

Systems Portfolio Guide

A Resource For Creating Your Systems Portfolio



Academic Quality Improvement Program

The Higher Learning Commission

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The Systems Portfolio

The Systems Portfolio serves a number of purposes simultaneously. It is:

- a means by which you can get high-quality, actionable feedback on your organizational strengths and opportunities from a team of quality improvement experts and educators;
- a body of evidence to show The Higher Learning Commission that your institution is meeting its Criteria for Accreditation;
- a common reference point that lets everyone in your institution share an understanding of how you are organized, what your key processes are, what kind of performance those processes produce, and how you improve;
- a planning tool that helps you shape the institution's future agenda and concentrate everyone's attention on those areas that should be the focus of scrutiny for improvement;
- evidence, over time, that AQIP is working to your institution's advantage, and that your continued participation in the program makes sense; and
- a public information and relations tool that lets all of your stakeholders understand clearly and persuasively what you are accomplishing with your resources.

Your Systems Portfolio communicates to a variety of audiences, including the public. It isn't just for the Higher Learning Commission. Begin by envisioning the different groups of people who will read it, considering what each group knows about higher education and why they are interested in your institution.

You can assume that your AQIP audience understands specialized terms relative to higher education. Other audiences, which might include prospective students, parents, employers, funding or governance bodies, state coordinating or regulatory boards, prospective faculty and staff, donors, or other accrediting agencies, may not. Some of these groups might require additional explanation of terms or concepts that peer higher educators would understand.

Creating the Overview

Provide an overview of your organization by briefly introducing vital characteristics such as mission, values, strategic vision, history, location, control (public or private) and status (for-profit or not-for-profit), and then answering the following nine items in a total of fewer than 5000 words (approximately 10 double-spaced printed pages). Devote no more than 1000 words (2 pages) to item 1 and no more than 500 words (1 page) each to items 2 to 9. In your Overview, describe the context and constraints within which your organization structures and operates its systems and processes, but use the appropriate AQIP Category P, R, and I items to explain and evaluate the processes themselves.

What are your goals for student learning and shaping an academic climate? What are your key credit and non-credit instructional programs, and educational systems, services, and technologies that directly support them?

1. What are your goals for student learning and shaping an academic climate? What are your key credit and noncredit instructional programs, and educational systems, services, and technologies that directly support them?

2. What key organizational services, other than instructional programs, do you provide for your students and other external stakeholders? What programs do you operate to achieve them?

3. What are the short- and long-term requirements and expectations of the current student and other key stakeholder groups you serve? Who are your primary competitors in serving these groups?
4. What are your administrative, faculty, and staff human resources? What key factors determine how you organize and use them?
5. What strategies align your leadership, decision-making, and communication processes with your mission and values, the policies and requirements of your oversight entities, and your legal, ethical, and social responsibilities?
6. What strategies align your key administrative support goals with your mission and values? What services, facilities, and equipment do you provide to achieve them?
7. What determines the data and information you collect and distribute? What information resources and technologies govern how you manage and use data?
8. What are the key commitments, constraints, challenges, and opportunities with which you must align your organization's short- and long-term plans and strategies?
9. What key partnerships and collaborations, external and internal, contribute to your organization's effectiveness?

Organizing Content

In each Category, address "in depth" at least 1/3 of the total items P, R, and I items, covering in depth at least one P, one R, and one I item. A Systems Portfolio should include references (item numbers, at a minimum) for all Category items. Items not addressed in depth and thus recognized as future opportunities for improvement may be answered briefly and honestly: "We don't do this at present." Or "We currently have no comparative performance results from other organizations for processes in this category."

Items that represented significant strengths in earlier Systems Portfolios can similarly be answered with a short response rather than an "in depth" discussion: "Our processes in this area are robust and well designed, as our last Systems Appraisal recognized." (An institution could provide a hyperlink in a statement like this, giving readers who want more information about these "robust and well-designed" processes a means of reading the details.)

Visit <http://AQIP.pbwiki.com> for *Notes and Support for Systems Portfolios*, an internet-based wiki containing both official AQIP guidance as well as advice and tips from the AQIP community higher educators.

