;2010).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students from several academic programs need to take external examinations in order to obtain their licenses in their field. The following provides a snapshot of how those students do in these external examinations:

- 84.9% of Associate Degree Nursing students passed the NCLEX in 2006.
- 86% of Social Work Program BSW students (2000-2005) passed the ASWB Basic Examination
- All sixteen students in the 2006 graduating class of the Radiologic Technology Program passed their national certification tests.

**1R3 Results for Processes Associated with Helping Students Learn**

Retention is another measure of the cumulative effectiveness of the many University processes that assist students on a path toward graduation. The University presents a twelve year (1995-2006) average retention rate of 62.2% (See Figure 1.12: Rio Retention Rate (1995-2006)).

![Rio Retention Rate (1995-2006)](image)

**Notes:** Calculated by taking the number of undergraduate students who enrolled in the previous year Fall term, removing the number of graduates who did not return the following Fall term, and matching the ID of students from the first year Fall term, to the
second year Fall term. The result of matching IDs between terms with non-returning graduate of any kind removed, divided by the total number of undergraduate students in the first year provides the retention percentage (Source: MIS, Feb. 2007).

1R4 Comparison of Results

Persistence to graduation rates for URG as compared to some like colleges and universities is presented below (See Figure 13: University of Rio Grande 2004 (6-year) Graduation Rate; Source: The Education Trust).

Persistence to graduation rates by gender for URG is also provided. (See: Figure 1.14: 2004 Six Year Graduation Rates: Overall and by Gender; Source: The Education Trust).

2004 Six Year Graduation Rates: Overall and by Gender

Improvements

1I1 Improving Processes for Helping Learners Learn

In addition to the curriculum review, development processes and student learning assessment activities described above, all four of URG’s AQIP Action Projects have contributed to the
improvement of the processes described in the Helping Students Learn Category. Direct communication with students for all purposes, including academic requirements and expectations, is available to students through the student internet portal, which is accessed through the University home page.

1I2 Targets for Improvement

For individual courses and academic programs, targets for continuing improvement occur at two levels: a micro and a macro. The former refers to course-level assessment, while the latter department-level assessment, in response to student performance data (e.g., course grades) and the results of the assessment of student academic achievement at the program level. Based on 2006-2007 assessment activities, several opportunities have been identified to improve assessment processes and reporting.

Coordination of such assessment work will need to be better coordinated with the Assessment Committee, programs, and faculty.

Some suggestions have already been proposed, for instance, the University’s participation in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), whose results will enable the University to make comparisons with national benchmarks useful for identifying areas for focused improvement initiatives.

Strategic planning has also considered projects in enrollment and retention, a review of the English and History major and growth potential in graduate online programs. Data collection strategies will also review post-graduate follow-up for all majors, dependency on course grades as evidence of student learning, and variables to include in a program viability process to determine program modification goals.
Category #2: Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives

The partnership between the private university and public community college reflects the University's distinctive objective to provide responsive academic programs and access for students to pursue higher education.

Context

2C1 Other Institutional Objectives

The University pursues several guiding objectives to sustain its unique identity.

- Developed as a private baccalaureate-degree granting institution, the University has evolved a continuum of associate and graduate level programs. Currently, of annual degrees awarded, 40% are associate-level and 20% are masters level.
- The partnership between the private University (URG) and the public Community College (RGCC) over the past 33 years has proved to be a positive legacy for the region and state.
- Low class size allows for personalized faculty-student interaction.
- Higher education opportunities help to transform a significant first generation student population.
- Continuing to support an open admissions policy, the University embraces accessibility and provides a sequence of developmental coursework that guides the student's performance toward success.
- Program development and growth at the community college level proves the University's responsiveness to workforce development, esp. health fields.

2C2 Ensuring Alignment of Objectives – and -
2C3 Supporting Learning

The cooperation of the two boards strives to sustain the range of higher education options available to students by collaborating on a shared vision of accessibility and support.

Processes

2P1 and 2P2 Determining and Communicating Other Distinctive Objectives

The character of organizational communication at the University of Rio Grande/Rio Grande Community College respects both the process of governance and its structure as a medium of communication that supports consensus-building and informs decisions. On a day-to-day operating level, the following summarizes the other means by which communication of both University objectives and the accompanying expectations to members of the campus community occur.

At the University administration level (see Category 5, Leading and Communicating, response to Question 5C1), there are groups that meet regularly, with the primary purpose of sharing information among administrators and for transmission to their respective units. The President’s Cabinet is comprised of the president, the four vice presidents and two academic deans. Faculty and staff learn about the University’s objectives and the expectations associated with them through the hiring process (Human Resources Policies), employee orientations and evaluation activities.

Students are presented with essential information through the Student Handbook, the University’s catalog and academic advising (e.g., Category 1, Helping Students Learn). The University’s website, includes a sophisticated portal that takes students to a wide range of information.
described in the Organizational Overview and contains the full listings of University policies and procedures relevant for both academic and support services.

Communication media that enables all members of the University community to be familiar with University objectives and associated expectations include the University email system and email utilities (all employees and students are assigned University email accounts), the University website, the weekly Calendar publications (available online), and The Signals student newspaper.

The University Relations Office uses a number of methods to communicate both on and off campus. These include:

   a) Membership with local chambers of commerce.
   b) Institutional signature banners at area high school athletic fields.
   c) Advertisement with newspapers, magazines, radio, and television.
   d) Distribution and printing of submitted news articles locally, regionally, and statewide with special submissions to newspapers outside of Ohio.
   e) Radio remotes and PSA’s (public service announcements).
   f) Yearly publications for admissions, recruitment, and alumni.
   g) Yearly advertisements – highway bulletin boards, area maps, and business displays.
   h) Weekly WKOV radio broadcast “This is Rio Grande”- Jackson, Ohio.
   i) Posting of press releases on website.

2P3 Determining Faculty and Staff Needs

There are a variety of ways in which URG determines faculty and staff needs relative to the “Other Distinctive Objectives.” Often, this occurs on an ad hoc, project-by-project basis with proposals for activities or resources submitted at the unit level, as part of the annual operating budget building process.

Flexibility in instructional delivery is one of the ways that accessibility is promoted and the project to develop online degrees in a variety of disciplines is a direct response to the objective.

2P5 Measures of Accomplishing Objectives

Currently, there is no formal system that facilitates the collection and analysis of such information, but such a system will be considered as part of the institution’s Strategic Planning process.

Results

2R1 Results in Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives

As is indicated in 2P5, results will be generated once a system is put in place to collect such information.

2R2 Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives

The institution acknowledges the importance of selecting a group of benchmark institutions to compare for the effectiveness of what the institution is doing in accomplishing a range of distinctive objectives. It is anticipated that such comparative information will be available for the next update of the Systems Portfolio.

2R3 Impact of Results

Please see 2R1 and 2R2.
Improvements

2I1 Improving Systems and Processes

An effective process to be put in place to facilitate the development of such systems will be needed, and then measurement of how effective such a process is will be needed as one of the priorities for the institution’s Strategic Plan.

2I2 Setting and Comparing Targets for Improvement

There are a number of initiatives being developed as part of the Institution’s Strategic Plan to set improvement targets. Implementing a new scheduling and registration system (StudentSpace), revising the faculty evaluation process, increasing the University’s online program offerings, and structuring an aggressive enrollment plan are priority projects. Challenges facing the University include a low population rural growth trend, increasing dependence on commuter students, and limitations on the moderation of private university tuition by community college subsidy support.
**Category #3: Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs**

The University is active in engaging students and stakeholders and modifies programs to promote accessibility. Collecting information, analyzing and planning solutions in a more systematic way will improve the efficiency of URG's education and workforce development processes.

### Context

#### 3C1 Learner and Constituency Groups

The University's key groups are students and other constituent stakeholders. Students include enrolled, admitted, special, Post Secondary Enrollment Options (high school students), continuing education, and graduate students. Students are defined as currently enrolled and not in inactive status. Student segments also include: traditional (<24 years old), adult learners (24+ years old), first-time/first-year (0-16 credits), transfer (>16 credits), graduate, financial aid recipients, and non-aided students. Students are further segmented by discipline, college, and ethnic heritage.

Other stakeholders include: Alumni; communities; employers; taxpayers; legislators and other elected officials; and local area school districts.

1. Students are recruited within a four-county community college district, the entire State of Ohio, adjoining states, and internationally.
2. Appalachia opportunity, i.e. Project CHAMP
3. Numerous community advisory boards and involvement
4. Appeal procedures for academic suspension or probation
5. Academic programs are responsive to regional workforce development.

The Graduate Program (approved by the Ohio Board of Regents in 1991) developed out of requests from school administrators in the local region to provide a master's degree program for teachers that would be accessible to teachers who maintained full-time employment in the public schools. With very few programs in Southeastern Ohio, and virtually no programs for classroom-focused teachers, URG developed a Master's of Education in Classroom Teaching program with three graduate concentrations: Mathematics, Learning Disabilities, and Reading Education K-12. The Learning Disabilities concentration was renamed as Intervention Specialist and a concentration in Integrated Arts was added.

This response to serving local communities further developed in the creation of four additional concentrations to the Master's of Education degree: Athletic Coaching Leadership, Educational Technology, Humanities, and Intervention Specialist in Early Childhood. All options were stimulated by Federal *No Child Left Behind* guidelines or mandates of the Ohio Department of Education.

#### 3C2 Requirements and Expectations

Each stakeholder group is unique in its contributions to and what the members of that group need from the University. Information about students is formally collected in the placement data, new student orientation evaluations, admission applications, and new student surveys. Information on other stakeholders comes from laws, policies, procedures, rules, and many other sources, including news reports, partnerships with community-based action groups and employers, advisory boards, regional task forces and alumni surveys.

**Students:** It is assumed that, for the short term, students want a good education from an accredited, affordable private university, as they develop academic and professional connections. They expect equal access to educational opportunities and compliance with state and federal requirements regarding minority, disadvantaged or disabled students. They also expect orientation to academia, including adequate information on policies and procedures and degree planning; access to academic advisors; courses to achieve their educational goals; and excellent
service when they use available student support services, such as financial aid, accessibility service, placement testing, career services, and student counseling. They expect professionally and pedagogically superior instruction at all levels, including academic support areas, such as the Jenkins Center. They expect flexible, convenient scheduling of classes, independent study and online learning options, credit for prior and experiential learning, and other types of learning opportunities. In the long term, partnerships and rapport with other colleges and universities, community-based organizations, and prospective employers contribute to a context that enables students to achieve their life-long learning and career goals.

Data sources for students’ short- and long-term requirements and expectations include the Admissions Data form, the placement results, and periodic participation in nationally-normed surveys (e.g., Noel Levitz Survey).

**Alumni:** Alumni want their education to have prepared them for employment in a field that complements their interests, values, and aspirations and provides professional advancement and self-improvement opportunities. Over time, alumni rely on the University’s reputation as a high-quality institution to be confident that a degree from URG will retain its academic and professional value. The longer-term value of the connection with the University is underwritten by the activities and programming of the Alumni Association, which provides a continuing network among URG graduates and programming that responds to their interests. Sources of information about alumni are the postgraduate surveys administered by the Alumni Office.

**Contributors and taxpayers:** Short- and long-term goals for these stakeholders include responsible and accountable resource management, adherence to terms and conditions of grant-funded projects, enrollment of students, fulfillment of the University’s mission, and the University’s reputation.

**Communities and Employers:** Regional communities and employers rely on the University to be accessible to a diverse student population and contribute graduates to a well-prepared workforce. They also expect the University to be a responsive and responsible contributor to the social, political, and economic development of the communities that it serves. In summary, all of these constituencies have substantive stakes in the fulfillment of the University of Rio Grande’s mission and academic purpose.

**Processes**

**3P1 Identifying Changing Need of Students**

URG’s students display a variety of types: traditional students, PSEO students, and older, usually working adults who bring transfer credit to their degree completion plans and attend part-time, as they navigate occupational and family obligations. The changing needs of students are identified through a combination of formal and informal communications between students and staff. A primary method, person-to-person conversation, is a direct result of the close relationships that faculty forge with their students, both in and outside of class. URG enjoys a relatively low student/faculty ratio that encourages students to openly express their needs and issues. This enables faculty to closely observe students’ classroom behavior and coursework, to identify students’ needs, and make referrals as appropriate.

