IVCC recognizes students as the primary reason the organization exists and to that end maintains a number of key collaborative relationships and partnerships, without which IVCC could not successfully execute its mission. In a district that includes 2,000 square miles, the 21 high schools are among the most important relationships connecting prospective students to IVCC. Employers and area industry provide additional key collaborative relationships. Many of the key relationships are listed in Figure 9.1.

### Figure 9.1 IVCC Key Collaborative Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Relationship</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Relevance to Mission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>K-12 Schools</strong></td>
<td>Source of students, Collaborative projects, Special events</td>
<td>Provide access to higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Four-year Colleges</strong></td>
<td>Articulation, Transfer</td>
<td>Access and preparedness for academic transfer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employers</strong></td>
<td>Advisory committees, Training contracts, Clinical sites, Internships, Special events</td>
<td>Supply quality workforce and fulfill training needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational Organizations</strong></td>
<td>Tech Prep (Technical Preparation), Starved Rock Associates for Vocational and Technical Education (SRAVTE)</td>
<td>Provide quality educational opportunities between secondary education and the College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Organizations</strong></td>
<td>Accreditation, Regulation, Area chambers of commerce, Discipline- and position-specific professional development associations</td>
<td>Assures quality of IVCC programs and community responsiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Agencies</strong></td>
<td>Regulatory, Performance and comparative data, Funding</td>
<td>Assures quality of IVCC programs and provides comparative data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty</strong></td>
<td>Instruction, Curriculum development</td>
<td>Assures fulfillment of and focus on mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support Staff</strong></td>
<td>Academic, instructional, technological, and physical support of entire organization</td>
<td>Support all key functions of the College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Board of Directors</strong></td>
<td>Vision, leadership</td>
<td>Assure that the College is fulfilling its mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Students</strong></td>
<td>Primary stakeholder</td>
<td>The primary group that drives the College’s mission</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9C2 In what ways do these collaborative relationships reinforce your institutional mission? If applicable, how do these relationships support changes in your institutional directions as addressed in Criterion 8, Planning Continuous Improvement?

Collaborative relationships are vital to fulfilling IVCC’s mission. One example of the impact collaborative relationships have on the products and services IVCC provides is the labor force trends that were revealed in the most recent environmental scan. Both the data collected for the scan and interviews with community representatives revealed that the anticipated ongoing growth of the transportation industry in the Illinois Valley area will continue to drive the need for trained truck drivers and warehousing/logistics workers. As part of the Governor's statewide Critical Skills Shortage Initiative and working in partnership with the Local Workforce Investment Board # 12, IVCC has developed a new certificate in Warehousing and Distribution to help address training needs directly identified in the environmental scan. A second labor force trend is that the healthcare sector will continue to see job growth for the next three to five years. These are only two examples of the critical role partnerships and relationships will continue to play in reinforcing IVCC’s institutional mission.

In August 2003, IVCC entered into a three-year partnership with six area hospitals. The goal of this partnership was to increase the number of students admitted to and graduating from the Associate Degree Nursing Program. In turn, this would increase the pool of qualified graduates for employment. To allow this to occur, the CEOs of all six area hospitals agreed to pay the salary of one new, full-time, master’s-prepared nursing instructor for three years. The six area hospitals recently renewed their commitment to fund a full-time faculty position in Nursing.

With the new hospital partnerships in place, 15 additional students were admitted to the Associate Degree Nursing Program in the fall of 2003. The graduation rate for nursing increased by 36.5 percent from 2004 to 2005. Because of this partnership, IVCC was made aware of other healthcare shortages in this district and IVCC has developed a certificate in Phlebotomy, a certificate in Medical Transcription, and a series of Medical Coding classes.

The institutional mission would be impossible without the many successful internal relationships, as well. These specific collaborative relationships between departments, divisions, and college service areas demonstrate that no single work unit can provide all of the needs of the College’s students and community.

9P1 How do you create, prioritize, and build relationships with the educational institutions and other organizations from which you receive your students?

IVCC continues to partner with educational institutions and other organizations such as the Regional Office of Education and SRAVTE to create and build relationships with potential students through programs, services, and events. One example is the annual Career Fair. The Career Fair invites eighth grade and high school students to IVCC’s campus to participate in hands-on career exploration activities. Another example is a Counselor Convocation, an annual event structured to create and build relationships between high school counselors and IVCC, so that they may better serve high school students preparing for college.
College Night is another example of the ways in which IVCC creates relationships with potential students. Not only is this event a prime opportunity to recruit for IVCC, but IVCC opens this event up to over 50 colleges from around the state. College Night also helps strengthen the relationship between IVCC and the other participating colleges through the personal connection and face-to-face interaction with professional counterparts. These joint activities with four-year colleges help promote IVCC as a "first choice" for students to consider for completing transfer coursework before enrolling at a four-year college.