No matter what your current stage of development or mix of priorities, Category 1 should occupy at least 15% of the total space in your Portfolio (about 15 pages in a 100-page Portfolio), and none of the other eight Categories should be passed over in less than about 7% of the total space (7 pages in a 100-page Portfolio). But within the sections devoted to each of the Categories, you have much latitude to focus on what is most important to you now. As a higher education organization begins to look at itself through AQIP's process-focused Categories, it will realize that there are developmental stages through which it will pass (or has passed) for each Category. These stages occur at different points in different areas of an organization. The organization needs to estimate its current stage of development in any particular Category and respond to those P, R, and I items

that will be most useful in producing beneficial feedback for the organization – appraisals of its strengths and opportunities that the organization can use to propel itself to the next developmental stage. Consequently, AQIP will expect to see an institution’s Systems Portfolio shift towards *performance results* and *improvement* and devote greater and greater emphasis on the R and I items (and less, comparatively, on the P items as an institution gets more and more of its processes under control). The second, third, and subsequent versions of an institution’s Systems Portfolio should clearly document how the benefits of improving processes is paying off, and where the evidence shows it.

Further, AQIP expects experienced institutions to become more skilled at telling their stories effectively — describing processes succinctly, presenting significant results clearly, and explaining systems for operations and improvement vividly. Subsequent versions of an institution’s Portfolio ought to reflect growth in these skills.

Stages in Organizational Quality Development

Reacting Approaches. The organization sees its operations as activities rather than processes. Operations primarily respond to immediate needs or problems and don’t concentrate much on anticipating future requirements, capacities, or changes. Goals are implicit and poorly defined. There are lots of “informal” procedures and processes. “Putting out fires” seems more important than preventing them.

Systematic Approaches. The organization is at the beginning stages of conducting its operations by repeatable, consistent processes that it can evaluate and improve. It has begun to see the value of making explicit the goal of every activity, procedure, and process and of designing “proactive” processes that prevent rather than discover problems. There are early signs of closer coordination among organizational units, with effective processes being deployed across the organization. Strategy and quantitative goals are being defined. The walls between organizational “silos” are beginning to erode.

Aligned Approaches. The organization groups and manages operations as processes that are repeatable and regularly evaluated for improvement. It strives to make sure that what is learned is shared among organizational units. Its processes address the organization’s key goals and strategies. Coordination among units, divisions, and departments is a major emphasis. People see “the big picture” and relate what they do to organizational goals and strategies.

Integrated Approaches. Operations are characterized by processes that are repeatable and regularly evaluated for change and improvement in collaboration with other affected

Use the Organizational Overview questions in each Category to begin with a statement summarizing where you think your institution is on that category, and why you are focusing on the items you have chosen. This statement will explain and alert readers of your Portfolio to the logic behind choices you have made in answering the questions. If you have little or no results data in a Category, say so directly, and explain you have chosen instead to devote more space and attention to describing current processes in order to develop the situation that will enable you to define and measure results. When you get to the **R1** and **R2** questions, say “No significant data is currently available for performance in this Category; see items C1-3 for explanation” or something equally brief and direct. This will enable your System Appraisers to give you feedback where it is most valuable — the areas that demand your current focus and attention.

AQIP will not penalize you for selecting the Category questions to which you respond more fully, nor will the audience that reads your Systems Portfolio. (In contrast, everyone has strong negative responses to institutions that make up answers to questions where they really have nothing to

report.)

Although AQIP will require its Systems Appraisers to read and analyze *everything* in the roughly 100 pages of an institution’s Systems Portfolio, institutions should also embed in the Portfolio links (if the document is electronic web-based) and references (if it is print-based) to additional resources. These links can refer readers to other web pages, electronic documents, or even print documents that provide additional explanation and evidence of how its processes work, what

results they are achieving, and how improvement is encouraged. With the right links, you can present to other users of your Portfolio — your faculty and staff, current and prospective students, other accrediting agencies, the public — a much fuller and more comprehensive picture of your institution and the difference it is making for those it serves.

AQIP encourages — but does not require — its Systems Appraisers to follow System Portfolio links, so plan your Portfolio so that its basic 100 pages respond to all nine Categories. Make sure your Organizational Overview and your responses to each Category explain the reasons you are emphasizing **P**, **R**, or **I** items in each section of your Portfolio.

When addressing any item under one of the nine AQIP Categories, be sure to reference, where appropriate, information from the Organizational Overview.

Creating your initial Systems Portfolio is a task you can take on in pieces, one Category at a time. Here are some tips to get you started.

