Description of Components of the North Georgia Technical College Institutional Effectiveness Model

Introduction

Institutional Effectiveness at North Georgia Technical College is a continuous, comprehensive, and integrated system of analysis, planning, implementation, assessment, and continuous application of the results designed to demonstrate the progress of the College in fulfilling its stated mission. This comprehensive and integrated approach to improving quality also involves monitoring and local, state, and federal budgeting. Institutional Effectiveness employs a system that ensures plans are implemented and evaluated with emphasis on decision-making and changes as a result of the evaluation findings. Results of research are utilized in the planning and evaluation process.

North Georgia Technical College’s model contains three major components: 1) **Strategic Planning and Evaluation**, which sets the overall direction of the College in support of the mission; 2) **Operational Planning and Evaluation**, which establishes the annual operational plan and budget in supporting the strategic plan; and 3) **Institutional Effectiveness**, which assesses the quality and effectiveness of the education and services provided by the College in meeting its operational and strategic goals and objectives.

The components of the Institutional Effectiveness Model are described as follows:

**Strategic Planning and Evaluation**

**Annual Review of Mission**
An annual review is conducted of the institution’s mission, philosophy, purpose, and goals by faculty, staff, the Local Board of Directors, and program advisory committee members. If changes are recommended for the institution’s mission statement, it is forwarded to the State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia for approval. An annual review of the purpose, philosophy, and goals of each program is conducted by the program advisory committee members.

**Three-Four Year Strategic Plan**
A comprehensive three/four-year Strategic Plan is developed by North Georgia Technical College faculty and staff. Strategic goals and objectives are established that include all functional areas of the school. The functional areas include the President’s Office, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Administrative Services, Economic Development, Institutional Advancement, Institutional Effectiveness, Adult Education, Technical Support Services, and Library/Media Services. A summative evaluation of the Strategic Plan is made on a three/four-year cycle, and major revisions are made based on assessment findings.

**Annual Review of Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives**
North Georgia Tech’s goals and objectives included in the Strategic Plan are reviewed annually and revised as needed. Progress toward the accomplishment of strategic goals and objectives is documented and reported at the end of the fiscal year.
Campus Master Plan and PAS Budget
A campus-wide plan for new facilities and for facility renovations is prepared as needed but at least every five years to meet the requirement of the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG). The Campus Master Plan is the result of administrators and faculty planning for new and/or existing program/services expansion, modification, and deletion. The required projected state funds for a new facility or facility renovation are requested from the Technical College System of Georgia by the Vice President of Administration. Following approval of a request by the legislature, the College’s submission of the Performance Accountability System (PAS) Improvement Budget Request includes a request for equipment for the new facility or facility renovation.

Budget requests address those needs identified through an internal analysis and improvement planning process. NGTC receives state funding annually for continuation of current programs, services, and administration.

Operational Planning and Evaluation

Annual Operational Plan and Budget (Financial Plan)
The goals of the operational planning and budgeting process are: 1) to be preceded by sound planning; 2) to have a budgeting process that documents a participatory methodology; 3) subject to sound fiscal procedures; 4) to integrate operational planning, budgeting, reporting, and evaluation into a systematic approach that enables the College to be governed effectively. An annual operational plan of work and budget are developed by each department, instructional program, and functional unit of the College. The operational plan of work is based on the following:

1. Strategic Plan goals and objectives
2. Strategic Work Plan for the upcoming year
3. Previous annual operational plan
4. Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Core Requirements and Comprehensive Standards
5. Trend reports from Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) obtained from KMS
6. Georgia Workforce 2016 “Beyond the Horizon – An Analysis of Long-term Employment Trends” from Georgia Department of Labor
7. Initiatives and other information provided by TCSG Commissioner
8. Student evaluations
9. Program specific licensure/accreditation/certification standards and evaluations
10. Evaluation results of federal core indicators
11. Evaluation results from TCSG PAS
12. Evaluation results from assessment reports
13. Faculty/Staff evaluations

The process involves every program and unit and includes evaluating, planning, budgeting, and implementing. Part II of each program or unit Annual Plan contains the unit’s operational plan of work that includes: operational objectives, current fiscal year action items, accountability, timetable, and end-of-year evaluations. Strategic Plan goals are referenced for each operational objective written in the annual operational plan of work, and budget request items are referenced to operational objectives if applicable. The operational planning and the budgeting process are evaluated periodically by North Georgia Technical College’s Executive Team to ensure that the process is effectively supporting the institutional mission and goals. (See Annual Operational Plan and Budget for details on the process.)
Annual Plan and Budget for Federal Funds - Perkins

The Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) distributes funds under the Carl Perkins Act to eligible postsecondary schools that have completed an approved Local Plan. The Local Plan constitutes an agreement between the College and TCSG for the receipt of federal funds. The Local Plan and Budget document how the College plans to accomplish the federal requirements and selected allowables and details how the College plans to expend federal funds. Final approval of the Plan is made by TCSG.

