



# Academic Quality Improvement Project

The Higher Learning Commission NCA

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January 8, 2002

Dr. Marilyn Liddell  
President  
Glen Oaks Community College  
62249 Shimmel Rd.  
Centreville, MI 49032

Dear Dr. Liddell,

A very Happy New Year to you and your colleagues at Glen Oaks Community College. AQIP has experienced tremendous growth and learning during 2001, we expect no less in 2002, and we trust that you are experiencing similar developments. We appreciate and value your involvement in AQIP and thank you for submitting your first set of *Annual Updates*. This letter offers concise feedback on your recently submitted Updates, provides some brief information on the upcoming *Systems Portfolio*, invites your participation in our Annual Meeting, and asks for a testimonial from you.

### Context for the Annual Update of Action Projects:

At the Strategy Forum, your institution identified several *Action Projects*, to which you later formally committed yourself. (Prior to April 2001, AQIP referred to *Action Projects* as "vital few goals," but we changed the name to make clearer their function as projects that galvanize and change institutional culture.) The *Action Projects* attempt to ground your institution concretely in action learning experiences that will make specific institutional improvements while helping strengthen the overall culture of continuous improvement within your institution. The Projects chosen generally relate to two to four different AQIP Criteria, but at least one *Action Project* must address the *Helping Students Learn* Criterion.

The first *Annual Updates* on *Action Projects* were due December 1, 2001 (for institutions that participated in Strategy Forums prior to March 2001; for all subsequent participants, in years from 2002 forward, reports will be due each year on September 21, the first day of autumn. This date was chosen to coincide with the "State of the College/University" address that leaders normally deliver early in the fall.) The *Annual Update* consists of a brief on-line form the institution completes and submits electronically. Experienced peers will review these Updates, and assist AQIP in crafting an *Update Response* letter that provides actionable feedback on each of your Projects and on your institution's overall progress in continuous performance improvement. Your *Update Response* stresses your institution's positive accomplishments, and relates your institution's efforts to the AQIP values.

### Action Project 1: Design and implement systems to measure student learning

It appears as if Glen Oaks Community College's efforts on this Action Project are producing significant gains, and we congratulate you on your progress. Your status seems to be progressing appropriately relative to your Action Project (or Goals Commitment) Declaration, and you appear to have involved the appropriate stakeholders. Your proposed next steps, in deploying the Project to the remaining divisions and in identifying measurement instruments, are clear and compelling and it appears as if you have considered the appropriate challenges.

GOCC's progress illustrates you are embedding the AQIP Guiding Values of Learning and Information within this Action Project.

### Action Project 2: Design and implement systems to monitor stakeholder satisfaction.

From your Update, it would appear that Glen Oaks Community College's efforts on this Action Project, "[title of project]", are not producing the intended effects you aimed for in your Action Project (or Goals

Commitment) Declaration. From your update, it would appear that your Stakeholder Satisfaction Committee is moving leisurely to gather instruments, but there is little clarity about its next steps in the process for accomplishing this project. Please call me at the AQIP office at 800-621-7440, ext. 106, or email me at [sds@hlcommission.org](mailto:sds@hlcommission.org) by January 25, 2002, so we can discuss how to ensure GOCC will make the progress it wanted on this Action Project. Before you call or email, however, you might consider whether the group working on this project has clear steps and a timeline in mind, and, if so, share those with us.

Focus on the needs of students and stakeholders represents a fundamental value for AQIP and all quality approaches. It is essential that an institution seeking to build a culture of continuous improvement have systematic ways to understand whether it is satisfying its stakeholders' needs. Your willingness to undertake this project is therefore highly admirable, and the energy you invest in it is certain to pay for handsomely for GOCC.

**Action Project 3: Evaluate the viability and effectiveness of instructional degrees and certificates (hereinafter "programs").**

It appears as if Glen Oaks Community College's efforts on this Action Project are proceeding fairly smoothly, yet you might consider tracking your progress in a more robust manner by creating more aggressive stretch targets for Team GO as it oversees this project. There seem to be only the vaguest mileposts envisioned along your route to the establishment of a review system. By even a simple dated objective (like establishing the timeframe for "pilot testing" of whatever review system you evolve) you might encourage those working on this project to line out the stages preliminary to that objective, and to invest more energy and enthusiasm in their task.

GOCC's progress shows you are addressing the AQIP Guiding Value of Information within this Action Project, Information that is usable, readily available, flexible and user-friendly, and practicing Collaboration in the design of the new review system.

In all, we are very proud of your institution's activity and progress since becoming involved in the Academic Quality Improvement Project. To communicate the good experience that many institutions have had in AQIP, we are collecting "testimonials" for publicity purposes. We want to share actual institutional experiences regarding AQIP with improvement-focused colleges and universities considering AQIP as their reaccreditation option. If willing to help, please provide a concise comment or two, submitted by February 15, 2002 to Mary Fleming ([mfleming@hlcommission.org](mailto:mfleming@hlcommission.org)), or by fax to her at 312-263-7462. We would most appreciate an honest 3-4 sentence statement about AQIP's value as a process, about any of AQIP's subparts, or about ways in which AQIP has helped you keep institutional focus on continuous performance improvement. You need to make clear in the note (e-mailed, faxed, or snail-mailed) that we can quote you, and provide the name and title of person being quoted.