- Begin by creating the sections that deal with the Categories that relate directly to your current (or proposed) Action Projects. Understanding the systems that underlie your Projects will make their success more likely.
- Be concise! You have limited space, so address the key processes and results related to each Category.
- Do not hesitate to reference other Category descriptions when responding to Category items – this will help illustrate how your institution’s processes are aligned and linked.

Processes (P)

Wherever possible, present your processes by using tables and flowcharts providing needed explanation in text. Describe your processes by explaining how they work. Who is included is fine, but the key information is how processes work and are deployed across your institution. Do not hesitate to reference other Category descriptions when responding to process items – this will help illustrate how your institution’s processes are aligned.

Process items allow you to:

- put early institutional efforts into developing a process focus;
- clarify the goals for which key processes exist;
- re-engineer processes that are now done reactively or casually;
- describe those processes now in use clearly and precisely;
- connect separated activities and operations by explaining how they are parts of a larger process; and
- deploy the most effective processes widely throughout the institution.

When a higher education organization first begins to work on continuous improvement by becoming conscious of its own processes, it may find that:

- many of its processes are traditional or informal, and no one thinks about them much;
- many independent activities, offices, and procedures have shared, common goals, but are not perceived as parts of a single process;
- many of its processes evolved and were never consciously designed to achieve their goals;

- many processes are cumbersome and involve steps that add little value and produce delays and errors;
- many processes have multiple conflicting goals — or no clear goal;
- few processes are actively managed by an individual or group charged with responsibility for improving them;
- the costs of processes are not accounted regularly or precisely;
- the effectiveness of processes at accomplishing desired goals is not measured; and
- improvement of processes is sporadic, unplanned, and unpredictable.

Given this common situation, the place for most institutions to begin improvement is by accurately capturing current practice in key areas — documenting the *who*, *when*, *where*, *how*, and *why* for key institutional processes. The AQIP **P** (for **Process**) items under each Category are helpful in stimulating inquiry about key processes. But as it begins its quality journey, the typical college or university cannot possibly focus attention equally on all of the numerous key processes suggested by the Category questions. To be of maximum value to an institution, the Systems Portfolio must focus attention on those processes most essential for the next stages in its quality efforts. Three useful targets for attention at this early stage are:

1. **Critical processes**, whose effectiveness will translate into institutional success or failure in the near future.
2. **Broad sets of independently-run, autonomous activities that share common goals**, operations that are not now recognized as a single institution-wide process that includes multiple activities; or that react to situations, challenges, and opportunities instead of proactively anticipating and avoiding problems before they arise.
3. **Model processes** that the institution has consciously designed (or re-engineered) to accomplish goals that are clearly expressed, especially processes that look different from other organizations' processes because they were engineered to fit the institution's distinctive mission, and processes for which measures of effectiveness have been identified and where data patterns reveal trends.

Choose carefully the **Process** questions to which you respond in depth. Select items that allow your institution to spotlight those processes on which its attention needs to be concentrated immediately or over the next 2 – 4 years. When you devote a lot of space in your Portfolio to responding to a **Process** question, it should normally be because (a) you recently completed an Action Project that significantly improved the process under discussion and everyone needs to know how that happened, or (b) you would like to see commitment to an Action Project that will significantly improve the process under discussion and everyone needs to understand why such an effort makes sense.

Some Tips on Process items:

- Where possible, present your *Processes* by using tables and flowcharts, providing needed explanation in accompanying text.
- Describe your *Processes* by explaining how they work. Explaining who is included may be useful, but the critical information is how processes operate to achieve their purposes.
- Be sure to describe how your processes are deployed across your institution. If a process is used only in one department or division, say so; if you accomplish the same end with different processes in different units, say so.

Results (R)

When responding to results items, understand you can only present KEY results –you may have to reference the existence of other results and their trends in a compact format so that readers understand your track and use other types of results information

Results items allow you to:

- Develop measures that indicate a process's successful operation and achievement of its goals,
- Gather data that shows the operation of a process over time and allows understanding of the causes of variation in its performance,
- Obtain data from other organizations on similar processes that allow the institution to see exactly how effective or poor its own processes are.

The organization truly committed to quality is *never* satisfied that its current performance is the best it can do, and knowing how well it currently performs is essential to knowing whether to strive for improved performance. Thus, gathering results on whether key processes are achieving their goals — realistically — is essential for an AQIP institution.