Since the early 1990s, IVCC has pioneered in developing Tech Prep programs at the community college level. IVCC’s Tech Prep team, winner of five Connections 2000 Awards from the Illinois State Board of Education, has attracted statewide, nationwide, and international attention with its innovative projects. (More information can be found at http://www.ivcc.edu/techprep/General%20information/General-information.htm).

IVCC has partnered with 17 of the 21 high schools within the College’s district to offer college credit and non-credit courses in convenient locations for the community as well as dual credit/dual enrollment courses for high school juniors and seniors, called the Early Entry College (E²C) Program. In spring 2006, the College created a Dual Credit Coordinator position to strengthen the relationship between IVCC and district high schools. The Coordinator is charged with increasing the number of E²C courses offered; increasing enrollments in existing E²C offerings; and implementing continuous improvement strategies in the recruitment, registration, and reporting processes associated with all of IVCC’s E²C offerings. The College’s expectation is that Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Tech Prep offerings will increase as these partnerships grow.

In addition, IVCC continues to strengthen relationships with a wide range of stakeholders through courses geared toward educators, Associate of Arts in Teaching (A.A.T.) program, hospital partnerships, student orientations, course articulation, and transferability. The College’s program advisory committees are other examples of strong partnerships specifically forged with local employers. In addition to recruitment of graduates of the College’s CTE programs, the advisory committees provide the College with guidance for curriculum revision. Members also send their current employees to IVCC to upgrade and expand their skills. Each CTE program meets at least once a year with their advisory committee to get their input and to share information about current course offerings.

9P1 How do you create, prioritize, and build relationships with the educational institutions and employers that depend on a supply of your students and graduates who meet their requirements?

Through CTE program advisory committees, IVCC creates and builds relationships with employers that will potentially result in hiring IVCC graduates. Other activities that promote business and industry relationships include employer panel discussions, internships, special events, special programs, and services.

The Business Training Center (BTC) is an important community program for employee development and training. The BTC serves district companies by providing business consulting and training programs that improve employee performance and enhance organizational
productivity, efficiency, and quality. The BTC offers customized training courses to area employers, ranging from basic skills to technical and industrial skills, health and safety, quality, leadership, management/organizational development, computer training, and communications. The BTC also has a partnership with the Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center to provide objective and affordable expertise to help small- to mid-sized manufacturers improve their productivity and competitiveness. The BTC works with state agencies in an effort to obtain grant funds that can be used to reduce the training costs for area employers.

IVCC continues a history of partnerships with other educational institutions through the development of articulation agreements and offering recruitment days for four-year colleges and universities. Included in these is the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI), through which the College partners with the Illinois Community College Board, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, Illinois public universities, and Illinois community colleges to provide a system of seamless transfer to state universities.

**9P1 How do you create, prioritize, and build relationships with organizations that provide services to your students?**

IVCC works with underserved populations through the Hispanic Partnership Council, Youth Services Bureau, and other community-based organizations. The College works to maintain communication with various publications that market IVCC services to the district.

The Dislocated Workers Center, located on IVCC’s campus, is a branch of the local integrated workforce system and provides employment-related services to both employers and job seekers under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act. Individuals served at the Center can enroll in college training programs and/or receive career planning and job search assistance.

The Development Office invests in the future of IVCC students by providing over 180 scholarships annually through the IVCC Foundation and by purchasing instructional equipment for classrooms and labs the College could not otherwise afford. In 2006, the Foundation provided over $100,000 in scholarship funding to IVCC students.

The I-READ Literacy program at IVCC partners with all public libraries within the district to provide locations convenient to the community for adult and family literacy programs and services.

IVCC partners with Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Service (ADV/SAS), the regional domestic abuse agency to provide services to assist students and community members who are victims or potential victims of domestic violence or sexual assault. This partnership has resulted in a federal grant that supports and has helped to expand the program.

**9P1 How do you create, prioritize, and build relationships with education associations, external agencies, consortia partners, and the general community with whom you interact?**

Other relationships between IVCC and external agencies and the general community are supported by the Continuing Education and Business Services Division, which offers courses for
the general community and to assist local employers. The Illinois Small Business Development Center (ISBDC) is part of a statewide network of management assistance and training for those who own a business and for those who are seeking to start a business. It is sponsored by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and the Small Business Administration (SBA). The ISBDC has formed a partnership with IVCC and its office on campus for small business consultation and referral.

9P2 How do you ensure the varying needs of those involved in these relationships are being met?

IVCC ensures that the needs of those involved in relationships are being met by interviewing or surveying participants and collecting data. IVCC conducts student evaluations, participated in the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) in 2003 and 2006, as well as the Noel-Levitz Survey in 2005.