**Developing a Systems Portfolio for the Systems Appraisal**

As you know, participation in AQIP demands that you fashion and pursue a set of Action Projects that will concretely involve your faculty, staff, and administrators in the development of a culture of continuous improvement, and that Glen Oaks Community College periodically conduct a comprehensive,

systems-oriented analysis of its "big picture." Creating this Systems Portfolio serves multiple purposes: it allows AQIP to continue to vouch publicly for your institution's performance in the areas that you deem most important, it provides AQIP and the Higher Learning Commission to have documentation upon which to base your continued accreditation, and it provides the stimulus to help you identify areas for future Action Projects or other improvements.

The Systems Appraisal will begin three years after your attendance at the last Strategy Forum, so you should plan ahead now for the completion and review of your Systems Portfolio during the next few years, beginning with those AQIP Criteria that correspond primarily to your current Action Projects. At the 2002 Commission Annual Meeting you will receive more detailed information on what this Portfolio should look like, tips for preparing it, and a sample of a fully completed Systems Portfolio.

In the meanwhile, however, you should begin considering how you will craft the sections of the Systems Portfolio that deal with the AQIP Criteria that relate most directly to your current Action Projects. We would envision you answering, directly and in order, the questions posed under each Criterion section, presenting your context, key processes, performance results, and approaches to improvement for each Criterion. Our current estimate is that the section of your Systems Portfolio describing "Helping Students Learn" should take up about 15-25 double-spaced pages (about 8,400 – 14,000 words), and that each of the other eight Criteria should occupy 6 – 10 double-spaced pages each (about 3,500 – 5,600 words). Our target for the total Systems Portfolio is about 100 double-spaced pages (about 56,000 words). We know creating this Portfolio will be an exciting, consensus-building enterprise on every campus, and the sooner you begin considering how you will approach it, the less burdensome and more rewarding the work will become.

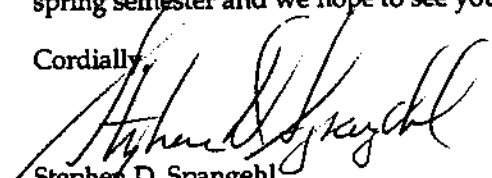
### **Annual Meeting**

We invite you to the Higher Learning Commission's Annual Meeting, March 23-26, 2002, at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Chicago. AQIP is prominently featured and we are asking AQIP institutions to present table displays on Saturday, March 23 as part of an all-day Networking Gallery and Collaborative Quality Colloquia. There is no charge for this event. Please contact Mary Fleming (mfleming@hlcommission.org) by January 31, 2002 if you would like to participate. Meeting registration information is available at [www.ncahigherlearningcommission.org](http://www.ncahigherlearningcommission.org) and at [www.AQIP.org](http://www.AQIP.org).

Beyond numerous off-hours networking opportunities and other sessions addressing AQIP's directions and offerings, we are also holding an AQIP Improvement Session, and hosting a reception (in the exhibition hall, on Monday afternoon) honoring the faculty, staff, and administrators of those institutions who have undertaken quality journeys. The improvement session is an excellent opportunity for you and your colleagues to help shape the continual progress of AQIP, and the reception will be an excellent opportunity to network, both with other AQIP schools and with those still unsure of making an institutional commitment to continuous improvement.

Finally, we again wish you the best as you continue addressing your Action Projects. Have an excellent spring semester and we hope to see you at the Annual Meeting in March!

Cordially,



Stephen D. Spangehl  
Director

13 Dec. 2001



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## Action Project Annual Update

*Submit electronically (send this file with an email) to  
AQIP@HLCommission.org by December 1, 2001.  
It is not necessary to send a paper copy.*

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Fill out one form for each Action Project on which you have worked this past year. (If you've completed a Project, fill out forms for both the one completed and the one which will replace it.) Each completed form should be no longer than three printed pages. Call AQIP at 800-621-7440, or email AQIP@HLCommission.org, if you have any questions.

Action Project title: Evaluate the Viability and Effectiveness of Instructional Degrees and Certificates (hereinafter "Programs")

Name of Institution: Glen Oaks Community College

Name of Person to contact

for additional information: Dr. Richard Wedemeyer

Telephone number: (616) 467- 9945 Email address: rwedemeyer@glenoaks.cc.mi.us

1. In the past year, what have you accomplished on this Action Project? What is its current status?

A. Accomplishments: Established the Program Review Committee.

B. Current Status: Creating a program rating system and a program review schedule.

2. How did you involve people in your institution in your work on this Action Project?

The college's quality council (Team GO) authorized a committee to carry out the objectives of this goal. The committee includes representatives from the following areas of the college:

Business Office  
College Operations  
Faculty  
Institutional Research  
Student Services

**3. What are your planned next steps on this Action Project?**

The Program Review Committee will develop a rating system and a program review schedule by the end of Winter 2002 Semester.

**4. Has your work on this Project resulted in an "effective practice" of which you are proud and that we could share with the broader higher education community? If so, describe the practice.**

Not at this time. An effective practice may be the result, but our project is just beginning.

**5. What challenges or problems, if any, are you still facing with regard to this Action Project?**

It is too early in the process to identify the challenges or problems.

**If you would like to discuss the possibility of AQIP's providing you with help to stimulate progress on this Action Project, explain your need here and tell us *whom* to call, and when.**

Not at this time.