A second essential method for identifying students’ needs is through the advising and counseling processes. Instructors and advisors meet with all enrolled students to determine individually appropriate courses of study and for referral to academic support services, such as the Jenkins Center (for individual tutoring in math, writing, or other subject areas). Student Services staff members advocate directly for students’ needs with administrators and faculty members and indirectly through the committee process. The needs of Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) students are determined by their high school counselors and the PSEO liaison at the University. Their needs are communicated to instructors, departments, and colleges, as
appropriate. In all of these examples, informal discussion between a student and a staff or faculty member may resolve the student’s immediate needs. The staff/faculty member may propose a new initiative or support mechanism to address additional needs.

Individual student needs identified through informal discussions are typically handled immediately. More general needs or issues involving potential conflict may be referred to a School Chair, the Dean, or the Provost. Issues that are more administrative in nature (e.g., policies) go to the President’s Cabinet for review and then through the governance process. The roles of these groups are described in more detail in Category 5 (Leading and Communicating).

The University also solicits input from students through a variety of ways.

The Student Senate is an integral part of the governance and planning processes of the University. Senate representatives are elected from the student body. The Senate is an active participant in the decision-making process and assists the administration in determining various issues of concern. The Student Senate leaders and its members participate on various University Committees to express student concerns, interests, and needs.

A number of student groups are formally recognized and funded by the Student Activity Office. These groups represent the varied interests and diversity of the student population and afford students an additional forum for social support, academic and professional affinity, community and University service, and advocacy.

Members of the Student Affairs and academic support staff contribute to a required freshman course, LA101 Freshman Success, discussing the array of services available and giving students an opportunity to express their needs.

3P2 Building and Maintaining a Relationship with our Learners

As a student-centered institution, URG encourages building and maintaining relationships with students. All newly admitted students are required to attend new student orientation, where they meet faculty members, professional advisors, and academic and student services personnel. Each student is assigned an academic advisor. Appointments can be made for individual meetings and students can also get immediate support at walk-in CARS Office. Class sizes (including online courses) are traditionally small, which enables the teaching faculty to develop continuing relationships with students, even at the freshman and sophomore levels. Tutors quickly develop continuing relationships with students, whom they see more than once.

The tutors at Rio Grande are university students who have achieved a 3.0 or higher average in the discipline they tutor. These students are paid minimum wage through work study money or university student labor. A tutor works approximately ten hours every two weeks. Tutors are an integral part of the staff at Jenkins Center for Student Success. Each year new tutors are required to go through 21 hours of tutor training conducted by the two specialist’s from Jenkins Center. The tutors are trained and confident at conducting tutoring sessions in many disciplines. Students find that they can get the academic help they need to understand course material, so they are able to apply their knowledge. Therefore, students at Rio Grande return to the center to get help when needed. The support services are provided to any enrolled student at no additional cost.

3P3 Identify Changing Needs of Other Constituents

Administrators and program directors determine new course and program offerings in response to changing demographics, employment demand, and the developing needs of the respective professions.
3P4 Building and Maintaining a Relationship with our Key Stakeholders

Prospective student relationships are built through high school visits and tours for visiting students. Maintaining such relationship with alumni is also important. A paper survey was administered to all (7500) alumni in March 2006 to collect and maintain information for the current alumni database. Alumni are also given the opportunity to update personal information three times a year through the alumni magazine, Tower & Times, E-mail, mail, and the phone are also available for this purpose. An attempt is made to personally contact alumni by telephone for an extensive interview, by a professional publishing company, prior to the publication of the alumni directory. This directory is published every five years.

3P5 Determining Needs to be Addressed

Analysis of enrollment levels, trends, and projections are a crucial element in determining needs. High enrollments yield more sections and can initiate new courses in popular programs. Low enrollments can result in cancelled sections and, possibly, the elimination of courses and even programs. If a significant number of new students are registering for certain courses, programs may have to be expanded.

Budget analysis is also critical, to connect plans with the requisite resources, to provide services for certain program development.

3P6 Collecting Complaint Information

The University has a complaint procedure in the Student Services Office. Student complaints are received by telephone, letter, face-to-face, e-mail, and survey and may be directed, as appropriate, to instructors or staff members, Deans of Student Services, School Chairs, Deans, Vice Presidents, or the President.

As Jenkins Center serves as a main location for providing student support, it becomes important to collect any student complaints and use the information for improving the services. The Center has an open door policy for any student or faculty member who wants to discuss an issue informally. Complaint forms are available should anyone desire to file a complaint. The complaint form is completed and submitted to the Associate Director of Jenkins Center. The complaint is reviewed and relevant information is collected and reviewed in a timely manner. The associate director keeps the form and a computerized log of complaint, along with the solution agreed to by the parties involved. If an agreeable solution cannot be found, then the information is brought to the attention of the Provost. Most of the complaints are resolved quickly by a conversation with the parties involved since most students know that adult behavior and respect for each other is expected at all times at Jenkins Center.

3P7 Determining Constituent Satisfaction

Student and other stakeholder satisfaction data are gathered, largely, on an ad hoc basis. The current AQIP process of strengthening data collection and analysis will be important for the institution’s goal of continuous improvement.

Results

3R1 Learner Satisfaction Results

(See the degree-completion rates in six-year time periods charts presented earlier). The AQIP process has revealed a need for more systematic and quantitative information to improve program offerings and services to students.
3R2 Building Relationships with Learners

The most recent persistence to graduation calculation (see Charts presented 1R4) shows that even though the 32% graduation rate at Rio is somewhere in the middle with a group of like institutions, the larger number of entering students who need to take developmental courses (see Developmental Course Total Enrollment chart in 1R1) may contribute to the overall graduation rate. With the specific characteristics of students enrolled at Rio the institution has been making efforts in different areas to provide support for the students. For instance, 66% of the students enrolled for credits (based on 2005 statistics) received Pell Grants, and the retention rate for the past ten years has been above 60% (See: Figure 3.1: Retention Rate (1995-2006)).

![Retention Rate (1995-2006)](chart)

3R3 Results of Stakeholder Satisfaction

Such data is not currently available yet, but will be part of our Strategic Plan.

3R4 Building Relationships with Key Stakeholders

Donors and grant-making entities are a good barometer of the University’s relationships with key stakeholders. Donors and grantors provide funding for programs and initiatives that have special value to the donor/grantor. Funds will continue to be granted so long as the University continues to meet the expectations of donors and grantors.

Grant funding provided over $2.3 million to the University of Rio Grande and Rio Grande Community College during the 2005-2006 fiscal year. Funding, received from individuals, foundations, corporations, and government agencies, provided for educational activities, scholarships, facilities improvements, and community services.

Monies received from external sources offered opportunities that University and Community College budgets could not support. For example, the CROSSROADS Program (funded by the County Departments of Jobs and Family Services in Gallia and Meigs Counties) provided educational, career preparation and job experience activities for many area residents. The CROSSROADS Program provided the support needed by many people to take the first steps leading to employment or further education.

Another example was a grant from the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation that supported the Girls Emerging in Math and Science (GEMS) summer program. This program encouraged area eighth and ninth grade girls to become interested in mathematics and science related careers. The American Electric Power Company, Inc. contributed to an endowment fund to support GEMS.
Outside funding made possible the presentation of *The World War I Years: America Becomes a World Power* series. Hosted by the Davis Library, this program, funded by National Video Resources and Ohio Humanities Council, brought many scholars to the campus to present a program of lectures and discussions to students, faculty, staff, and community residents that examined this crucial time in the nation’s past. The program also provided off-campus sessions that extended this educational opportunity to many citizens.

This summary highlights only a few of the activities that were made possible by grant funding. Each activity demonstrated the importance of external funding to help the University and the Community College provide opportunities that would not be possible without the generous support of contributors.

A major fund-raising campaign, *The Lighting the Way*, began in 2002 and is critical to Rio Grande’s ability to fulfill its unique mission. The campaign objectives focus on two broad aspects of Rio’s mission:

- **Academic quality and program development.** To provide support for high potential career programs in the Schools of Business, Education, Nursing, and Technology; create an endowed chair in the School of Technology; improve and maintain instructional technology; and create more endowed scholarships.

- **Campus life and community outreach.** To provide support for the expansion of the Student and Community Center, support key community outreach programs, expand and enhance Rio’s athletic programs and facilities, and to provide for ongoing maintenance of major campus facilities.

The goal of the five-year campaign is $21 million and as of June 2006, $13.7 million had been committed to the campaign. The next phase of the campaign, which began in Fall 2006, involved Rio Grande’s alumni.

The benefits of the campaign are already evident throughout campus including the naming of the Lyvonia Clark Bunce School of Education, which provided for the refurbishment of Anniversary Hall, new equipment for the School, and many new scholarships for education majors; the installation of new bleachers in the Newt Oliver Arena; the addition of lighting, bleachers, and fencing on the Evan E. Davis Soccer Field; and the groundbreaking for the expansion of the Davis University Center.

Cultivating relationships with donors is part of the on-going work of the University Advancement staff.

**3R5 Comparison of Results**

For various elements of data analysis, the University has used comparison data from The Education Trust ([http://www2.edtrust.org/edtrust](http://www2.edtrust.org/edtrust)) and the National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Statistics (IPEDS) ([www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds](http://www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds)).

**Improvements**

**3I1 Improving Processes for Understanding Needs**

Improvement of current processes for understanding and responding to the needs of students and other stakeholder groups must build on the initial commitments to systematically collect appropriate data, at both the University and national levels. Components of this process improvement effort need to include:
• Creating a systematic process for gathering, evaluating, and communicating information on student/stakeholder satisfaction, and
• Establishing a system for reviewing data trends and variances to determine the roots of satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

3I2 How We Set Targets for Improvement

The current Strategic planning process will provide a platform to set targets for improvement. The compilation of the Systems Portfolio points to the need for a more formal and systematic accountability system for understanding and meeting the needs of stakeholders. The Strategic Planning effort will engage stakeholders by considering the completion of a community needs assessment and the development of an expanded comprehensive student satisfaction survey.

Category #4: Valuing People
It is recognized that University employees are a valuable asset in supporting student learning. Developing a budget to support the mission is a persistent challenge that requires an effective and efficient effort.

**Context**

4C1 Distinctive Ways of Organizing the Work Environment

The University of Rio Grande adheres to the policies set by the Board of Trustees. Policies and procedures are developed and implemented through the management team consisting of the President, Vice President for Academic Affairs (Provost), Vice President for Administrative and Student services, Vice President for Finance, and Vice President for Institutional Advancement (See Figure 4.1: Institutional Governance Flowchart). These Vice Presidents, the Deans, and the Director of Graduate Studies comprise the President’s Cabinet. Also in the policy making role is the President’s Council.

![Institutional Governance Flowchart]

Other participants in policy making are the University of Rio Grande Faculty Association in their collective bargaining efforts, University standing committees (Human Resources, Building and Grounds, Academic Affairs, Student Development, Finance, Institutional Advancement, and Athletic Committees). Student body representatives are included in each of the campus committees.

URG emphasizes student learning and development by offering small class sections, classes in the evening and on weekends. The location and arrangement of many of the student support services areas and offices have been undergoing several changes in the recent years, all with the focus on how best to provide services to students. For instance, several key student services areas and offices, such as the Admissions Office, the Health Services & Accessibility Office, and the recently renovated Jenkins Center are all located on the same floor in the same building. Plans are being made to look into the future move, which would place all such student supportive services, such as Financial Aid Office, the Finance Office, and the Records Office in one location, creating a one-stop format for students.
4C2 Key Institutional and Geographic Factors for Work Environment

The University of Rio Grande is located in Gallia County in rural southeastern Ohio with equal distances between the villages of Gallipolis and Jackson. A major state highway is adjacent to the University campus. The nearest large city is approximately 50 miles northwest with access to major metropolitan cities (Columbus, Ohio, and Charleston, WV). The University has one center in adjoining Meigs County with two part-time staff members and depending on the semester, up to 10 part-time faculty members.