But before an institution can measure results meaningfully, it must stabilize its processes and understand them well enough to use measurement productively. Even when the goals of a process are ill-defined, an institution could measure the process's cost, cycle time, and gross productivity (e.g., number of students enrolled, number of forms processed, number of applications distributed, etc.). But these measures have limited value without the context provided by clearly understanding the goals of a process; used poorly, rough measures of the wrong kind can lead to serious problems. Jumping too strongly into measurement, and doing it too early, can do more harm than good.

Not having results that document the performance of your key processes is normal, but not desirable — for AQIP institutions, particularly. But the situation is common in many colleges and universities (as well as businesses in other economic sectors). Don't waste Portfolio space talking about performance results you don't have.

AQIP expects every institution to work toward identifying measures that can document the effectiveness of its processes and therefore expects that the last of the **P** (for **Process**) questions in each AQIP Category will be discussed in the Systems Portfolio. But it does not expect that every institution, as it begins its quality journey, to already have performance data to report under the **R** (for **Results**) questions. And it will be rare for an institution that has not been working at performance measurement seriously for several years to have enough data of its own to warrant the collection of comparative data that can be used to evaluate key processes.

Some Tips on Results items:

- When addressing **Results** sections, understand you can only present key results – this may mean you have to reference the existence of other results and their trends in a compact format so that readers understand you track and use other types of results information in addition to the results you are reporting.
- If you describe a process in detail because it is critical to achieving your institution's mission, reviewers will expect to find how you intend to measure these important processes, even if a track record of results doesn't exist.

- If you have no significant data on the performance of processes in a given category, do not respond to the R (for Results) questions in that Category. Instead, invest your energies in re-engineering your processes so that they have clear goals, prevent problems from occurring, work stably and effectively, and can be measured.
- If you are just beginning to get data on the performance of your own processes, do not respond to the R (for Results) questions asking about comparative data and benchmarking. Until your processes are better designed and more stable, you can't afford to invest efforts and space in these areas.

Improvement (I)

Responses should illustrate a clear pattern of how you are improving your processes (and therefore your results) and what specific improvements are being targeted.

Improvement items allow you to:

- Benchmark to discover and adapt the best practices of outstanding organizations
- Build regular mechanisms that create predictable cycles for improving all processes
- View systematic improvement as a challenge worth working for.

Systematic, continuous improvement is an extremely challenging goal, one that requires most institutions to *first* master the art of designing and measuring key processes. It is only when performance is known and can be analyzed that true continuous improvement becomes possible. Therefore, most institutions will find that the first iterations of their Systems Portfolio will have little or nothing to say in response to the I items. Successful Action Projects are best reported as part of the processes they have been used to re-engineer, using the I questions only to report reliable, repeated, institutionalized processes that guarantee the improvement of processes cycle after cycle.

Indexing your Systems Portfolio to summarize the evidence that you continue to meet the five Criteria for Accreditation

AQIP functions *both* as a quality improvement program *and* a quality assurance program. To maintain their accreditation, colleges and universities need to demonstrate clearly that they continue to meet the Higher Learning Commission's five *Criteria for Accreditation*. To assist, participating institutions submit a simple *Index to the five Criteria for Accreditation* along with their Systems Portfolios. This separate 3 - 5 page *Index* allows AQIP's Systems Appraisal team to efficiently review the evidence that an institution continues to meet the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*. However, AQIP's need for this index does not turn the Systems Appraisal into a summative judgment about accreditation. If the Systems Appraisal identifies gaps in an institution's documentation that it meets accreditation requirements, the institution will still have several opportunities (via paper or through a *Checkup Visit*) to provide the needed evidence in order to assure that AQIP's seven-year *Reaffirmation of Accreditation* will go smoothly.

Where evidence is likely to appear in a Systems Portfolio that an institution is meeting the Commission's common Criteria for Accreditation

Commission's Criteria for Accreditation 	Criterion One: Mission and Integrity.	Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future.	Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching.	Criterion Four: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge.	Criterion Five: Engagement and Service.
AQIP Categories 					
1. Helping Students Learn	x		x	x	
2. Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives	x			x	x
3. Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs	x		x	x	x
4. Valuing People				x	x
5. Leading and Communicating	x		x		x
6. Supporting Institutional Operations		x			
7. Measuring Effectiveness		x	x	x	x
8. Planning Continuous Improvement		x			
9. Building Collaborative Relationships		x			x