Institutional Effectiveness

The faculty at North Georgia Technical College identified expected student/program outcomes that they determine to be of importance for all programs. The following is a list of those outcomes and the process for determining how achievement of the results is ascertained:

1. **Graduates will be employed in field of study or in a related field.** Graduating students complete the Graduating Student Survey, identifying their employment status at the time of graduation. Graduate employment information is also verified through the Georgia Department of Labor. NGTC’s Career Development and Disability Services Director reports employment information to the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) who compiles the data and provides various reports through its electronic Knowledge Management System (KMS). NGTC evaluates this outcome during TCSG’s Performance Accountability System annual review and NGTC’s Peer Program Review.

2. **Graduates will pass required certification or licensure exams.** Graduates in the following programs take certification or licensure exams: Clinical Laboratory Technology, Paramedic/Emergency Medical Technician, Cosmetology, Medical Assisting, Practical Nursing, Pharmacy Technology, and Commercial Truck Driving. NGTC evaluates this outcome in program Annual Plans and during NGTC’s Peer Program Review.

3. **Graduates will be technically/occupationally proficient in their areas of study.** Each program area assesses technical/occupational proficiency of its graduates in different ways during the Annual Plan process of assessing student learning outcomes. The following are some of the methods that the program faculty use for assessment: capstone projects or portfolios, comprehensive exams which include written and performance components, multiple projects that cover several specific competency areas, and internship/co-op evaluations. NGTC evaluates this outcome in the program Annual Plans.

4. **Students who complete Learning Support courses will be able to demonstrate proficiency in basic academic skills that prepare them for diploma/degree courses.** Students who fail to meet minimum requirements in math, English, and reading on the ASSET or COMPASS test for Regular Admission status into their programs of study are required to complete Learning Support courses. In order to assess the effectiveness of the 098/099 level Learning Support courses (those required for associate degrees), the Learning Support faculty re-administer the COMPASS test to the students as an exit exam at the completion of each of their Learning Support courses. Successful 098/099 students (those who score as program ready) may then progress to associate degree-level courses. This post-test gives the Learning Support faculty specific information regarding which areas within the curriculum need improvement or need additional emphasis placed upon them by the faculty. Diploma students who successfully complete Learning Support courses at the 097 level and move into diploma-level courses are
5. **Students who complete General Education courses will be able to demonstrate proficiency in academic skills that prepare them to perform successfully in their programs of study as well as on the job.** The General Education faculty conducts the assessments for General Education. Math skills are assessed using a comprehensive written exam appropriate to the level being assessed, diploma or degree. Diploma-level English skills are assessed with a comprehensive exam or the completion of a final research topic, whereas, degree-level English skills are assessed by having students compose a final essay. In addition, assessment is conducted with associate degree students in areas such as humanities, speech, psychology, etc., using methods appropriate to the area. NGTC evaluates this outcome in the General Education Annual Plan.

6. **Graduates will have knowledge of and demonstrate value in work ethics as an integral part of the workplace environment as it relates to their program of study.** Work ethics instruction and assessment are required components of an introductory class at North Georgia Technical College in order to meet the standards established by the Technical College System of Georgia. Students are expected to exhibit in classrooms and laboratories the following ten areas of work ethic traits and performance standards: attendance, character, teamwork, appearance, attitude, productivity, organizational skills, communication, cooperation, and respect. NGTC evaluates this outcome in the program Annual Plans.

7. **Graduates will be satisfied with the education that they have received.** Graduating students complete the Graduating Student Survey, identifying their level of satisfaction. (During their program of study, students complete the Student Satisfaction Survey and quarterly instructor/course evaluations which give the College a means to gauge student satisfaction prior to graduation.) NGTC evaluates this outcome in Annual Plans of various Administrative and Educational Support units.