Although the University is committed to hiring the best possible candidates for each position, its rural setting with limited opportunities for spouse employment is a hindrance in recruitment. URG employs 93 full-time faculty members with 39 being female and 54 male. Part-time faculty member numbers vary from semester to semester averaging between 55-60. There are 58 hourly employees, 42 female and 16 male and 64 administrative employees with the gender breakdown being 30 females and 34 males. Part-time faculty members are hired from the community and represent the community networking connection that is so necessary in rural smaller college settings (See: Table 4.1: Employee Education Levels).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee Education Levels</th>
<th>URG/RGCC Faculty</th>
<th>URG/RGCC Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>47 (50%)</td>
<td>8 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>42 (45%)</td>
<td>24 (38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>4 (4%)</td>
<td>24 (38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

External factors that affect the work environment at the University include regulations from the state and the federal government regarding work environment for both faculty and staff members. For instance, each year, the state of Ohio Industrial Commission requires annual updates for any existing handicapping conditions in the employees at the University. Such information, once collected, becomes part of the basis for the University to provide any needed accommodation for its employees. Another external factor is the available pool of candidates for various campus positions. In recent years, there has been a relatively high turnover of certain positions (such as secretaries) resulting from higher salaries from outside for similar positions. It can be a challenge in terms of recruiting candidates for those positions and retaining them.

For academic staff, the current ratio of full-time faculty and part-time faculty is 93/96, which is close to the national trend of full-time vs. part-time faculty statistics.

4C3 Demographic Trends

The University evaluates workforce needs annually. Records reflect that 17% of employees of all classifications are between the ages of 60-75 and 23% of employees have years of service between 20 and 50 years. A large number of retirements are expected within the next five years. With new allied health programs and online educational and international programs being added, emphasis will shift in the numbers and types of both full- and part-time employees.

The University analyzes turnover and age cohorts of faculty by discipline to anticipate retirements and determine future hiring needs. Career areas for high-growth potential (e.g. Nursing) are analyzed to serve sectors that indicate increasing shortages of workers.

4C4 Training Initiatives
Employee training opportunities include: new employee orientations, legal aspects that relate to colleges and universities (HIPPA, FERPA), and many safety oriented programs for all. Complete files are kept on all who attend trainings. Ongoing faculty development initiatives include three mandatory trainings required by the negotiated faculty contract. Staff development funds are available for faculty use by applying to a faculty development committee. Tuition remission is available for all full-time employees and dependants. Supervision training is available for all administrators.

**Processes**

**4P1 Establishing Hiring Criteria**

Hiring practices are determined by federal and state laws and University policies which are outlined in the *University Policies and Procedures Manual (PPM)*. A personnel requisition is completed for each position that is posted. Personnel requisitions include job duties, educational, and experience requirements. Selection Committees comprised of at least 4-5 members are formed for each position interview. Committees are trained by Human Resources on the legal aspects of interviewing and evaluation forms are completed by the committee on each candidate interviewed.

The HR department ensures that all potential employees have the proper certification by checking transcripts, references, status of required licenses, and background checks for misdemeanor and felony claims. The Affirmative Action Plan (updated each November) outlines criteria for hiring and is used for any employment search.

**4P2 Recruiting and Orienting Employees**

The URG Affirmative Action Plan is committed to recruiting talent from diverse backgrounds. Supervisors and administrators assist the HR Office in recruiting quality and qualified employees. Recruitment methods include internal posting, advertising in local and state (regional) newspapers, college websites, [www.higheredjobs.com](http://www.higheredjobs.com), Hispanic Outlook, Black Educator, and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Specific trade journals (nursing, fine woodworking, social work, etc.) are used for recruiting in these specific areas. Retention strategies include a systematic orientation process, mentoring activities, years of service recognition and achievement awards and at least annual professional performance evaluations with a review of program and individual goals and objectives.

**4P3 Communication and Ethical Practices**

Employee input is highly utilized at URG through committee work, administrative and President’s Council meetings, and opportunities to meet with upper management where concerns and expertise are valued and considered. Although the University currently has an Interim-President, the former President was in office for 12 years. Previous statistics that reflect years of service and patterns of continuity are viewed favorably. Employee turnover is low as few employees leave the area for local positions, but rather move to other regions.

The PPM is posted on the University intranet and student handbooks are readily available from the Student Services Office and the Provost’s Office. Both include policies on non-discrimination, Minimum Ethical Standards, FERPA, HIPPA, harassment (including sexual harassment), Student Rights and Responsibilities, and academic freedom. The negotiated faculty contract also outlines specific ethical practices and policies for faculty members.

**4P4 Training and Development**

URG provides training for all staff and faculty in the areas of: College and University Personnel Training, state and national financial aid, faculty development on advising, curriculum and
evaluation, safety issues (identity theft, first aid, and fire safety), effective communications, FERPA, HIPPA, employee insurance, and pension planning. Approximately 80% of all employees have attended trainings listed above.

A Faculty Development Committee reviews applications and awards $12,000 annually in grants to full-time faculty for seminars, conference attendance, or short courses. A Teaching and Learning Fund provides mini-grants ($250 maximum) for innovative course projects with students. In the last decade, the first faculty sabbatical was announced Spring term, 2007.

4P5 Determining Developmental Needs

Needed training opportunities are generally determined through staff surveys. Evaluations are used at training sessions and information on topics for future workshops is requested. Training for new technology use is an ongoing developmental need.

4P6 Personnel Evaluation

Every administrative and hourly employee has an annual performance review. A new administrative performance appraisal was adopted May, 2007. HR retains evaluations in employee personnel files. Faculty evaluate academic deans one time a year using an online format. A review of the current faculty evaluation process continues and has been extended. Non-tenured faculty members are reviewed by their peers and Dean at least one time per academic year in the first 4 years and one time every other year thereafter. The faculty contract requires that a faculty committee will review the performance evaluation process and have an updated process by the end of the third academic year of the negotiated contract (2008).

4P7 Reward and Recognition

The administration is supportive of faculty and hourly employees. Faculty members are honored by two annual teaching awards with special administrative recognition given at commencement activities to staff and family members completing associate’s, bachelor’s and master's degrees. Yearly celebrations of clerical staff, maintenance and grounds staff and campus police are hosted by the President and Rio staff members

Employee compensation systems and benefits are set by collective bargaining agreements and plans. Compensation depends on rank, education, and experience in the teaching field/practice in the work field.

The reward structure for faculty (principally the tenure and promotion criteria) is closely aligned with the range of activities in which faculty colleagues engage that directly support academic and related University-level goals and objectives. Administrative and hourly compensation and benefits are determined by the President and VP for Administrative Services within the constraints of the budget.

Years of service awards are presented to all classifications of employees. Faculty members nominate one peer annually to receive the Edwin E. Jones Excellence in Teaching Award. The selection is determined by a committee composed of former Jones Award winners. Students annually nominate a full-time faculty member for the Ernie Wyatt Award for excellence in classroom teaching. Each award includes a monetary stipend and is presented at a banquet at the end of the academic year. A third annual faculty award is the Welsh Studies Fellow Award given to a faculty member who works with the Madog Welsh Center for one academic year, completes a research project, and presents it publicly.

4P8 Key Motivation Issues
The University offers forums, meetings, and satisfaction surveys for all employees as a method of determining overall employee morale. University culture requires an administrative “open-door” policy at all levels. During the Spring, 2007, academic term, two open forums were arranged with a representative member of the University and Community College Board of Trustees to open discussion regarding the Strategic Planning Process and the contractual relationship between the two Boards.

4P9 Providing for Employee Well-Being

The University is vigilant in monitoring the safety of the workplace. Compliance is pursued related to:
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Sexual Harassment Training
- Safety Committee (to promote the safety and welfare of employees and students)
- Staff members attend annual Ohio Safety Congress
- HR Office sponsors three-county Safety Council developed and monitored by Ohio Bureau of Worker’s Compensation
- Emergency Planning Conference Attendance (Pandemic)

4P10 Measures of Valuing People

The University considers a range of measures in confirming the value of its employees. Long and continuous service reflects the mutual investment of employer and employee. Employees feel comfortable extending best wishes, sympathy, and help during tragedy to colleagues. Safety data confirms the campus community as a healthy work environment. Exit interviews at the time of separation suggest that the large majority of employees leave to relocate a significant distance and not because of poor or unsafe working conditions.

Results

4R1 Results of Valuing People

URG is committed to providing educational and employment opportunities to persons of diverse cultures and backgrounds to achieve their learning, employment, and citizenship goals. The University is proactive in attempting to enrich the cultural diversity of its campus by employing persons from both within and outside the fabric of the community. The Affirmative Action Plan and Strategic Plan attempt to measure the results of hiring and retention initiatives.

Faculty Diversity

A description of university faculty salaries reveals higher average salaries by males at the rank of Assistant and Full Professor. Female faculty average salaries are higher at the rank of Instructor and Associate Professor (2005). The university maintains a salary scale which focuses only on rank, initially established by degree level and years teaching/practice experience. A higher percentage of male professors with earned doctorates and tenure longevity are assumed to account for differences in salary levels.

University employees (See Table 4.2: University Employees Race/Ethnicity/Gender 2005) across all categories (Administration, Faculty and Staff) are predominately White/Non-Hispanic (94%) and majority female (60%). The total race/ethnic minority employee population is 6.2% (of which 4.7% is Asian/Pacific Islander).
The rate of tenure by gender (See: Table 4.3: University Faculty/Gender/Tenure Profile - 2005) is proportionate at all faculty rank levels. Tenure patterns remain influenced by an earned doctorate and length of service.

### University Faculty/Gender/Tenure Profile - 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Tenure</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Tenure</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2004/2005 Total/%  22/36  61%  39/54  72%  61/90  67%
1997/1998 Total/%  20/29  69%  48/56  86%  68/85  80%
1991/1992 Total/%  12/36  36%  30/57  53%  42/90  47%

During the past eight years the percent of tenured university faculty has declined 13 points to 67%. Male faculty continue to enjoy higher rates of tenure at 72% v. 61%, but in the past eight years this difference has declined by 6 points. All faculty at the Associate and Full rank currently are tenured. A 32 point difference in the tenure rate at the rank of Assistant Professor that favored male faculty in 1998 (86% v 54%) is significantly reduced, and now nearly equivalent (45.8% female v. 43.4% male). The rank of Full Professor with tenure remains over-represented by males, though also lessened (2.9:1 from 4.4:1).

The proportion of female to male faculty has improved to 40% (2004) from 33% (1998). Women hold 33 key administrative and leadership positions in the university. The individuals and the positions they hold are presented in the table below (See Table 4.4: University Leadership Positions – Women – 2007).
### Position - Academic Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Hatfield, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Interim Provost and Vice-President of Academic Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donna Mitchell, Ph.D., RN, CNS</td>
<td>Administrator of Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phyllis McQueen, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Head of Teacher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vicki Crabtree, M.Ed.</td>
<td>Chair, School of Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen, Molohan, M.A.</td>
<td>Chair, School of Humanities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy Boggs, M.Ed.</td>
<td>Director, Radiologic Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephanie Saunders</td>
<td>Director, Diagnostic Medical Sonography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura Lee, BS</td>
<td>Clinical Coordinator, Diagnostic Medical Sonography</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Position - Administrative Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Luanne Bowman, MBA</td>
<td>Vice President for Financial and Administrative Affairs (RGCC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beverly Crabtree, B.A.</td>
<td>Vice President for Institutional Advancement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaine Armstrong, BSW, M.Ed.</td>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patsy Fields, M.S.</td>
<td>Women's Volleyball Coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joyce Manuel-Wolfe, Ed.D</td>
<td>Director of Jenkins Center for Student Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phyllis Mason, MBA, SPHR</td>
<td>Director of Human Resources, AA Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gina Pines, M.A.</td>
<td>Director of Meigs Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Haft, B.S.</td>
<td>Director of Alumni Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dot Neutzling, BSN</td>
<td>Director of Health Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Rogers, BS</td>
<td>Director of RSVP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krystal Wilson, B.S.</td>
<td>Director of Housing and Student Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong N. Yang, A.S, B.S.</td>
<td>Director of Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean Ann Vance</td>
<td>Publications Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Alderman</td>
<td>Associate Director of Financial Aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tammy McCain</td>
<td>Associate Director of Admissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debra Browning, M.A.</td>
<td>Assistant Registrar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeanne Jones Jindra, M.Ed</td>
<td>Assistant Director, Madog Center for Welsh Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Dyer, B.S.</td>
<td>Assistant Director of Financial Aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephanie Marks</td>
<td>Assistant Director of Admissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alicia Martin</td>
<td>Assistant Director of Admissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel King</td>
<td>Assistant Bookstore Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monna Phillips</td>
<td>Desktop Support Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol Smith, M.A.</td>
<td>SIFE Project Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca Long, B.S.</td>
<td>Community College District Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cher Bellar</td>
<td>Volunteer Center Coordinator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4R2 Results of Valuing People Processes

Focus group information collected from the AQIP Conversation Day and the more recent SWOT analysis process provided generally positive feedback but also established the need to collect information in a more systematic method.