Bear in mind that *evidence*, as we are using the word, refers to more than simply making claims. The Systems Portfolio needs to present the facts and logic upon which your claims rest. Rather than simply assert “We have effective systems for assessing student learning,” the Portfolio needs to explain who you assess, how you assess, how frequently you assess, how broadly assessment is deployed across the institution, what results you’re getting, and how you use the data to improve and to communicate your effectiveness publicly. If, given the focus of your current Systems Portfolio, providing that much detail is awkward, a link within your Portfolio can point the way to additional evidence. The Systems Appraisal team will trust that your descriptions of institutional practices, activities, and systems are accurate and therefore provide trustworthy evidence that you meet the Commission’s *Criteria*, but the team cannot make this determination unless your Portfolio presents or summarizes real evidence.

AQIP needs each institution's *Index*, as a short, separate document, along with its Portfolio for a Systems Appraisal.

The box presents a sample of the kind of *Index* you need to prepare, with simple descriptions or reports pointing at the evidence Appraisers will find in the various sections of your Portfolio.

For most of the institutions participating in it, AQIP functions *both* as a quality assurance *and* a quality improvement program. Thus institutions using AQIP to maintain their accreditation from The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools need to demonstrate clearly that their college or university continues to meet the Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation*.

Your *Index* should be inserted at the end of your Portfolio and should provide a series of "bullets" (typically four or five) under each of the Criteria's Core Components, each bullet concisely reporting or summarizing what appears in a specific section of your Systems Portfolio. Following each bullet you should include, in brackets, the specific questions where this evidence appears. Thus your *Index* will look similar to our illustrative example. If appropriate, you may reference in your *Index* evidence that does not appear in your Systems Portfolio, but is available to the public (and

therefore to the Systems Appraisers) on the Internet or in print. If you do this, provide the web address (e.g., www.AQIP.org/downloads) or the title of the publication in the bracket in place of the AQIP question reference. This is an opportunity to show the Systems Appraisers how your Systems Portfolio contains much of this evidence by providing a simple *Index* of where the evidence for each Criterion and Core Component is located in the Portfolio.

Evidence demonstrating you meet Commission accreditation expectations may be distributed throughout your Systems Portfolio. Your *Index* needs to collect references to this evidence, under the five Criteria and their Core Components, so that the Appraisal Team can evaluate comprehensive compliance. You are free in your *Index* to reference your answer to *any* Systems Portfolio question as support to demonstrate you meeting *any* of the *Criteria for Accreditation*. If appropriate, you can even reference the same Portfolio sections for different Core Components. It is likely that certain sections of your Systems Portfolio will contain much of the evidence for one or another of the *Criteria for Accreditation*. The chart below may be helpful to you as you identify the locations of the relevant evidence in your Portfolio.

An electronic document (IndexTemplate.doc), available in the Systems Portfolio category of Downloads on the AQIP Website) provides you with a template for this *Index* by listing the five *Criteria for Accreditation* and Core Components under each Criterion. All you need to do is add

Selection from a sample Index to the Five Criteria for Accreditation

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.

- Mission documents approved by Board and published in 1997. [5C1]
- Board of Trustees approved current strategic plan and vision statement in 2001. [8C1, 8P1]
- Mission reflect a commitments to a diverse student population, the community, founding church denomination, and employees. [3C1, 3C2]
- Mission identifies overarching value-driven learning goals for all students relating to the development of the complete person. [1C1, 1C3, 1P1]
- Mission documents are available to the public, especially potential and current students, through a variety of sources. [5P6, 5P8, 5R1]

your 4-5 bullets under each Core Component and the bracketed reference to the Systems Portfolio question where the evidence for each bullet will appear.

Remember that the comprehensive review of your Systems Portfolio is NOT AQIP's review of your accreditation. If, after your Systems Appraisal is over, there remain questions about how you meet any of the Criteria for Accreditation, you will have ample opportunity to fill any gaps and show that all is well — long before AQIP determines reaffirmation of accredited status. The System Appraisal is only *one* opportunity to do this, in an iterative back-and-forth process that provides several opportunities.

