

CATEGORY 9 BUILDING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Examines your institution's relationships, current and potential, to analyze how they contribute to the institution's accomplishing its mission.

Introduction

Processes for Building Collaborative Relationships reveal a maturity level with most processes categorized as the systematic transitioning to an aligned level of maturity.

Black Hawk College benefits from a number of collaborative relationships with key stakeholders. These relationships enhance college initiatives in support of the institutional mission. Although many of these relationships are strong and beneficial, they are often created and maintained at the departmental level and are not prioritized at the institutional level. Many of the relationships are activity-based and respond to a direct need in the campus or college community.

In the systematic category, the portfolio assessment demonstrates repeatable process conducted in a proactively manner to build relationships with educational organizations from which it receives students (9P1), relationships with educational organizations that receive BHC graduates and employers who employ them (9P2), and with vendors that supply materials and services (9P4).

Those processes that have not experienced cycles of evaluation and improvement are those addressing the identification and prioritization, by the college, those key communities and relationships that are significant for the college to continue to provide services to students (9P3) resources to the faculty and staff (9P4) and the general community with whom it interacts (9P5).

Processes (P)

9P1. Key partners are critical to accomplishing Black Hawk College's mission and vision. Partners are those organizations or individuals that have a direct role in education or the delivery of support services and for which there are reciprocating relationships. Examples of educational partners include all the K-12 school systems in the BHC district and businesses who work in partnership to deliver educational activities. These partners fulfill roles ranging from preparing college-ready high school students, accepting transfer students, and hiring graduates, to providing students with internships and service learning opportunities.

Relationships with the public, parochial, and alternative high schools within District 503 are built in several ways. The recruitment office creates and maintains relationships with all secondary schools in the college district through frequent visits, information sharing with school counselors, and organized visits to the college by students from these institutions. Recruiters also work closely with special interest groups, professional associations, and the local Partners in Job Training offices to recruit students.

College instructional staff and faculty members work closely with District high school superintendents, principals, guidance counselors, and faculty in the deployment of dual enrollment opportunities to create a transitional path for high school students to BHC. A formal memorandum of understanding exists with each district high school codifying the offering of dual enrollment and dual credit opportunities.

Outreach staff members and adult and alternative education faculty work closely with the school districts and the Regional Office of Education in the delivery of adult education, alternative education, and high school completer programs. Internally, college faculty and staff members work collaboratively to attempt to transition GED and adult education students into college credit coursework. Outreach employees engaged in continuing education also host activities designed to engage students in programs that encourage the pursuit of higher education. CFK and Digital Divas are two examples of summer programming aimed at elementary students and early teens that seek to engage students in academic and career exploration and expose students to Black Hawk College programs and services.

9P2. The college has long-established partnerships with colleges and universities throughout Illinois and across the nation. Dual admission agreements with Western and Northern Illinois Universities and the college's active involvement in the **Illinois Articulation Initiative** have significantly reduced transfer barriers for students transferring either to or from participating institutions. The Articulation Coordinator is a dedicated staff position that manages the college's relationship with senior institutions. The college maintains Compact Agreements with most of the universities in the state. A listing of general education and/or curricula specific post-secondary articulation agreements with baccalaureate institutions is publicly available on the college's website. In addition, a Transfer Coordinator position maintains communication with senior institutions and creates opportunities on campus for students to explore transfer options through events such as College Nights and visit days.

A newer model for working in partnership with other institutions of higher education is called Linkages. There are currently nine linkage agreements with Western Illinois University (WIU). The linkage agreements outline a suggested degree completion guide and provide recommended course sequencing. The program allows students to transfer seamlessly from BHC to WIU with additional transfer benefits including WIU's tuition cost guarantee.

Curriculum development and modification is also completed by considering the needs of other higher education partners. During the Program Review process, faculty members scan universities and colleges to identify any significant changes in requirements that would necessitate changes in the 100- and 200-

level preparatory classes. Potential changes are submitted through the Curriculum Committee process for approval.

The Internet Course Exchange (ICE) is a service created by the Illinois Community Colleges Online (ILCCO) consortium where 23 community colleges, including Black Hawk College, willingly share their online courses with each other. This technology partnership provides residents of the district with opportunities to take courses from other institutions for BHC credit while at the same time providing students from other districts with the opportunity to take college courses that may be unavailable at their home institutions. Black Hawk College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission to grant degrees earned entirely online. The college also established a partnership with Franklin University so students can complete a baccalaureate degree online in specific programs. Students complete coursework at the college, including “bridge” courses, and then enroll to take upper level courses online through Franklin University.