### 4R3 Evidence of Employee Productivity

Training plans, department goals and objectives as well as individual goals and objectives for all classifications of employees are submitted and reviewed annually. Progress toward goal completion is reviewed periodically by the employee, their supervisor, and the President’s Council.
On a larger scale, the University is generally challenged to do more with less and faculty, staff, and administrators are more reasonable when initiatives and retractions are accompanied by a rationale and fairness. Among eight Schools and 93 full-time faculty, overload assignment has averaged 41.5 FTE faculty (2002-2006). Administrators and support staff are likely to accept additional duties in the interest of good “customer service”.

4R4 Comparison of Results

Surveys to determine comparable pay and workloads for faculty, staff, and administrators have been done in the past, but not recently. The faculty profile at Rio prioritizes teaching and service; research activities are applauded, but not required. The job market and compensation package is considered to be competitive enough to support low employee turnover.

Improvements

4I1 Improving Processes and Systems for Valuing People

Areas being investigated for improvement include expanding efforts to recruit minorities through increased national searches in specific minority publications and the development of a five-year plan to address the projected large number of retirements.

4I2 Setting Improvement Targets for Valuing People

Targeted improvement priorities include:

1. Tabulate/publish/archive faculty development accomplishments.
2. Create a forum for faculty development accountability.
3. Develop incentive programs.
4. Use campus technology to develop and improve staff recognition/communication.

Category #5: Leading and Communicating

The operation of the University has persisted through a seventeen-month period of interim leadership. Establishing benchmarks, implementing a strategic plan, and measuring leadership
and communication effectiveness are now the tasks of the University and Community College Boards.

**Context**

**5C1 Leadership and Communication Systems**

URG is governed by a Board of Trustees, which makes general policies for the private university. The Community College has its own Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees of the University consists of informed people who understand their responsibilities, function in accordance with stated policies, and have the resolve necessary to preserve the institution’s integrity. The Board of Trustees of the Community College is appointed by the Commissioners of the district’s four counties of Gallia, Jackson, Meigs and Vinton and the State of Ohio.

The URG President reports directly to the University Board of Trustees. Until recently (January, 2006), the University President also served as President of the Community College (RGCC). Efforts by both Boards to rewrite a presidential job description for one person to serve as president of both the University and Community College have been suspended due to recent reinterpretations of state law requiring a separation of private and public governance. Separate interim-presidents have been appointed by both Boards. (See: 9C1).

The URG President is supported by four Vice-Presidents:

- Provost and VP for Academic Affairs
- VP for Administrative and Student Services
- VP for Institutional Advancement
- VP for Finance and Information Technology.

The University’s reorganization in 1997 created two Colleges, each with four schools.

*College of Liberal Arts and Sciences*
- Holzer School of Nursing
- School of Humanities
- School of Sciences
- School of Social Sciences

*College of Professional Studies*
- Evans School of Business
- Bunce School of Education
- School of Fine Arts
- School of Technology
- and the Graduate Program

Each College has a Dean who is a non-faculty administrator. A faculty member is elected as chair by the members of each school. Faculty are independently organized as a Faculty Association which negotiates a contract for salary, tenure, and evaluation. On the academic side, supervisory responsibilities begin at the Dean’s level.

Leadership systems include direct supervisory relationships between the President and his direct reports, between Deans and School Chairs, and directors and the employees they supervise. Coordination and communication among these vertical systems (see Organizational Chart) is provided for through regularly convened meetings of the President’s Cabinet, and Provost and Deans meetings. In addition, University initiatives, news, and values are communicated through college and departmental meetings.

Standing committees are composed of both University administrators and representatives of various University constituencies. For decision-making recommendations, the University seeks
input from eight standing committees: Academic Affairs, Athletic Council, Building & Grounds, Finance & Business, Human Resources, Institutional Advancement Development, Student Development, and University Relations. Other committees with assigned faculty input include: Assessment, Edwin A. Jones Award, Faculty Development, Honors Program Advisory Council, Portfolio Review, PSO Advisors, Research Resources, Student Success Faculty Advisory, and Transfer Credit Appeals.

Inter-divisional communication and leadership operate through a variety of structures and processes. These include, but are not limited to: Various meetings by different units are a formal part of the governance structure, in addition to standing committees of the University; focused task forces of longer or shorter duration (including AQIP Action Project teams); print and electronic media; and recurring University gatherings and events. These bodies thus serve both to increase the information and perspectives available to the administration, often through formal governance recommendations about major University initiatives, and to facilitate University-wide communication, awareness, and investment in high-priority activities.

The AQIP Steering Committee serves as an advisory and monitoring body with a representation of key administrative areas (administrative, student services, and finance), faculty, and the AQIP Systems Portfolio coordinators. This committee meets on a monthly basis, hearing progress of the AQIP Systems Portfolio completion process and other continuous quality improvement activities, making suggestions, and providing general direction for institutional AQIP initiatives.

Communication occurs through various channels and contributes to both announcement and discussion. Topical interest is promoted by standing committees of University, Presidential Forums on significant issues, Faculty Association meetings, listserv email postings, website postings, faculty/staff intranet, and certain meetings of the Boards.

The President’s weekly radio program provides updates on University activities, educational initiatives, new class times, online learning opportunities and generally provides opportunities for staff members to showcase URG. Numerous community activities are held on campus and provide opportunities to demonstrate the University’s commitment to the life cycle of the region and the life-long learning process.

5C2 Aligning our Leadership System

In addition to the communication that takes place through reporting lines, each level of leadership has responsible individuals who oversee assigned activities in the responsible areas, for instance, the Deans, School Chairs, and directors for various campus units/offices.

5C3 Institutional Values and Expectations

The University promotes high standards of ethical behavior on the part of faculty, staff, and students who belong to a community of higher learning. These standards apply equally to the teaching and learning process and to interpersonal relationships in all parts of the university community.

Through its policies and procedures, the University expresses its values and expectations on subjects like acceptable student and employee conduct, drug abuse, smoking, possession of firearms, privacy and “right-to-know” issues, workplace violence, academic standards, protection of human subjects, intellectual property protections, appropriate conferring of University honors, and appropriate display of artwork. The University strives to carry out both the letter and the spirit of federal and state laws concerning affirmative action, non-discrimination, equal opportunity, and the rights of the disabled. The Student Code of Conduct also places emphasis on integrity and ethical behavior.
Processes

5P1 Setting Directions

Annual planning at each level serves as the primary method for information collection of needs from different areas. Budgets for university operations are determined by reviewing budget allocation for the current year and projected needs for the coming year. Budget requests are submitted to each responsible level of individuals (for instance, the Provost being the individual receiving all budgetary requests for academic areas). The President requires submission of priorities from each Vice President for his/her responsible areas. Such priorities are communicated at campus-wide meetings such as the Faculty meeting at the beginning of each term.

5P2 Seeking Future Opportunities and Building and Sustaining a Learning Environment

University leaders identify new opportunities for enriching the learning environment by seeking additional collaborative activities with other institutions. Currently, such collaborative academic programs are in place with several Ohio colleges in providing various academic programs or courses, providing educational opportunities for students enrolled in those programs, but also generating additional opportunities for the institution.

Another direction that the institution has been investing is distance education. With a strong technological infrastructure in place (see descriptions in 6C2), the institution has been offering a number of courses in web-based, web-enhanced, and hybrid formats since 1998. Offering online courses has created a learning environment that meets the needs to those students who have various reasons that prevent them from taking regularly scheduled face-to-face classes. It also becomes an impetus for creating faculty development opportunities in learning how to integrate technology as a useful tool in teaching and helping students learn. With a Title III grant, a number of such faculty development projects were created, and implemented, having enabled a number of faculty to explore the possibility to incorporate technology in their instruction. A survey from Title III reports that a very high percentage of faculty who participated under the Title III initiated faculty development projects continued to use what they had developed from those Title III projects in their classroom teaching.

5P3 Decision-Making

Ultimate decision-making authority at the University is delegated from key administrators (the Provost, the Vice Presidents) after inputs are collected from various university committees. Authority to make operational decisions within divisions or Schools is delegated to the School Chairs. University’s leaders seek to maintain coordination and a good flow of information by getting reports and feedback from regularly scheduled meetings within each responsible area.

5P4 Using Information in Decision-Making

The types of information on which leaders base decisions vary across divisions and tasks. Selective examples of the types of data available for diverse kinds of decisions include:

1. The Academic Program Review Process
2. Program development
3. Program suspension
4. Results of academic achievement assessment
5. Student Retention
6. Information Technology Services
7. Online Learning
8. Facilities Use
9. Student Learning: services to support student learning
10. Employee Satisfaction
11. Student satisfaction

5P5 Communication Among Institutional Levels

Internal communication processes include the Online Calendar and the intranet as well as the University’s website, newsletters, memos, and meetings.

5P6 Communicating Expectations

University leaders consistently articulate to the University community and to regional and state opinion leaders and elected officials that the University is dedicated to serving the post-secondary educational needs of residents of the four-county areas by delivering accessible, high-quality learning programs, and services.

In addition to statements by University leaders, the institution’s goals, values and expectations are prominent in several public documents. The University website, intranet and email system is a good representation of the University’s efforts toward transparency. To the extent that links are outdated or incomplete, it is a live document of efforts to publish, respond, and continuously renew a vibrant educational community.

News articles, internal newsletters, relevant documents, conversations at faculty/staff meetings, and minutes of Committee meetings persist as processes that mark the social contract of carrying the business of the University.

5P7 Encouraging Leadership

An important expression of leadership is reflected in the degree of dialogue fostered in the campus community so that the University’s direction and investments can be influenced. At times, School Chairs were sent to leadership training workshops to foster leadership development.

5P8 Leadership Succession

The most recent President was hired following a search and served for 12 years as the President of both the University and Community College. Since his departure in January, 2006, the University has relied on interim-appointments in the highest level of administration, i.e. Interim-President, Interim-Provost and Interim-Dean, and now for its first time in history, Rio Grande Community College has an Interim-President (See 5C1). New state administrative rulings have reinterpreted the arrangement between the private university and public community college to require some areas of separation. The current Presidential Search has been suspended until the very important relationship between the University and Community College is reconciled.

5P9 Measures of Leading and Communicating

The performance of administrators is evaluated through annually scheduled performance evaluation, and results are analyzed by individuals’ supervisors. Faculty evaluate their respective dean using a formal instrument. Through the recent SWOT analysis, completed for the Strategic Planning process, the University accepts the need to develop a more formal process for using leadership and communication measures (See Figure 5.1: Rio SWOT Planning and Strategy Model Goals). Future AQIP Action projects will consider including this as a priority.
5.1 Rio SWOT Planning and Strategy Model

Results

5R1 Results for Leading and Communicating

The University has relied on focus group techniques for identifying operational strengths and challenges. The recent two-day SWOT analysis in November, 2006 produced results similar to the AQIP Campus Conversation event in 2003. After 33 years of uninterrupted University/Community College partnership, an impasse persists in the contractual relationship between the two educational entities. The leadership and communication issues embedded in this tension also reveal the symbiotic nature of the relationship. The higher education opportunities made available to this region evolved and persist only by recognizing the commonality of mission and vision.