**Annual Assessment Plans and Reports for Expected Outcomes**

As part of the College’s Institutional Effectiveness Model, all educational programs, administrative support, educational support, and community/public service units of the College identify expected outcomes as part of the College’s Annual Plan process, along with operational objectives for the coming year. Each unit’s Annual Plan defines the unit’s purpose and how it supports the NGTC mission. Part I of the Annual Plan, Assessment Plan of Expected Outcomes, identifies outcomes to be assessed and how they link to strategic plan goals, how those outcomes will be assessed, the extent to which those outcomes should be achieved, and improvements made based on assessment results.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

Through a curriculum mapping process, the NGTC faculty in each program, including Learning Support and General Education, meet as a group to identify student learning outcomes based on program competencies that they determine are of utmost importance for their graduates to attain. The faculty then map the program curriculum to identify in which courses those competencies are taught to accomplish the student learning outcomes and the level at which the competencies are
experienced. From those courses, the group selects courses in which assessments of the student learning outcomes will be administered.

As part of the Annual Plan process at the beginning of each fiscal year, the faculty select three to four of these student learning outcomes to assess during the year, determine how each of the outcomes will be assessed, and the highest level of learning expected. The faculty employ a variety of assessment methods, such as comprehensive final exams (or portions thereof) which may include written and performance components, comprehensive or capstone projects, portfolios, rubric-scored assignments developed by faculty, multiple projects that cover several specific competency areas, and internship/practicum evaluations. Data from the assessments are collected during the year and recorded in the Annual Plan. The results are analyzed to determine the extent to which the outcomes have been achieved and then improvements are made based on the results. The assessment section of the Annual Plan is completed, documenting the data analysis and any subsequent improvements when appropriate. The improvements are implemented during the following fiscal year and analyzed for effectiveness.

Administrative/Educational Support and Community/Public Service Units Expected Outcomes
An Annual Assessment Plan is also developed by each Administrative and Educational Support and Community/Public Service Unit to assess the quality and effectiveness of the services that they provide. At the beginning of the fiscal year, the administration and staff in each functional unit identify between three and five expected outcomes to be assessed during the coming year that they determine to be of most importance to the unit or that they wish to improve. The outcomes vary with each unit but generally deal with improvement of services and/or processes. The administration and staff in each unit determine the means of assessment and the criteria that would determine success in meeting the outcomes. After the assessments are conducted during the year and the data are collected and analyzed, the units determine changes to be made for improvement and implement those changes. At the end of the fiscal year, each unit summarizes the assessment data collected and the use of results to improve the unit. The units are then ready to develop next year’s plan, determining which outcomes to re-assess for another year and which outcomes to add to the assessment plan.

Reports of Improvements Made Based on Annual Plan Assessments
After the assessment reports are completed each year, the Institutional Effectiveness staff compiles the information into reports that highlight improvements that have been made as reported in the Annual Plans. These reports provide evidence of improvement based on analysis of assessment results.

Customer Evaluations
Internal and external customer evaluations are completed for the College. Customer survey findings are reviewed, and action is taken as needed. The results are also used during the evaluation and planning phases of the institutional effectiveness process and used during the evaluation of programs, functional units, and the College. External evaluations include: Graduate Follow-up Survey, Employer Follow-up Survey, and community surveys. Internal evaluations include: Student Satisfaction Survey, Graduating Student Survey, Colleague Survey, Library student and faculty surveys, and instructor/course evaluations by students including those for online courses.
Data Reports
In addition to customer evaluations, various data reports from the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) Data Center are distributed to faculty and staff to be used during assessment planning and reporting and during the preparation of both the Annual Operational Plan and Budget and the College’s Strategic Plan. Examples of reports include: various enrollment reports, enrollment trends, placement reports, awards conferred by program, revenue by program, various attrition reports, etc.

Staff Development Plans
Annually, each full-time member of North Georgia Technical College’s faculty and professional staff participates in planning staff development activities. The staff development plan includes required activities such as those related to state requirements and accreditation, as well as selected activities based on the school’s needs, individual needs, and results from performance evaluations.

Annual Faculty and Staff Evaluations
Each faculty and staff member of North Georgia Technical College is evaluated annually by his/her supervisor. Faculty and staff design staff development activities and plans for the following year.

TCSG Performance Accountability System: Evaluation and Plan
The Technical College System of Georgia’s institutional effectiveness process, the Performance Accountability System (PAS), is a management process that annually measures performance on a prescribed set of measures and plans for continuous quality improvement in the institution. PAS evaluation, planning, and budgeting processes are completed for program groupings and for the College. The program and college information is recorded within the PAS database. Each credit program (degree, diploma, and certificate) within the institution is subjected to the formal evaluation of PAS that includes the evaluation of established outcome benchmarks for enrollment, awards, and placement. (See PAS Trend Report)

Annual Review of TCSG Standards: Institutional, General Program, and Program
Annually, administrators of functional units review assigned sections of the TCSG Institutional Standards to determine compliance with evaluative criteria and to identify/locate required documentation. Additionally, program faculty members review standards and determine compliance with evaluative criteria and identify/locate required documentation. Results of the reviews are utilized as individuals ultimately determine compliance with standard-related measures included within the TCSG: Performance Accountability System. Standards for General Education courses are also reviewed to determine compliance.