In addition to creating and prioritizing relationships that will benefit the college's students as they continue their education, the college develops relationships with the business and industry employers in the district who receive graduates. Many key business leaders sit on college advisory committees providing insight into the needs of their workforce as well as others in the industry. This information is then used to modify and further develop curriculum responsive to their needs and ultimately producing a better-prepared graduate. Relationships with business and industry partners also contribute to the success of work experience and internship programs for students. The college maintains a database of work experience and internship sites and has formal processes for matching students with work sites both for credit and not for credit.

The career services offices also connect students with potential employers through job fairs, job boards, employment, and non-credit internship opportunities. Staff works directly with employers and through regional and community economic development organizations to contribute to the employee-employer matching process.

9P3. The current process to create a relationship with organizations that provide services to BHC's students may be initiated directly by the college or by an outside agency. Appropriate college employees meet with representatives from the other organization and determine if the project appropriately supports the mission and strategic goals of the college. The process to build and develop the partnership consists of developing a plan to execute the initiative, delineating the roles of the parties, and determining a plan to fund and evaluate the program and partnership. Project evaluation determines whether the initiative is continued or expanded, but relationships are valued and maintained even when initial programs are no longer warranted or feasible allowing either organization to explore future opportunities to meet student needs.

Examples of projects where an external partner initiates a project to serve students include: a summer actuarial program for women and minorities with Drake University and Royal Neighbors of America, the MetroLINK bus pass initiative, the Quad Cities Region Career Connection Intermediary (United Way, Community Foundation, Western Illinois University, Eastern Iowa Community College), the partnership with the Illinois Math and Science Academy (IMSA), and the Rock Island Math and Science Academy. The college also identifies external agencies with expertise to serve students and has long-standing relationships with social service and mental health organizations to serve students across programs from English as Second Language (ESL) students to college credit students. More recently, the college has worked with veterans groups to strengthen services to a growing population of students who have served in the military and meet their needs in returning to academic and civilian life.

9P4. Building relationships, with organizations and vendors who supply materials and services to the college, is primarily the management responsibility of the purchasing department. Unit managers identify needs for services and materials and work with the Purchasing Director to determine requirements before publicly soliciting pricing options through a competitive process.

Relationships are created when a mutual interest exists between the college and the vendor. Initial contact usually occurs one of two ways: (1) the college seeks vendors believed to sell the required product/service and makes contact with them, or (2) the vendors seek new customers and make an initial contact with the college. The college seeks vendors by searching the internet, placing advertisements in various publications, using the phone directory, or through vendor responses to Requests for Proposals and Invitations for Bids published in a minimum of two (2) newspapers within the district. The college prefers to create relationships with vendors that operate within the district geographic boundaries, as it supports and strengthens the local economy and tax base. A vendor may further be classified as a sole source provider if they are the only supplier of a good or service in the region or nationally. The **Procurement of Domestic Products Act** (30 ILCS 517) makes it possible for community colleges to take into account where an item was made and “give preference to manufactured articles, materials, and supplies that have been manufactured in the United States.” All vendor information is maintained by the purchasing department in a database.

Relationships are incrementally built over time as a vendor proves itself to be aligned with the college’s strategic priorities and supporting goals and further meets the pricing, quality, on-time delivery, service, and support needs. Relationships are maintained through regular and systematic communications based on contract language and competitive bid processes. For example, the Purchasing Manager meets quarterly with the office supplies sales representative to review key metrics associated with the contract such as on-time performance, percentage of order fulfillment, expediency of problem resolution, and usage trends. Similarly, college facilities staff members regularly meet with construction contractors to compare progress to the contract work plan, discuss unforeseen problems encountered, and manage change orders.

9P5. Relationships with educational associations, external agencies, consortia partners, and the general communities of District 503 are created and prioritized based on the needs of BHC’s students and the alignment to the college mission to create the environment and resources for lifelong learning. In addition to institutional memberships to organizations such as the League for Innovation in Community Colleges, Continuous Quality Improvement Network, the American Association of Community Colleges and the Chamber of Commerce, leaders are empowered to maintain a wide variety of relationships through individual memberships to organizations providing resources, education and services that aid in the improvement of the college’s services to students.

College administration develops accreditation relationships with educational organizations that accredit the college’s academic programs, with the ICCB and the Higher Learning Commission based on their role and responsibilities to the college.

Consortia partners are developed when common educational goals and objectives become known to benefit BHC’s students. Several grant applications have been successfully obtained to provide resources to the college’s students because of consortia partnerships.

Community partnerships also allow the college to serve residents. The College’s Professional and Continuing Education (PaCE) department, Business Training Center (BTC), SBDC, ITC, and PTAC establish partnerships in order to provide needed services to community organizations and businesses.