5R2 Results Comparisons

The success of the University/Community College partnership for 33 years has produced a legacy that is now local. Having long identified the relationship as “America’s Unique Institution”, the University and Community College must now respond to even bigger challenges related to higher education enrollment competition, new state and federal funding formulas, consumer accountability, and hybrid technology. Building a model for comparison will focus on value-added measures.
**Improvements**

**5I1 Improvement of Current Processes and Systems – and - 5I2 Targets, Improvement Priorities, Communications**

Developing an effective measurement system to evaluate the effectiveness of the Institution’s operations and processes will be of high priority and integrated in the Strategic Plan and future AQIP Action projects.

Some of the principles emphasized in current and pending initiatives are:

1. Support a culture of solution-focused decision-making based on analyzed data.
2. Require and create protocols for documenting decision-making, especially mid-level minutes, quarterly reports.
3. Grow the website to serve current and useable information that complements social interaction.
4. Trust the transparent story of *Rio Grande*.
Category #6: Supporting Institutional Operations

The student and administrative support services on campus play an important and active role in providing support for students, employees, and the mission of the institution. Increasing competition in the higher education market will require that the University capitalize on this team history to develop a responsive assessment process that promotes efficiency and effectiveness.

Context

6C1 Key Support Service Processes

The University of Rio Grande’s processes are shaped by the mission and characteristics of the University and its student population, from entry support services, such as recruitment, admissions and orientation, through student development services such as proficiency and placement testing, advising, student employment and student life, on to graduation and lifelong learning through connections with alumni associations and continuing professional education. A range of key support services (See Table 6.1: Student Services) contribute an effective service model. A Student Handbook is available in paper copy and/or online.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT SERVICES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Services Office</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Coordinates physician care, immunizations and referral to other health providers, assists with insurance claims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Provides health and fitness screenings and information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Conducts health workshops to students in residence halls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Schedules physicians and mental health counselors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Assists students, faculty, and staff with health-related issues or training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Surveys students to determine needs and services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accessibility/Special Needs</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Implements Federal Americans with Disabilities Act for students presenting an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and requesting an accommodation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Makes referrals for resources as necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Liaison, advocate, and broker from student to faculty for course and testing requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Pursues grants to purchase equipment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Services Office</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Dean of Students meets with every student organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Regularly meets with the Student Senate, the Student Development Committee, Housing Director, and Residence Hall Directors to determine student needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Satisfaction surveys for residence halls and food services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>–Work with the Student Senate President who is the student representative to the faculty and the Board of Trustees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Activities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Student Planning Board meets weekly and plans schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Surveys students re: concerns, activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Student Activities Director works closely with Health Services to provide some activities that are alcohol free events. Special funding for alcohol free events is provided through an annual state grant of $25,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jenkins Student Support Center</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Comprehensive support to First Year students enrolled in LA101 Student Success, ie. study skills and time management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Targeted support for first generation, nontraditional, and displaced worker college students and developmental courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Coordinates Tutor certification (since 2004) program and schedules both general and discipline-specific assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Assists CARS with orientation testing and advising and administers COMPASS exit test for writing and reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-General support for paper editing, test preparation, note scribes, computer assistance and study skills development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CARS (Career Advising Resource Services)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Orientation testing and advising.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Vocational inventory career advising.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Brokers job opportunities and post-graduate placement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6C2 Support Service Reinforcement of other Processes

Administrative services support student learning by providing safe, well-maintained, technology-rich facilities where student learning takes place. The Human Resources function supports faculty and staff in recruiting and preparing well-qualified individuals to serve in various support positions. In addition, the HR office provides other services for all employees (full-time and part-time) and students through established processes in maintaining all personnel information, all inactive personnel files, and all information on pension plans (DB, DC), all payroll files (including information on payrolls transmitted for each company, taxes paid, wage garnishments). To further assure security of such information, HR scans all employment files into the computer each day that there is activity in the file. This information still remains in paper form in the file until the person terminates. The scanned files are backed up on a server. When the person terminates, the file information is verified, final termination paperwork (retirement paperwork, insurance, etc.) is scanned into the file. The paper file is kept for one year (until after the pension audit), it is then shredded. Since it is backed up on the server it is instantly available when needed, secured, and safe from fire or other damage.

Payroll records are backed up daily on the ADP payroll package by HR and by Campus Computing and Networking. CDs are made of payroll reports for each of the three payroll companies after each payroll also. W-2 forms are received on CD from ADP and these are retained in the HR office.

Administrative services provide a sound fiscal infrastructure that supports the operations of the University. The University operates within its financial resources, and maintains appropriate reserve levels as required by the Board of Trustees. Fund balances in excess of that required reserve are retained and invested in carefully selected projects that will further the University's mission and goals.

Information technology has increasingly enhanced communication across systems. With the current technology infrastructure described in 7P6, students and faculty can use their portals, email and other technology tools for enhanced communication and learning opportunities. Currently, the institution uses the course management system of WebCT (both WebCT 4 and WebCT 6 until April 2007 when WebCT4 ceased to continue because of the discontinuance of tech support from WebCT/Blackboard) as the online learning platform for web-based course delivery as well as other types of web-enhanced course deliveries (such as web-enhanced, and hybrid courses). Each academic year, such web-supported courses are offered for those students who need the flexibility in completing courses needed for their programs, and a WebCT support staff provides technical support for faculty and students in those web-supported courses.
Processes

6P1 Identifying Support Service Needs

As described under Categories 1 (Helping Students Learn) and 3 (Understanding Students’ and other Stakeholders’ needs), information concerning learner support service needs is available from a variety of sources.

- Student direct feedback to instructors on SIR each term.
- Student participation on various governance committees.
- Periodic meetings of University leadership with Student Senate.
- Increasing use of web-based online surveys and student portal polling, sponsored by various units.
- Proficiency and placement test results.

Most services rely on several methods of data gathering to provide a rich supply of information for goal-setting and improvement processes. Much of the data continues to be generated at the department or unit level.

6P2 Identifying Administrative Support Service Needs – and - 6P3 Managing and Documenting Support Service Processes

There is a continuing effort at the University to reallocate resources for instruction and student services that meet acceptable standards as economically and efficiently as possible. Key student support and administrative processes are managed by the Dean for Student Affairs, the Vice President for Administration, and Vice President for Finance. Formal and informal communication and coordination among the vice presidents occurs in many venues, including the President’s Cabinet. The University monitors the needs of faculty, staff, and administrators through regularly scheduled Deans and School Chair meetings, Directors meeting with the Provost, School meetings, Administrative Council meetings, University Committee meetings, and Campus Wide hearings.

6P4 Using Information and Results to Improve Services

The Office of Student Services conducts student satisfaction surveys in the residence halls, surveys in the Student Activities/Planning Board area, provides opportunities for students to express their satisfaction or their displeasure to the Dean of Students through direct contact, email, or phone at any time, maintains weekly contact with the Student Senate to obtain information from students regarding their satisfaction with campus life and living issues, and represent issues of students at the President’s Council meetings held every two weeks at the University President’s office.

6P5 Measures of Support Service Processes

Residence hall and commuter student surveys are utilized by Student Service Division staff. Information is shared by students at the weekly Student Senate meetings and the monthly Student Development meetings. The surveys of the Student Planning Board help to determine the services to be provided to students. Student Services forwards requests to the Vice President of Administration and Student Services when determining what actual services and the funds needed to provide the services. Student Services Division works closely with the Special Needs Office and with the faculty to address student behavioral or social issues. Regular meetings are held with the Housing Director and the residence hall directors to address residence hall issues. Dining hall satisfaction surveys are conducted by cafeteria personnel. Food services committee meetings are conducted once a month to address student satisfaction with campus dining.
Results

6R1 Learner Support Service Process Results

A position of Online Coordinator was created in response to the growing number of students taking web-based courses. This individual serves as a contact for students who express interest in taking online courses, directs them to appropriate resources so they can determine if online courses are appropriate for them, and to assess the requirements of online courses. Help is also provided with registration for online courses and communication with respective instructors for those online courses.

6R2 Administrative Support Service Process Results

In the Facilities area there are a number of specific recent improvements.

- **Building renovations** have taken place to improve classrooms in Wood Hall (that houses the School of Social Sciences, the School of Humanities, both of which provide a large portion of the institution’s General Education Program courses), the Kidd Math & Science Hall (where the School of Sciences is located and provides a considerable number of the General Education Program courses), and Anniversary Hall (that houses the School of Education).
- **Laptops on carts** have been installed in many of the classrooms in those buildings, providing a better Internet connectivity for classroom teaching purposes.
- **Wireless hot spots** have been provided in several areas on campus, enabling students to use their wireless laptops on campus.
- **Two Smart-Classrooms** (enhanced computer classrooms) have been added and maintained in both Wood Hall and the Jenkins Center, providing state-of-the-art technology equipment for teaching.
- **The current University Center** (which provides meeting facilities and food services for students) is being expanded and will provide more space for campus and community events.
- **Renovation of the Lyne Center swimming pool** (the only Olympic size swimming facility in the area), enables the institution to offer swimming classes, life guard training, and other community recreational benefits.

6R3 Comparison of Results

See 3R5.

Improvements

6I1 Improving Processes

As an AQIP institution, the University is moving toward a more systematic process of planning for improvement. Assessing current online learning courses will help to develop a more coherent system of scheduling and marketing. Identifying best practices for faculty teaching online will promote the development of meaningful faculty evaluation in this area. Assessing General Education course enrollment trends will help with classroom scheduling and resource management. Regular customer satisfaction survey and study will guide decision-making.

6I2 Setting Targets for Improvement

A shift toward commuter enrollment has left the University with underutilized residence hall space. Increasing the resident population is an outcome that can only result from out-of-district recruitment. A new enrollment strategy is based on a principle of assertive relationship building.
within the communities of URG’s diversified markets, (Community College associate degree programs, baccalaureate professional degrees, and Graduate School teacher education and business MBA). Concurrently, the Institution hopes to serve the four-county community college district, the larger region, and international projects in China, India, and Wales.
Category #7: Measuring Effectiveness

The University collects and maintains data and information from a multitude of sources to sustain daily operations. Trend analysis is generally demographic and reactive. The institution does perceive AQIP as an opportunity to develop a culture of assessment and data-based decision making.

**Context**

7C1 Collecting, Storing, and Accessing Data

The primary repository for various institutional information and data is the Management Information Systems (MIS) Office. A longitudinal enrollment data base is maintained by MIS on its internal website. Specific data requests are available to project groups on campus. Other offices, such as the Finance Office, Financial Aid Office, Records, Human Resources, Academic Affairs, and other administrative and support offices collect mission-specific information. The MIS Office provides data upon request from different groups of people on campus. Some longitudinal data is also available on the MIS internal website. The current AS400 server and Jenzabar software system will be replaced in academic year 2007-2008 by Student Space.

7C2 Key Institutional Effectiveness Measures

Key institutional effectiveness measures are designed to validate the strategic plan. Identifying possible variables to monitor the achievement of the Strategic Plan will progress toward goal achievement (See Table 7.1: URG Strategic Planning).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>URG Strategic Planning</th>
<th>MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>STRATEGIC PLAN</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Programs</td>
<td>Benchmarks for student placement and testing</td>
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<td>Student performance</td>
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<td>Student progress</td>
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<td>Program quality</td>
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<td>Course outcomes/student learning outcomes</td>
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<td>Retention rates</td>
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<td>Graduation rates</td>
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<td>State board pass rates</td>
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<td>Advisory board activity</td>
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<td>Program quality</td>
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<td>Instructional quality</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Program viability variables</td>
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<td>Institutional Advancement</td>
<td>Level of contributors</td>
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<td>Fundraising targets</td>
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<td>Alumni Center and Chapel projects</td>
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<td>Residential Living and Campus Life</td>
<td>Residence hall occupancy rate</td>
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<td>Activity Schedule</td>
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<td>Student satisfaction with college services</td>
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<td>Participation and engagement</td>
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<td>Technology Support Systems</td>
<td>Use levels and patterns</td>
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<td>User satisfaction</td>
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<td>Training schedule</td>
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<td>Accessibility</td>
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<td>Communication and Marketing</td>
<td>Yearly cost comparison with Ohio regional institutions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Institutional climate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Processes

7P1 Selecting, Managing, and Using Information and Data

For academic area needs, individuals from specific academic programs, departments, or Schools make requests to the MIS Office for select data. This information is analyzed by those individuals for their specific purposes, for instance, enrollment in remedial courses to determine staffing needs, scheduling needs, and classroom space allocation. Analyzing course enrollment patterns by students in the General Education Program is an example of collecting information and analysis of this information is part of the assessment for the effectiveness of the General Education Program. The process of information collection, analysis, and utilization will be part of the planning and assessment processes for each academic program to assure student learning. The Institution has also implemented changes in processes where data and its analysis will be part of the required supportive information in proposing new programs, new courses, and/or making changes in academic programs.