Annual Reports for the Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)
Two reports are completed each year for the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The Financial Profile and Indicators report is completed in July, and the Institutional Profile for General and Enrollment Information is completed in January.

Three-Year Internal Program Review
An internal, comprehensive peer review of the College’s academic programs is conducted on a rotating cycle each year, with each program reviewed every three years. This review is facilitated by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and conducted by a two- to four-member faculty team who evaluates the following: program outcomes such as enrollment, graduation, completion/attrition, and placement; classroom and/or lab environment(s); equipment; and quality of instructional materials such as syllabi and lesson plans. The results of the evaluations are utilized for continuous
improvement and identifying specific needs in the instructional process, physical facilities, equipment, and fiscal needs for any future improvement.

In addition, program Advisory Committees annually evaluate the programs, and, if needed, make recommendations for change in the following areas: program purpose and objectives, program admission requirements, program content and length, competency tests used to evaluate achievement; instructional materials, equipment, skill levels and/or proficiency required for program completion, and methods of program evaluation. The program Advisory Committees also make recommendations regarding the elimination of programs and the addition of new programs.

**External Performance Accountability Review (PAR)**
An external, comprehensive, on-site review is conducted by a team of Georgia technical college administrators and selected TCSG college personnel every six years or according to a risk-based system. The PAR serves several purposes including verification of state standards’ implementation and monitoring and improvement planning for federal compliance. The PAR findings are provided to North Georgia Tech’s president, faculty, and staff, as well as the TCSG Commissioner. The local president, faculty, and staff prepare a corrective action plan response for any recommendation made by the PAR team. The Commissioner reviews and approves the corrective action plan. The College advises the PAR team and TCSG when the corrective action plan has been completed.

**Five-Year Reaffirmation Review by Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)**
Compliance Certification documentation and a Quality Enhancement Plan are submitted to the Commission on Colleges prior to the five-year reaffirmation review which follows initial accreditation of an institution. An Off-Site Peer Review Committee meets in Atlanta and reviews the Compliance Certification; and, following that review, an On-Site Review Committee will conduct a focused evaluation at the campus to finalize issues of compliance, provide consultation regarding issues addressed in the QEP, and evaluate acceptability of the QEP. The Report of the Reaffirmation Committee, along with the institution’s response to areas of non-compliance, is then forwarded to the Commission for review and action on reaffirmation. The Committees on Compliance and Reports (C & R), standing committees of the Commission, review reports prepared by peer committees and the institutional responses to those reports. A C & R Committee’s recommendation regarding an institution’s reaffirmation of accreditation is forwarded to the Executive Council for review. The Executive Council recommends action to the full Commission which makes the final decision on reaffirmation and any follow-up activities that it requires of an institution. The full Commission convenes twice a year. After a successful five-year reaffirmation, the next reaffirmation occurs in ten years.

**Conclusion**
All of the above components of the Institutional Effectiveness Model support North Georgia Technical College’s mission which states in part: *North Georgia Technical College is a public, residential, multi-campus, two-year technical college whose mission is to provide quality technical education, adult education, continuing education, and business and industry training to individuals who can benefit from these programs and services...by preparing them to succeed as literate and technically competent members of the workforce and by promoting the economic growth and development of the Northeast Georgia region...* Everything that is planned and accomplished by the College should support this mission of workforce development. As outlined in NGTC’s Strategic Plan, the plans to expand facilities, add additional programs, and expand and improve existing programs support the College’s mission of “providing high quality, accessible education and training
through continuous improvement efforts.” The Institutional Effectiveness Model is the system whereby the College can monitor that it is serving its purpose and that it is doing so effectively by assessing not only the accomplishment of operational objectives, but by assessing the quality and effectiveness of what is accomplished. The combined elements of the IE Model create a comprehensive system that ensures that North Georgia Technical College periodically reviews its mission, goals, and outcomes, has a systematic means of determining whether it is effectively accomplishing its mission and meeting its goals and outcomes, and has a process in place to systematically make improvements.