The BTC maintains strong partnerships with Rock Island Arsenal Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center (RIA-JMTC), John Deere Harvester Works, Tyson, and various labor unions and aligns educational and training offerings with the professional standards of the American Welding Society (AWS) and the DiSC system for behavior profiling. The partnership between BTC and the RIA-JMTC has expanded over the years from the college renting space from RIA-JMTC to setting up an entire award-winning welding lab. Reciprocal agreements have the JMTC cutting metal plates for the welding program and the BTC delivering customized contract training to JMTC. In a strong move from competitor to collaborator, the BTC is currently in the second year of a five-year or \$1.5 million government contract to provide a 12-week training series. As a sub-contractor in the arrangement, the BTC is now working in partnership with a local private university, public university, and a veteran-owned business in the endeavor.

The PaCE works in partnership with various professional organizations to offer professional development and credentialing. Computer training partnerships include Microsoft and EducationToGo. Resources are also shared among Illinois community colleges through the weTrain and Illinois Council for Continuing Education and Training (ICCET) consortia. In order to serve western Illinois small businesses, the college maintains partnerships with the following organizations among others:

- Chambers of Commerce
- Department of Commerce and Community Affairs Offices Abroad
- United States Department of Commerce
- Rotary and other civic and service clubs throughout the district
- Kewanee Economic Development Corporation
- AWS
- Department of Commerce and Community Affairs Foreign Trade Office, Chicago
- ITC Network
- weTrain (Illinois Community College Training Resource and Information Network)
- Literacy and Education Research Network (LERN)

9P6. Contracts and articulation agreements detail partnership relationships and deliverables as a measure of whether requirements are met. Participants complete evaluations of educational offerings to ensure that services are meeting constituent needs. Beyond that, many of the college's partnerships do not employ formal evaluation strategies that are systematically reviewed.

9P7. Open, clear communication among faculty, staff, and administrators has been important to the college culture. Steps to improve communication are always ongoing.

Current channels of communication are identified below.

- Labor-Management Council, which includes officers from all collective bargaining units, professional staff, and administrators, meets monthly to attempt to address concerns before they become major divisive issues.
- President's Cabinet is scheduled bi-weekly to convene the senior leadership group.
- Monthly faculty and staff meetings are held at the East Campus with the Vice President for East Campus to provide a forum for sharing information and asking questions. Announcements sent via e-mail provide information about what is happening on the campus while the monthly meetings allow for further conversation.
- District-wide, discipline-based meetings are held at the beginning of each semester to discuss and implement student learning outcomes and objectives.
- Each campus convenes a Faculty Senate to participate in shared governance and make recommendations to the Vice President for Instruction.

- The Faculty Senate officers from both campuses meet monthly with the Vice President for Instruction.
- Many departments meet face-to-face on a regular basis to share information and work on tasks.
- A Staff Development Day is held annually during the faculty and student spring break period to allow all staff members to come together for a day of learning, development, and networking.
- Each campus Foundation conducts annual employee campaigns to communicate the needs of the institution and solicit financial support from individual employees in support of the college mission.
- Themed group meetings led by the Interim Vice President for Instruction connect segments of the organization to resolve known challenges among departments and functional areas.

Additional electronic means of communication currently in place are outlined below.

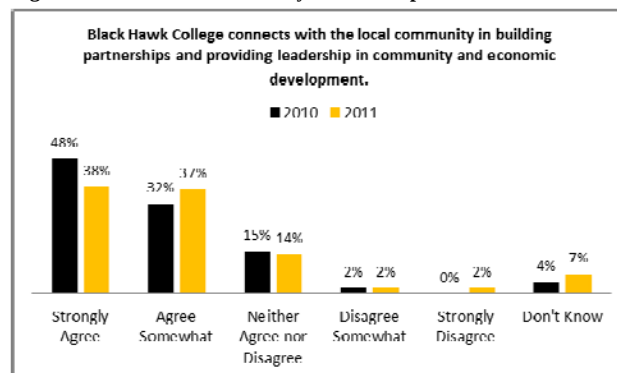
- E-mail is readily available for all employees from their desktop or from any computer with Internet access.
- The college portal, myBH, provides ready access to college reports, studies, forms, procedures, and processes.
- The upgraded phone system facilitates leaving and receiving messages. Employees may access voice mail from any telephone on campus or remotely.
- Shared calendar tools allow for efficiency in scheduling and convening meetings.
- Minutes of many college committees are posted on the college's website.
- The college's electronic internal newsletter, The Wire, is distributed monthly to all faculty and staff and to retirees upon request.
- A weekly electronic newsletter, Points from the President, is distributed via email to all employees.

Results(R)

9R1/9R2. The college monitors two indirect measures to understand if the relationships with external stakeholders are meeting both the internal and external requirements of those partners. The first comes from the Community Perception Survey in which community members are asked to what extent they agree that the college connects with the local community in building partnerships and providing leadership in community and economic development and the second is measures reported in the Economic Impact History discussed in 2R2.