Category 1: Academic departments have been challenged to demonstrate the importance of developing student learning outcomes for academic programs and departmental plans through the collection and analysis of student learning products. Currently, student learning outcomes are developed by discipline area faculty through indicators commonly recognized within the discipline, and with some consideration of the University's mission. To increase the engagement of faculty and staff in AQIP Action Projects, the University has required all faculty to identify how to more effectively align their teaching with student learning by participating in a course assessment mini-project each term. Another project analyzed course syllabi in all General Education Program courses to determine if required General Education Program goals were articulated as part of the course objectives, and to examine how teaching activities were aligned with course objectives. The results revealed the need to strengthen the linkage between course objectives and teaching activities. Subcommittees of faculty teaching in the General Education sequence were formed to review and develop alignment strategies.

Category 8: The selection of performance measures is constrained by several factors: adequate knowledge of appropriate assessment instruments to measure achievement, knowledge of how to embed such measurement into the teaching process, and logistical considerations. Currently used measurements include placement testing (required of all incoming students) with COMPASS, senior assessment (required of all graduating seniors), rotating a number of select General Education Goals each year (or every two years; for instance, the senior assessment for the current academic year is on writing, and for the past two years was for technological competence), program specific measurement (various programs have specific required
assessment, for instance, the use of the Major Field Tests by the School of Business, and by several other academic programs, such as computer science, math, psychology, English).

7P2 Determining and Meeting Data Needs

Deans and School Chairs meetings with the Provost provide an opportunity where specific data is required in making decisions, such as scheduling classes or setting unit-level budgets. Relevant data is obtained from the MIS Office, analyzed, and interpreted by those who requested the information. Some regular and intermittent reports are published on the Campus Intranet. Announcing trends that are being monitored or setting benchmarks for review helps the University community understand how the daily operation of the institution contributes to the mission or represents a challenge to resources.

7P3 Comparative Information and Data

For various elements of data analysis, the University has used comparison data from The Education Trust (http://www2.edtrust.org/edtrust) and the National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Statistics (IPEDS) (www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds).

7P4 Analyzing Performance Data –and-
7P5 Alignment of Information Analysis with Institutional Goals

The Office of Academic Affairs, MIS, and the Office of Institutional Advancement are central points of contact for summative information. Individual academic programs responding to specialized accrediting agencies (i.e., Education for NCATE, Nursing for NLNAC, Social Work for CSWE) produce and share “best practice” models for assessment. MIS compiles required enrollment, attendance, finance, and grade reports. The Office of Institutional Advancement maintains a cumulative report of the University’s resources and needs to facilitate grant applications, funding reports, and donor interest.

7P6 Ensuring Effectiveness of Information Systems

The Institution maintains modern and accessible technology throughout campus. Rio Grande is connected to the Internet via a gigabit fiber “Last Mile” connection to Ohio’s Third Frontier Network and is an active member/participant in OhioLINK. Responsible staff are active and regular members of OSTEER, OARtech, and OhioLINK’s governing and technical committees. All Rio Grande students, faculty, staff, and guests are provided a RioNET account for authenticated access to network resources. E-mail accounts and Network File Storage (with quotas) is provided to all RioNET users. Internet publishing spaces (websites) are provided to all faculty & staff and to students enrolled in coursework.

Public access and instructional-use computers are readily available in the Davis Library and in 30+ labs or instructional work-areas. Easy access to computing facilities is maintained with a low 1:3 (computer to student) ratio.

All major computer labs are configured with instructional stations with large screen data projection systems. The campus has 10 fully-equipped Instructional “Smart” Podiums with computer projection, DVD/VCR, and amplified audio. Portable laptop carts with projectors and amplified audio are positioned in each building to be used as needed by faculty in classrooms without permanent podiums. Two mobile wireless laptop carts also provide Internet access and instructional applications in a flexible delivery mode. Operating systems for desktops are Windows XP, Macintosh OSX, and LINUX and the campus maintains an annual licensing for Microsoft Office in the most current and recent past versions. Campus-wide (managed) antivirus software is licensed and installed on desktops, servers, and gateways. Resident Halls provide a 10/100 “Port per Pillow” ratio for residents.
A Pearson Vue Testing Center is operated out of the Rhodes Center CARS Office. Tutoring and assistance is available during school and extended hours from the Jenkins Center for Student Success. Wired and wireless access to RioNET is available in both "Public" and "Secure" Access modes. Port-level network access and bandwidth management are maintained through the use of firewalls and "packet shaping" systems.

A full-time staff of 5 persons supports the network and computing operations including security, system administration, desktop and lab support, and helpdesk. Operating Systems are updated and patched on a regular basis plus baseline security audits are performed and reviewed regularly. Student-level technical services are provided through a Student to Student Help Desk - including assistance to the Residential and Commuter Community. Management Information Systems supports Administrative & Student Information Systems.

The Instructional Media and Design Services provide audio and video services in addition to instructional design and website services. Four H.323 videoconferencing classrooms are located on the Rio Grande Campus and at the Meigs Center. One DAS- connected videoconferencing suite is available for sessions utilizing legacy (non-Internet) video connections.

A full complement of services is provided including BLOGS, Forums, streaming media services, and "Course Management/Learning Management" software in support of Distance Learning and instruction.

Practically every computer system on campus is network-connected - local and networked printing is available throughout campus. The campus "Print Shop" provides networked high speed black & white and color printing /binding services.

All academic departments and most administrative offices have a networked copier with scan/store document capability. A campus-wide document imaging system is widely utilized for paper-less document storage and retrieval. Every faculty & staff person has a network connected system with all the above mentioned software and printing capability.

7P7 Measuring Effectiveness of URG's Measurement System

Participation in AQIP has emphasized the need to assess the effectiveness of the measurement processes in a more systematic, comprehensive, and integrated manner. The current broad measures of effectiveness are based on enrollment, retention and graduation rates, and budget management. The Strategic Plan intends to develop an accountability process that makes data analysis more transparent.

Results

7R1 Measuring Effectiveness Results
7R2 Comparison of Results

The University and Community College cooperate as a viable and responsive educational institution. To the extent that higher education has become a market industry, the Strategic Plan attempts to embed a principle of proactive planning. The next round of action projects will facilitate a goal attainment analysis that will foster a process of modification to adjust to market changes.

Improvements

7I1 Improving Processes and Systems

The Systems Portfolio process charts the need for a more formal and systematic accountability system to support University improvement efforts for the long term. The process of developing the institution’s Strategic Plan provides a common platform for the campus to become more
engaged in understanding the importance of continuous improvement and accountability. It is expected that the Strategic Plan will provide the general impetus with a clearly articulated expectation of continuous improvement for the whole campus.

712 Setting Targets and Communicating Results

Trend data is not evenly available across campus. Baseline data and targets will be set for each area of operations on campus as part of the institution’s Strategic Plan and the implementation of all the developed plans and actions will be measured.
Category #8: Planning Continuous Improvement

The development of a strategic plan has started and the plan’s implementation process will be the next major step in the process. The areas already identified in the plan will greatly enhance the institution’s efforts as an AQIP institution to further its goal of continuous improvement and its mission to support student learning.

Context

8C1 Institutional Vision

The mission of the University provides a sense of the inspiration of Rio Grande. With some 140 degree and certificate programs, the educational experience at the University “provides opportunities to develop a balance of intellectual, aesthetic, social, and physical qualities that characterize the total human experience, and challenges students’ thinking and abilities.” The future will reveal how the University’s commitment to higher education access through responsive program design and workforce development is realized for the learned and technologically proficient graduate in a socially and culturally diverse world.

8C2 Short & Long-term Strategies

During a recent campus-wide strategic planning conversation, faculty and staff members (88% full-time employee participation) along with student representatives, part-time faculty, and some board members were invited to identify strengths and opportunities so that this information would aide Rio in determining where Rio would place its resources and focus its efforts for the next three years and beyond. From this campus-wide conversation, a number of issues were identified in each of the following areas (See Table 8.1: URG Strategic Plan Targets):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University of Rio Grande</th>
<th>Strategic Plan Targets</th>
<th>2006-2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Programs</strong></td>
<td>1. Review all undergraduate academic programs in order to assure that all curriculum meet student and employee needs and that all are fiscally sound.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. To gain designation from HLC as an “online University” in order to offer entire programs online where there are student needs.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional Advancement</strong></td>
<td>1. Successfully complete the “Lighting the Way” Capital Campaign.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. To increase the percentage of alumni giving from 2.4% to 5% by December 31, 2007</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Complete fundraising for Alumni Center.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Raise additional funds for construction and furnishing of a Chapel.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Provide recognition for donors to the “Lighting the Way” campaign.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residential Living and Campus Life</strong></td>
<td>1. Increase the number of residential students and improve the quality of campus life at the University of Rio Grande.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communications and Marketing</strong></td>
<td>1. Improve both internal and external communications so that all employees, students, and the public are more knowledgeable about Rio Grande operations and accomplishments.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Create an integrated marketing plan including establishing a Rio Grande brand so that the institution can be better promoted and support the two key areas of admissions and advancement.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Technology Support Systems</strong></td>
<td>1. Expand services of RioNET and ResNET to exceed the increasing demands of the campus community.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Develop a Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) budget model for campus technologies.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Improve End-User support and training functions.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Improve coordination and use of emerging technologies across all campus departments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enrollment Management Plan</td>
<td>1. Develop a new system of recruiting and retaining students with an emphasis on residential students and distribute scholarships to more students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial and Budget System</td>
<td>2. Create a balanced budget with sufficient cash flow to satisfy all billings on a monthly basis.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Financial Aid | 1. Package financial aid for the benefit of the student and the University.  
2. Process financial aid more efficiently. |
| Accounting and Financial Management | 1. Develop an overall financial reporting process.  
2. Improve the budget process.  
3. Create a balanced budget. |

### Processes

#### 8P1 Planning Process

Repeating the AQIP Campus Conversation Day format, Rio Grande organized two campus-wide conversations during the Fall semester 2006, where all full-time employees (faculty and staff members) were invited to a campus environmental scan process. A total of 196 people participated. The information collected was reconciled and a Strategic Planning Committee, consisting of faculty, administrators, and staff members, met and discussed the outcomes. Several work areas were identified and targeted committees began to develop strategic plans and activities to provide feedback to a University-wide Strategic Plan.

#### 8P2 How Strategies are Selected

Individual responses from the campus-wide conversations were collected and a Strategic Planning Committee organized the responses into categories, using this information as feedback for the institution’s strategic planning process. A number of short- and long-term strategies have been considered and finalized. These strategies are summarized in 8C2.

#### 8P3 How Action Plans Are Developed

Following URG’s Campus Conversation Days in November 2003, a team of administrators and faculty attended a Strategy forum in Chicago in February, 2004. Returning to campus they initiated a series of campus meetings in April that resulted in the submission of a set of four Action Projects (See Figure 8.1: Initial Action Project Model).

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![Figure 8.1: Initial Action Project Model](image)

**Ideas + Communication + Leadership = Success**
The final analysis of the campus-wide conversations contributed to the process of identifying projects and initiatives as the basic content for Rio Grande’s next round of AQIP Action Projects. Meanwhile, coursework mini-assessment projects on student learning have been implemented as part of the process of cultivating a culture of assessment and promoting continuous improvement. Mini-assessment projects are faculty designed, and faculty-led. All faculty were required to identify a learning process in one course each term that they would isolate for assessment. In most cases the development of a scoring rubric was used to promote the interaction of teacher and student in the assessment of learning on the targeted task. (Other strategies were also acceptable, i.e. pre- and post- testing, portfolio reviews, etc.). A project template was provided for faculty to use, and the project was designed to be completed within each semester. (See: (See Figure 8.2: Fall Mini-Project Participation College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Figure 8.3: Fall Mini-Project Participation College of Professional Studies). Full-time faculty participation during the Fall 2006 term was 77% and Spring 2007 results are pending. The University considers this an embedded strategy to demonstrate assessment culture development and will use the coursework mini-project model as an ongoing strategy to monitor student learning at the course level.