IVCC also tracks the number of students passing licensure exams, number of students continuing on to four-year colleges and universities, and the number of students successful in obtaining employment in their field of study.

9P3 How do you create and build relationships within their institution? How do you assure integration and communication across these relationships?

One internal process for understanding relationships within the institution is an assessment of the culture. The Organizational Culture Survey conducted in fall 2004 revealed that IVCC is a people-centered organization, interested in building capacity through acquiring new resources, and a culture that does not necessarily resist change. However, it is a culture that does not easily embrace the levels of outreach and collaboration necessary to become a more entrepreneurial culture. While the intent was to re-administer the Organizational Culture Index, College leaders decided instead to use the Personal Assessment of College Environment (PACE) as an indicator of College climate and employee satisfaction (see Figure 4.7).

In an effort to increase IVCC’s internal communication and collaborative relationships, an action project was charged with increasing understanding of internal roles and responsibilities. One result of this action project includes a combined all-staff in-service, in which all college employees will interact throughout a full day of development and training activities. Prior to this, the faculty and support staff have each had their own development day. A second result is the opportunity for job shadowing among faculty, staff, and administration.

9P4 What measures of building collaborative relationships do you collect and analyze regularly?

While there are various measures throughout the College that relate to analyzing collaborative relationships, there is no system-wide process. One step the College has taken to bridge this gap was the creation of an AQIP Action Project charged with understanding students and other stakeholders. In 2005, this action project began collecting data to prioritize the key stakeholder groups and to determine what data is collected and analyzed for each. The initial survey results found that the College prioritized students as the most important, followed by IVCC employees.
Community members and employers were essentially tied for third, with transfer universities ranked last (see Figure 9.2).

**Figure 9.2 IVCC Key Stakeholder Groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 Key Stakeholder Groups</th>
<th>Average Rank</th>
<th>Low Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IVCC Employees</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Members</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Universities</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>539</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, the action project collected baseline data regarding how individuals at the College communicated with and assessed the needs of high school students as a key stakeholder group. Survey questions attempted to acquire data on the following:
- Method of communication and frequency
- Type of information collected
- Purpose information was collected
- High schools most frequently communicated with
- Methods of assessment
- Methods of documentation of assessments

**9R1 What are your results in building your key collaborative relationships?**

One example of results for key collaborative relationships is baseline data from Action Project 2 on one key stakeholder group—high school graduates. The data revealed that 77 percent of college staff communicates with this stakeholder group and that 67 percent of that communication is face-to-face. The most cited purpose of communication was for recruitment, followed by understanding needs and expectations.

Results for other relationships include measuring the participation levels in IVCC activities and events by other agencies and educational associations. Some examples include:
- Extension site classes at approximately 17 district high schools
- Ten Tech Prep articulation agreements with district high schools
- 74 employers attended the 2007 Job Fair
- Over 50 Illinois area colleges attended College Night 2006
- 11 district high schools participated in the IVCC/SRAVTE Consortium

**9R2 Regarding 9R1, how do your results compare with the results of other higher education institutions and, if appropriate, organizations outside the education community?**

There is no comparison data available on partnership success that IVCC is aware of.
How do you improve your current processes and systems for building collaborative relationships?

Based on the environmental scan results, the institution recognizes the opportunities for improvement in streamlining system-wide processes for building collaborative relationships. Two significant competition trends identified in the environmental scan highlight this specific category.

The first trend revealed that neighboring community colleges are increasing offerings of online courses and courses at satellite locations. The suburbs of Chicago are pushing west to the Illinois Valley area while the colleges to the east of IVCC have developed or are in the process of developing satellite locations closer to IVCC’s district. Specific areas for improvement regarding this trend include:

- Need for more partnerships with other institutions
- Need to review standards for student support and success
- Need to survey high school opportunities in lab sciences and CTE programs

The second trend revealed that demand will increase for short-term training and personal use courses offered by corporations, professional organizations, and non-profit groups. Specific areas for improvement regarding this trend include:

- Capitalize on partnerships with four-year institutions
- Educate employers to value education
- Target employees and employers
- Evaluate marketing and relationships

Finally, a new position to recruit students for Career and Technical Education programs and manage the Early Entry College and Tech Prep articulation programs is expected to be approved by the Board of Trustees. This person will expand our opportunities for partnership development among local high schools, the SRAVTE, and the Area Career Center.

With regard to your current results for building collaborative relationships, how do you set targets for improvement? What specific improvement priorities are you targeting and how will these be addressed? How do you communicate your current results and improvement priorities to relationship partners, faculty, staff, administrators, and appropriate students and stakeholders?

IVCC has not established performance targets regarding its key collaborative relationships.