Reported in Figure 9R1/9R2-1, the college continues to have high recognition and a positive reputation in the local community. Eighty-five percent of area residents say the quality of instruction at Black Hawk is high, which is 2% higher than last year.

Figure 9R1/9R2 – 1 Community Partnerships



Reported in Figure 9R1/9R2-2 and in category 2 Figure 2R2-1, the economic impact history also reports positive outcomes resulting from the partnerships with local business and industry.

Information about BHC is often first received by students through their high school counselors. To ensure that the message they communicate to their students is consistent with the college's message to incoming freshman several relationship-building

processes are discussed in category 3. To measure their effectiveness the college monitors the perceived image of BHC by the high school counselors. As reported in Figure 9R1/9R2-3 many counselors see the college as providing career and technical education programs, however, there has been an increase in perception that transfer programs are also offered. The college is also observing an increased awareness,

by high school counselors, that the college offers developmental courses and a low cost option to students.

Figure 9R1/9R2 – 2 Economic Impact History

ECONOMIC IMPACT HISTORY 01/01/11-12/31/11			
	SBDC	ITC	PTAC
Jobs Created	156		86
Jobs Retained	123	45	1,015
Business Starts	11		
Business Expansions	11		
Loans Secured	14		
Loan Dollars Secured	2,190		
Export Sales		509,973	
Counseling Clients		42	103
Training Units		2	12
One-to-One Counseling Hours		177	675
Bids Submitted			341
Contracts Secured			61
Contract Dollars Secured			138,821

Relationships built with area high school are also measured by the percent of high school counselors who would advise students to attend BHC. Reported in Figure 9R1/9R2-4, significant improvement was made with sixty-five percent of the respondents indicating “definitely yes” over only thirty –five percent the previous year.

Internal collaborative relationships are measured by the PACE survey and are discussed in 6R1. Organizational leadership management styles are defined by NILIE as being collaborative, consultative, competitive, or coercive. While the college has remained in the consultative management style several

item have improved. No survey items are in the coercive management style, three items moved from competitive to consultative and three items moved from consultative to a collaborative management style.

Figure 9R1/9R2 – 3 High School Image of BHC

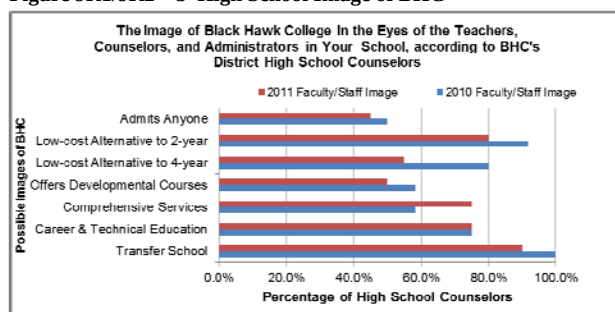
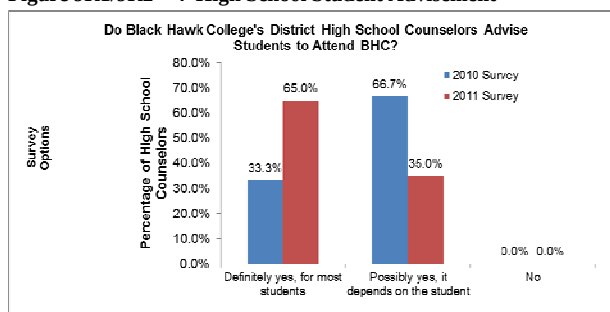


Figure 9R1/9R2 – 4 High School Student Advisement



The college does not have systematic approaches to monitor and evaluate the collaborative relationships with senior institutions for which it has articulation agreements with, social service agencies, community partnerships, vendors, and internal shared governance committees.

9R3. The college does not currently have sources for benchmark data on several measures discussed here with the exception of the PACE survey data.

Improvement (I)

9I1. A recent improvement and innovative relationship is the recent collaboration between the college, Western Illinois University, Eastern Iowa Community College District, Community Foundation of the Great River Bend, and United Way of the Quad Cities Area to create the Quad-Cities Region Career Connections Intermediary. This initiative is an expanded career program for QC students and is designed

to increase student achievement levels. The new program will expose students to possible careers using exercises such as classroom sessions, job shadowing and workplace tours. The program will give students perspectives on how education can be applied outside the classrooms.

9I2. BHC has a culture of shared governance that is realized by the Faculty Senates (QC and EC), the Labor-Management Council, and Action Committees. Each of these groups serve as places where faculty and staff can bring issues of concern that are discussed, and when necessary forwarded to appropriate committees for consideration and action. This culture encourages the college Administration to review its processes and to improve them based on input from the different constituent groups.

In addition to these, the AQIP steering committee also serves as a central point of convergence for collaboration when related to AQIP processes and Action Projects.