The participation by faculty has been a developmental process in that, as the collection of expected outcomes and areas of concern have been observed, discussions developed on how improvement could be sustained.

8P4 Coordinating and Aligning Planning Process

Administrators at the division and department levels are responsible for ensuring that their individual objectives contribute to the accomplishment of the University Mission. The implementation and completion of the four AQIP Action Projects (See Table 8.2: URG Action Project Summary) developed focused efforts and wide engagement of both faculty and staff members.
**Goal:** This project contends that a quality culture of student learning at Rio Grande has persevered AND can be more fully realized.

**Achievement:**
1. Good effort to engage academics and support staff in project.
2. Student Learning Committee recommendations helped structure the AQIP Assessment Committee.
3. Increased involvement of faculty in structured assessment activities that emphasized evidence collection.
4. Website related workshops and projects contributed to technology expertise of faculty and staff.
5. Systems Portfolio Coordinators actively meeting with administrative staff and faculty to initiate learning and implementation of the assessment process.

**Challenge:**
1. Prove that success in specialized accreditation programs is related to general education content.
2. Critical for University to complete data collection on a valid description/profile of entering students, embedded general education continuum with competency timelines, assessment of the advising program and level of student satisfaction in courses.

3. **Financial process: A.P.I.E.**
   
   Primary Category: Supporting Institutional Operations

**Goal:** To create and implement a financial process to ensure a viable institution.

**Achievement:**
1. Dedication to project for improving institutional operations.
2. Broad-based University-wide participation on an ambitious project.
3. Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) completed Spring 2005 to provide baseline for employee morale (63% return rate).

**Challenge:**
1. Minimal progress toward overall goal.
2. Little progress on monitoring outcome measures and developing performance indicators.

4. **Accountability**
   
   Primary Category: Planning Continuous Improvement

**Goal:** To improve processes for revising and disseminating information about and consistently enforcing current policies and procedures.

**Achievement:**
2. Communication, stakeholder participation and creating a process for faculty evaluation are effective practices.

**Challenge:**
1. Activity generated proposals but implementation recommendations stalled.
2. No response from HLC for assistance request in 2005.
3. Relationship between Faculty Evaluation and Development Committee (FEDC) and AQIP Accountability Action project is unclear.
4. Task forces or working teams may garner authority for the committee.

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**8P5 Select Measures and Set Performance Standards**

Performance measures for institutional strategies will be outlined in the Strategic Plan. At this point, specific measurement for how well each identified strategic plan would be assessed for its outcomes is still in development.

For the faculty developed course mini-assessments, measures are to be used for different purposes. The initial measure for the projects is faculty participation (completion of their projects). Other measures include: presence of content in areas of alignment between articulated learning outcomes and designed learning activities, clarity of rubrics, and analysis of data for expected improvement (gain) in student performance.

A major review of the General Education (GenEd) program reveals the pattern of enrollment in coursework choice in content areas. Assessment subcommittees are currently reviewing eligible
syllabi to prove alignment of GenEd objectives and course objectives. Standardized assessment protocols for multiple sections of GenEd coursework are also in development to assure that core objectives are achieved.

8P6 Resources Matched with Action Plans and Implementation

In the spring of 2005 the new Vice-President of Finance established a new general accounting system and system of accounting for endowments as priorities as part of the objective of creating a “sound financial process” for the University. The endowment accounting system provides regular reconciliations of each endowment, which includes allocating investment earnings to each individual endowment. The accounting system is on target for a spring 2007 completion. In addition to identifying the financial resources needed to implement some of the planned actions, recruiting needed personnel is expected by Fall 2007.

8P7 Employee Capabilities Matched to Strategy

A mentoring program has been developed for new faculty. Developing the leadership abilities of School Chairs has occasionally been accomplished with specialized training. At other times, staff and administrators have attended conferences or workshops on specialty skills, especially computer/technology upgrades.

8P8 Measures for Effectiveness for Planning Continuous Improvement

Transitioning from PEAQ, the University’s decision to apply and embed the principles of AQIP represents the broad plan for continuous improvement. The evolving Strategic Plan will identify appropriate measures for system effectiveness.

Results

8R1 Results for Accomplishment of Strategic and Action Plans

September 29, 2006 marked the end of a five-year Title III grant: Strengthening Institutions Project, the president’s $1.7 million grant through the U.S. Department of Education. Its goal was to improve student success and retention through basic skills curriculum revision, student support services, and faculty and staff development. Academic programs, institutional management, and fiscal stability were also addressed by strategic intervention. Thirty-nine faculty in forty-nine pilot courses completed embedded assessment mini-projects that incorporated technology, collaborative learning, and/or other delivery systems as a means of helping improve student retention and increase student persistence (See Table 8.3: Title III Pilot Course Project Areas). Title III staff facilitated the use of Jenkins Center for Student Success with its Computer Learning Lab and Smart technology to help students become more proficient with technology.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title III Pilot Course Project Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>English, Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>English, Math, History, Psychology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Currently, there are no results yet for the Strategic Plan until its implementation starts.

8R2 Projections for Performance for Strategies and Action Plans –and-
8R3 Compare Projections with Other Institutions

Rio is in the process of identifying a group of benchmarking institutions. Once this is completed, such comparative information will then be collected and analyzed.

8R4 Evidence that Planning Continuous Improvement is Effective

No measures are in place to generate such evidence yet, but the institution will be working on this to develop an appropriate measure system to assess the effectiveness of planning continuing improvement.

Improvements

8I1 How are Continuing Improvement Systems and Processes Improved?

Systems and processes are continually identified for improvement based on Systems Portfolio data submissions and through input and feedback from the following processes/reports.

- AQIP Action Projects;
- Executing plan objectives for improvement;
- Participating in the AQIP process as reaccreditation alternative;
- Adopting individual employee suggestions for process improvement; and
- Strengthening data/evidence-based decision.

8I2 How Targets from Continuing Improvement are Set

During a recent URG Board meeting, the participating members indicated that communication, the need for follow through, and the relationship between the two Boards must be addressed. The Board approved a motion from the Student Affairs Committee that improving the quality of campus life, including residential living be one of the designated initiatives of the new plan.
Category #9: Building Collaborative Relationships

The University (URG) has a firm commitment to build and strengthen a healthy relationship with the public Community College (RGCC) so that this partnership will continue to provide valuable higher education services to the students enrolled.

Context

9C1 Key Collaborative Relationships

1. University of Rio Grande/Rio Grande Community College partnership:

   The Ohio Board of Regents created the Rio Grande Community College District (Southeastern Ohio counties Gallia, Jackson, Meigs and Vinton) in 1972. In 1974, the Ohio Board of Regents further approved a contract for the University of Rio Grande to provide instructional and administrative services for the Community College and was a third party to the contract until 1999. Since the initial contract of 1974, the contract has been renewed every five years until 2005 when it was converted to a biennium contract to align with the state funding process.

   Since 1976, the State of Ohio, through the Community College, has funded six new facilities, added to two existing University facilities, renovated one facility, and jointly supported the University in building two other facilities. Other renovation and instructional equipment funds received from the State of Ohio are appropriately invested in campus projects.

   The Community College Board is authorized to grant associate’s degrees and certificates and cooperates with the University by approving University two-year programs for the purpose of recommending them to the Board of Regents for funding. The University provides two-year Community College instruction in arts and sciences, technical studies, adult education and developmental courses in “an effective manner consistent with the requirements of law and the District’s Community College Plan”. All academic credit is awarded by the University of Rio Grande.

2. Affiliation with Other Educational Institutions:

   a. Hocking College, Nelsonville, OH
   b. Washington State Community College, Marietta, OH
   c. Shawnee State University, Portsmouth, OH
   d. Columbus State Community College, Columbus, OH
   e. Fitton Center, Hamilton OH
   f. Pump House Arts Center, Chillicothe, OH
   g. Southern Ohio Correctional Facility, Lucasville, OH
   h. Chillicothe Correctional Institute – Chillicothe, OH
   i. Corrections Training Academy – London, OH
   j. Various Secondary School in Southern Ohio
   k. China, Baoji University
   l. India, TASMAC
   m. Wales, Trinity College
   n. Mexico,

In addition to those programs created to meet the increasing needs from the local community, the University of Rio Grande and Rio Grande Community College also provides educational opportunities for a wider range of constituents: K-12 teachers who are required to maintain their teaching license through various means. The Graduate Program has played a proactive role in creating more educational options for those teachers in terms of types of educational programs and of flexible schedules so that more teachers are able to take the opportunity to upgrade their
professional competencies in their areas of teaching. Currently, the Graduate Program offers a range of Master's Degrees in 8 concentration areas extending its service areas to cover the Logan-Hocking Local School District and Western Local School Districts. A total of 950 people have completed their graduate studies since 1993.

3. Affiliation with Other Organizations:
   a. Area Agency on Aging, District 7 – With administrative offices located on the campus of the University of Rio Grande, AAA7 provides a continuum of care planning that spans diverse residential needs with services in-home, in-hospital, and in-nursing facility as appropriate. Serving a ten-county region of Appalachian Southeast Ohio, AAA7 also provides internship opportunities for nursing and social work students.
   b. Retired and Senior Volunteer Program
   c. Maddog Welsh Center
   d. Gallia-Vinton Educational Service Center
   e. Project CHAMP,

The Institution’s collaboration is also found with the local high schools through the Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) program (which enables high school students to take designated college courses on the college campus and earn high school credits), and offering college courses in local high schools with college faculty instructors. These efforts provide an alternative way for high school students to earn college credit and communicate a goal of attending college. For this rural area, poor access to college and low self-esteem often become an obstacle for many of the families who hope to see their children become the first college graduates in their families. Since the start of the PSEO programs in 1992, some 585 (unduplicated headcount) high school students have participated in PSEO programs. Some of them eventually stayed and finished their college degree at Rio Grande, and some transferred their PSEO credits to other Ohio institutions to finish their college degrees.

4. Service Learning Partnerships: (Internship, field placement, clinical sites, cooperative education sites)
   a. School of Education – (40) - field experience contracts with county, independent, parochial and other educational facilities
   b. Nursing Program – rotating assignments at numerous health care facilities
   c. Graduate Program – typically current teachers
   d. School of Business – multiple cooperative sites in business and industry
   e. Social Work Program (over 40 social service agencies in the region)
   f. Radiological Technology – (10) - Holzer Medical Center, HMC-Jackson, Holzer Clinic Gallipolis, Holzer Clinic Athens, Holzer Clinic Jackson, Holzer Clinic Meigs, Holzer Clinic West Virginia, Holzer Clinic of Lawrence County, Holzer Clinic Sycamore, Pleasant Valley Hospital, WV;
   g. Diagnostic Medical Sonography – (11) - Adena Regional Medical Center, Berger Health System, Cabell Huntington Hospital, CAMC – Women's and Children's Hospital, Camden Clarke Hospital, Fairfield Memorial Hospital, Holzer Clinic – Gallipolis, Marietta Memorial Hospital, Pike Community Hospital, Pleasant Valley Hospital, St. Joseph's Hospital.
   h. Power Plant Technologies - American Electric Power
   i. Other Technologies i.e., Office Technology,

5. International collaborative activities have been designed and implemented. The number of sites for the summer cross-cultural programs for the Graduate Program has been expanded and students can now be joined by Rio faculty and members from the community to study and visit China, Wales, Italy, Spain, and Mexico.

9C2 Impact of Collaborative Relationships on Mission
The Institution’s mission reflects and is impacted upon by the area’s needs it serves, with the belief that to better serve its students, the Institution needs to be a learning institution providing “every student with learner-centered educational experiences.” To enhance such efforts, the Institution attempts to align its planned programs and other supportive activities with the mission. After specific needs are identified, any new program follows established procedures in providing data and information needed for the Academic Affairs Committee to review, discuss, and approve a new program and/or changes to an existing program.