Systems Portfolio Style

- Your Systems Portfolio can be no longer than 100 pages (*roughly* 50,000 words of text only, with no pictures, graphs, or white space). If your Portfolio contains flowcharts, tables, and other graphic communication devices, count each graphic as using up the words it would displace.
- The “100 pages maximum” rule trumps the “50,000 word” equivalent. Do not expect AQIP to appraise a Portfolio that exceeds 100 pages. (The 100-page limit includes the *Overview*, but the *Index to the Criteria for Accreditation* does not count as part of the 100 pages).
- You must provide an *Index to the Criteria for Accreditation* with your Systems Portfolio. (It is best if this is part of the same PDF that contains the Portfolio, but a separate PDF file is acceptable. Either way, the *Index* does not count as part of the Portfolio 100-page limit.) The Index helps the team understand where you have presented evidence for each of the five *Criteria for Accreditation* and *Core Components*, either in your Portfolio itself or through reference to a location on your institutional website. (Download an example of an *Index* from the AQIP website.) As you put your Portfolio together, pay attention to whether you've provided in it sufficient evidence that you are addressing each *Criterion*.
- Fonts should be easy to read (sans serif), and size should be set between 10 and 12 points; please avoid bizarre fonts.
- Footers with the page number and Category, and Headers with the organization's name and current date (month & year) should be included.
- All tables and graphics should be labeled, easy to read and the data clearly marked; text should refer to table by label.
- Use a single voice — “we,” or “the University”; avoid passives.
- Be brief, succinct and direct.
- Check spelling and grammar.
- Consider your audiences and care about readability.
- The Criteria questions should not be included in the Systems Portfolio; if you are using them in drafts of the Portfolio for guidance or assignment purposes, please remove them from your final document.
- If this is your “Second Edition” Systems Portfolio and you want to “carry forward” and retain material from your first edition (and not have it count against the 100 page limit), put the retained material on your website and put a link to it in your current Portfolio. Your Portfolio might respond to an item simply: **4P3** The 2005 Systems Appraisal saw our personnel processes as a major institutional strength because of our steps for hiring employees

committed to student success. We now have more data supporting these processes' effectiveness, but need **no additional feedback** on the processes themselves at this time. The link in this response (underlined) allows the team to read your previous response if it wishes, but the **boldfaced words** make it clear that you want this Appraisal team to focus its attention on your other responses.

Web-based

- If yours is a web-based Systems Portfolios (using MnSCU's eFolio or another platform), you need to provide the review team with a 100-page PDF version that captures the 100 pages of material where you want the team to focus its review efforts. If you want the team to have access to the full Portfolio, including all underlying documentation and "carry overs" from earlier versions of your Portfolio, send AQIP a link to the online version (or send us eight copies of a disk to which you've burned all the internet files that constitute your Portfolio). The team will use the PDF to make sure it analyzes and reviews everything you've answered "in depth," and the link or disk to see your institutional "big picture."

Submitting Your Systems Portfolio

1. If you are using the 2008 revision of the Categories to structure your Portfolio, use the Overview question corresponding to each Category to help the reviewers understand why you selected certain items to answer in depth and gave short or cursory answers to others.
2. Identify each response that you write with one – and only one – item number. Don't group items together (e.g., 3P4-6 or 8R1&3) when you respond — unless they are a group of sequential items to which you are **not** making an "in depth" response (in which case list each item number in the series, e.g., "3P4, 3P5, 3P6, 3P7 — We don't have defined processes for these things at this time, and recognize developing stable policies and procedures as future improvement opportunities.").
3. As the deadline for submitting your Systems Portfolio to AQIP comes closer, please use this reference to make sure that all the submission requirements are met. Doing this will help insure that the Appraisal process can begin on time and your Feedback Report will be delivered to you in a timely manner.
4. **Portfolios are due on June 1st and November 1st.** Your Portfolio will be due on one of these two dates. Reminder letters will be sent out alerting institutions as to when their Portfolio is due. Failure to submit your Portfolio on time will delay the start of the review process, cause your Feedback Report to be late, and trigger a reexamination of your AQIP participation.
5. **Indexes are due with the Portfolio.** The Index to the Five Criteria for Accreditation is due at the same time as your Portfolio. Attach it to the end of your Portfolio in both electronic and paper versions.
6. Submit your Portfolio as a 2 MB or smaller PDF file (of no more than 100 pages); the single file should include your *Overview*, your sections on each of the nine Categories, and (ideally) your *Index to the Criteria for Accreditation*. Email all files to AQIP@HLCommission.org by June 1, 2009. Sending us a paper copy is not required, but if you give us one we will use it as an example at workshops and our Annual Meeting.