The Radiologic Technology program and Diagnostic Medical Sonography program are products of this process. After extensive discussions with different groups of people in determining the needs for such programs to meet the needs of the local community, the responsible academic department drafted the proposals, presented and discussed them at an Academic Affairs Committee meeting, all before the start of both programs in 2004. With sufficient resource allocation and support (for instance, hiring of new instructors, acquisition of needed equipment for the program, allocation of classroom spaces, and identification of clinical areas), both programs have met their expected outcomes.

For the PSEO program to work well, each academic school directly involved in the PSEO program identifies one faculty member to serve as a designated PSEO advisor who provides information for high school students interested in the program, advises PSEO students with their course registrations and other areas of needs, and participates in discussions involving PSEO related issues.

The development of the Power Plant Technology program (with AEP), the Holzer Hospital Allied Health Programs, the MLT program (which is in the processing of being reviewed), and the Vinton County contract to train teacher assistants are examples of the University’s responsiveness in program development.

Processes

9P1 Creating, Prioritizing, and Building Relationships

Consistent with the mission of the University, the institution creates, prioritizes, and builds relationships with educational institutions and other organizations from which Rio receives students. Regular high school visits by the Admissions Office staff members make direct linkage with local high schools, providing information about the required academic preparation, available academic program offerings, and financial aid opportunities. College Visitation Days are sponsored by the Admissions Office throughout the academic year, during which time, faculty representatives from each academic School meet with both prospective students and parents directly.

The strong commitment in the collaboration with the community has resulted in the development of programs that respond to the community’s needs. The Radiologic Technology program and Diagnostic Medical Sonography (ultrasound) program provide examples of collaboration meeting community needs. Since the beginning of both programs in 2004, all students graduating from the Radiologic Technology program passed their national certificate tests while Diagnostic Medical Sonography program had its first graduating class in May, 2006. The Associate Degree Nursing program offers another example of the institution’s commitment to provide qualified nurses for the local community. The Holzer School of Nursing celebrated 25 years of educating nurses, having granted 1210 associate’s degrees and 148 bachelor’s degrees.

Advisory Committees in academic programs provide another example of pursuing stakeholder input. Technical area programs utilize advisory committees which consist of faculty, university staff members, and local business members. Their input is carefully evaluated and becomes part
of a program proposal when submitted for approval and renewal by the Academic Affairs Committee.

**9P2 Meeting Relationship Needs**

While some indicators do provide information (such as employment of graduates, high school classroom teaching success, community requests for a specific collaborative program), the Institution can use an Action Project strategy to launch a market survey. The current process of identifying strategic priorities will challenge different academic programs and offices to provide input on how assessment of meeting those needs can be more clearly developed and implemented.

**9P3 Assuring Integration of Internal Relationships**

The Institution has invested in a campus wide network system, *Student Space*, to replace the current AS400 (whose support will be discontinued by its provider). Once fully operational, this system is designed to provide a platform which enables the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data in a more systematic manner. The University is committed to growing a data-driven decision-making process.

Currently, the campus uses four main venues for disseminating information: communication through electronic and printed means, presentation at faculty and staff meetings, regular academic School meetings, and representative campus-wide committees.

**9P4 Measures of Collaborative Relationships**

University leadership understands that collaborative relationships are central to the University’s mission and supports faculty involvement in building partnerships through recognition in the tenure and promotion process. In addition, established faculty evaluation for post-tenure faculty provides another opportunity to measure faculty involvement in collaborative relationships.

**Results**

**9R1 Collaborative Relationship Results**

The interdependence of the University and Community College can be reviewed through enrollment trends. FTE total enrollment (See Figure 9.1: URG/RGCC % FTE Total Enrollment) contributed by the partnership over the fourteen year period 1992-2005 reflects intermittent gains and losses in the shared recruitment effort. Analysis of this history may reveal the effectiveness of strategic planning decision in the past and chart the potential for the continuing responsiveness of the partnership.
A more narrow focus of analysis reports “head count” enrollment data for an eight year period (See Figure 9.2: URG/RGCC FTE Enrollment 1998-2005) since the University’s last accreditation (1998-2005). Again, the mission principle of accessibility to higher education options (associate, baccalaureate and graduate programs) is sustained by interdependence of the partnership.

9R2 Results Comparison

The University is developing a data report schedule to collect, analyze, and maintain comparison information.

Improvements

9I1 Improving Processes and Systems - and -
9I2 Setting Targets and Communicating Results

Involving campus communities to identify benchmark group of outside groups/institutions will be a practical future AQIP project that the Institution should consider.
Index to the location of evidence relating to the Commission’s Criteria for Accreditation found in the University of Rio Grande/Rio Grande Community College’s Systems Portfolio

Criterion One – Mission and Integrity. The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Core Component 1a. The organization’s mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization’s commitments.

- The University of Rio Grande/Rio Grande Community College mission statement supports the institution’s institutional objectives. [2C1, 3C1, 3P1, 5P2, 8C1]
- The mission requires inputs from various constituencies. [Committee process of decision making.] [3C1, 3P1, 5P4, 8C1]
- The mission statement is present in all documents available to the public, e.g., in printed college catalog, student handbook, and on the URG website. [2C1, 3C1, 3P1, 8C1]
- The mission statement revision reflects the institution’s efforts to focus on student learning. [1C2, 1C1, 3C2, 5C3]

Core Component 1b. In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.

- The mission statement affirms the institution’s recognition of diversity through clear articulation of its General Education Program. [1C1, 1C4]
- Curricular and co-curricular activities support the institution’s efforts to introduce its students to diversity. [1C1, 5P2]
- The composition of the institution’s employees and faculty establishes a base line for diversity representations. [4R1, 4R1]
- The institution’s strategic plan development and its priorities intend to infuse efforts to enrich its employee and faculty diversity in future hiring practice. [2I2, 4R2]

Core Component 1c. Understanding of and support for the mission pervade the organization.

- The University’s strategic planning and priorities flow from and support the mission. [5P2, 8C2]
- Alignment between curricular and co-curricular activities design and the mission is maintained through assessment. [1C2, 2P1]
- Communication process of the University manifests the understanding of the mission. [2P1, 5C1]
- The strategic planning prioritizes alignment of action projects with the mission. [1P8, 8P4]
Core Component 1d. The organization’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.

- Broad participation in the discussions by internal and external stakeholders reaffirms the University mission. [1I2, 5R1]
- Leadership recognizes the contribution of committee recommendations to decision-making of the University. [1P3, 4P3, 5C1]
- Leadership engages program faculty in assessing initiatives and program modifications. [1P3, 2P3, 5P3]

Core Component 1e. The organization upholds and protects its integrity.

- Values and expectations implied in the mission address access, equity, social responsibility, community service and civic engagement. [1C1, 6C1]
- The University policies and procedures describe expectations for ethical and professional behaviors of all employees. [1C5, 4P1, 4P3]
- The Student Handbook defines a student’s rights and responsibilities. [2P1, 3P6, 6C1]

Criterion Two – Preparing for the Future. The organization’s allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill the mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Core Component 2a. The organization realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.

- The University’s curriculum development is responsive to changing community needs. [3P3, 9C2, 9P1]
- The University attempts to develop a market profile that reflects diverse societal and economic trends in our region and the larger world. [8C1, 9C1]
- The University is competitive in maintaining a platform that supports student learning. [6C2, 7C2, 7P1]

Core Component 2b. The organization’s resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

- The partnership between the private University and the public community college sustains the fulfillment of the institution’s mission. [9P1, 9R1]
- The budgetary planning reinforces growth. [1I2, 5P1]
- The University provides budgetary support for the continuing development of its employees. [1P1, 4P4, 9P1]

Core Component 2c. The organization’s ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.

- The Financial Process Action Project revealed the need to implement change recommendations. [5P1, 8P3, 8P6]
Assessment of student academic achievement occurs at the course level, and comprehensive program level assessment is planned. [1P11, 8P3]

Numerous advising boards contribute to academic curriculum development in specialized programs. [1P1, 9P1]

**Core Component 2d.** All levels of planning align with the organization’s mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.

- Annual goal planning requires College level and School level planning that supports the mission. [6C1, 6P3]
- The strategic plan represents priority initiatives that are aligned with the mission. [6I2, 8C2]

**Criterion Three – Student Learning and Effective Teaching.** The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

**Core Component 3a.** The organization’s goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.

- The University articulates common student learning goals through its General Education Program. [1C1]
- All academic programs have articulated their program goals and outcomes. [1C1, 1P3]
- Learning objectives in specialized and professional programs are aligned with the standards and criteria of national organizations. [1R2]

**Core Component 3b.** The organization values and supports effective teaching.

- The University values effective academic advising. [1P5]
- The University recognizes and rewards effective teaching. [4P4, 4P7]
- A system is in place for scheduled faculty evaluation. [4P6, 8P4]
- A faculty tenure and promotion policy clearly identifies effective teaching as a primary evaluation criterion. [4P7]
- The budget supports for faculty development. [4C4, 4P4]

**Core Component 3c.** The organization creates effective learning environments.

- The Jenkins Student Success Center and the MathLab provide campus-level resources to support effective teaching and learning. [3P2, 6R2, 7P6]
- Academic and student support services accommodate the learning styles of a diverse student population. [3P1, 3R2, 4C1]
- Online learning opportunities and other web-enhanced modalities enhance effective learning environment for students. [3R2, 5P2, 7P6]

**Core Component 3d.** The organization’s learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.
• The Campus Computing & Networking Office provides all technology support for all faculty, staff members, and students. [512, 7P6]

• Centralized student learning center offers individualized support for students through the tutoring program. [1P2, 7P6]

• As an open-admission institution, the University still reports a favorable rate of student persistence completion. [1R4, 7C2]

Criterion Four: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge, The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

Core Component 4a. The organization demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students, faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning.

• Continuing funding for faculty development demonstrates the University’s efforts and support for valuing a life of learning. [4C4, 4P4]

• The University’s continuum of educational opportunities supports a lifelong learning. [3P7, 4C4]

• Assessment of developmental learning encourages the pursuit of higher education. [1P2, 1R1, 1R2, 1R3]

Core Component 4b. The organization demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.

• The General Education Program emphasizes the breadth of intellectual skills in the arts and sciences content that supports advanced study and lifelong learning. [1C1, 1P1]

• Learning outcomes in all programs promote assessment of student learning. [1P1, 7C2]

• The University values and protects academic freedom. [1C5, 3C2]

Core Component 4c. The organization assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.

• Academic benchmarks in writing, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning and research encourage the level of student achievement that is aligned with real world success. [3C2, 7C2]

• Student learning outcomes are based on analysis of student preparation, professional standards and expertise, and external advisory groups. [1P1, 1R2, 3R2]

• General Education Program Goals and academic curriculum address diversity, global awareness, and ethical and civic responsibilities. [1C1, 1P1, 8P5]

Core Component 4d. The organization provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

• The University has explicit policies detailing ethical academic and professional principles and expectations for members of the University community. [3P2, 4P1]
• Professional ethics is an embedded component of professional programs. [2P1, 3C2]
• The University policies and procedures address standards of ethical and legal conduct. [1P1, 4P3]

Criterion Five: Engagement and Service. As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

Core Component 5a. The organization learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.

• The planning process includes campus-wide efforts to invite input. [8C2, 8P1]
• The University serves a broad and diverse constituency, [1C4, 3C1, 4C2]
• Collaborative relationships are shared by changing needs of partner organizations and the University. [9P1, 9R1]

Core Component 5b. The organization has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.

• Numerous specialized programs provide clinical experiences and internships involving external constituencies and communities. [9C1, 9P1]
• The University maintains an open-admission policy. [2C1, 7C2]

Core Component 5c. The organization demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service.

• The University is a member of various organizations, which provides Rio to enjoy and utilize educational and technological services to enhance student learning. [1P1, 2P2]
• The collaborative relationship between the private University and public Community College facilitates a continuum of entry-level higher education for students. [2C3, 9C1, 9R1]

Core Component 5d. Internal and external constituencies value the services the organization provides.

• Many special and technical programs involve employers and members of the professional community in program development and curriculum review. [1P2, 9P1]
• Evaluative information in specialized program accreditation self-study reviews confirms valuable library resources. [1P9, 7P5]