ALAMO WAY GLOSSARY

4DX
The Four Disciplines of Execution (authored by Chris McChesney, Sean Covey, and Jim Huling) is a simple, repeatable set of practices for organizations and individuals to focus on what is important, execute strategic priorities, and achieve superb results. The 4DX methodology involves four disciplines: Focusing on the wildly important, Acting on lead measures, Keeping a compelling scoreboard, and creating a cadence of accountability.

Academic Year
The 12-month period of time generally extending from September to August.

Accountability
Being responsible for performance results, while utilizing resources economically and effectively. It is about increasing transparency and ensuring the stewardship of our resources.

Achieving the Dream (AtD)
AtD is a national reform network dedicated to community college student success and completion. AtD is focused primarily on helping low-income students and students of color complete their education and obtain market-valued credentials. Alamo Colleges is identified as one of 66 AtD leader colleges by demonstrating commitment to and making progress on the five principles of Achieving the Dream which are committed leadership, use of evidence to improve programs and services, broad engagement, systemic institutional improvement, and equity.

Action Plan
Action plans identify the specific actions that respond to strategic objectives or goals. These plans specify the individuals responsible for implementing the action items, the time horizons for accomplishing the plans, and the aligned measures and their targets for the departments and work units. The action plan supports the implementation of the strategic plan; establishes performance goals or objectives to define the level of performance to be achieved by a department or unit; expresses such goals in an objective, quantifiable, and measurable form; briefly describes the operational processes, skills, technology, resources, and timeframe required to meet the performance goals; identifies ownership and levels of responsibility; establishes performance indicators to be used in measuring or assessing the relevant outputs, service levels, and outcomes of each program activity; provides a basis for comparing actual program results with the established performance goals; and describes the means to be used to verify and validate the measured values. Action plan goals, strategies, action items, and other information can be modified/updated whenever necessary, and performance metrics are tracked/recorded continually to document and inform implementation progress.

Action Items
The specific, quantifiable activities, functions, tasks, tactics, projects, services, or steps a DSO unit implements within a strategy or process. Action items can be major categories of responsibilities within a program, department, or unit. They provide a meaningful representation of the operations.

Adjunct Faculty
A person who holds a non-tenure-track appointment to the teaching staff of an institution. Adjunct faculty members are generally part-time, and hired as needed, with no guarantees as to continuation of employment.

Agility
A capacity for rapid change and flexibility. It enables more rapid, flexible, and customized responses. Agility allows for shorter cycles for the introduction of new/improved products and services, as well as for faster and more flexible responses to customers. Major improvements in response times often require simplification of work units and processes or the ability for rapid changeover from one process to another. Cross-trained and empowered employees are vital assets in agility-demanding environments. Agility requires a
new thinking in business structure, bureaucracy, restructure of work systems, multitasking of employees, simplified and innovative processes, and employee cross-training and empowerment. It is not just about responding fast to the customer or business environment, but also knowing how to support it.

**AlamoENROLL**
AlamoENROLL is a component of MyMAP that encapsulates recruitment, application, assessment, advising, and registration processes. AlamoENROLL ensures state and federal compliance and is designed to intentionally engage students in their preparation for college transition and success.

**AlamoLEADS (Leaders Emerging And Developing Students)**
AlamoLEADS is the principle-centered leadership concepts from the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People deployed to both employees and students throughout the Alamo Colleges.

**AlamoLearn**
AlamoLearn is the Alamo Colleges talent management suite. It consists of three areas: Learning, Performance, and Career Planning. AlamoLEARN can be accessed through ACES. Employee learning opportunities, training transcripts, and employee performance tools can be accessed through this suite.

**AlamoPERFORMS**
AlamoPERFORMS is the series of activities that document individual, unit, and organizational performance. The collection and analysis of data related to our key initiatives and the Alamo Colleges performance scorecard is a part of AlamoPERFORMS.

**AlamoPREP**
AlamoPREP is the courses and support to assist students to gain basic skills required to enroll in AlamoREADY courses.

**AlamoREADY**
AlamoREADY is the courses and support to assist students to gain college-level basic skills to enroll in specific college level courses (formerly called College Preparatory.)

**Alamo Academies**
Alamo College workforce development programs that provide education, experience, and job opportunities for high school students seeking to jump-start their futures and make a seamless transition from high school to college and/or the workplace. The four Alamo Academy programs are Advanced Technology and Manufacturing, Aerospace, Health Professions, and Information Technology and Security.

**Alamo Colleges**
A term used to refer to all five colleges (San Antonio College, St. Philip's College, Palo Alto College, Northwest Vista College, Northeast Lakeview College) and District Support Operations within the Alamo Community College District.

**Alamo Colleges Online (ACOL)**
An academic success unit dedicated to quality in teaching and learning in the online environment.

**Alamo Share**
Alamo Share is an internal website (intranet) available to Alamo Colleges employees. It includes a software platform and family of software products for internal collaboration, file sharing, and a place where process teams can do their work together.

**Alamo GPS**
A web-based degree audit and academic advisement tool to enhance the advisement process for students and advisors; also known as Degree Works.

**Alamo Way**
The Alamo Way is a policy (B.9.1) established by the Board of Trustees in 2011 that defines the top three priorities of the Alamo Colleges: Student Success, Principle-Centered Leadership, and Performance Excellence. These priorities are also the three strategic objectives of the Alamo Colleges strategic plan. The Achieving the Dream initiative is the primary approach we use to move students to completion of their academic goals and ultimately to achieve student success. The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People is the approach we use to equip our students and employees with principle-centered leadership competencies. Leadership development also occurs through the Alamo Colleges Leadership Academy for Success (ALAS) program for employees and the Student Leadership Institute (SLI) program for students. The Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence are utilized to guide our work as we strive to improve planning, engagement of our students and other stakeholders, systems and processes, collection and analysis of data, employee capabilities, and our performance results in order to demonstrate success in those areas.
Alignment
Alignment refers to consistency of plans, processes, information, resource decisions, actions, results, and analyses to support key organization-wide goals. Effective alignment requires a common understanding of purposes and goals. It also requires the use of complementary measures and information for planning, tracking, analysis, and improvement at three levels: the organizational level/senior leader level; the key process level; and the program, school, class, or individual level.

Analysis
Analysis is the examination of facts and data to inform effective decision-making at all levels of the Alamo Colleges.

Baldrige Criteria
The Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence provide a framework and assessment tool for understanding our strengths and opportunities for improvement and, thus, for guiding our planning toward achieving higher performance. As a component of the Alamo Way, the Baldrige Criteria show us how to operate with effectiveness and accountability for all Alamo Colleges stakeholders. The Baldrige Criteria helps us pay attention to various important dimensions (leadership, planning, those whom we serve, measurement and analysis, employees, and processes) which lead us to excellent results and our ultimate outcome of student success.

Benchmark
Processes and results that represent the best practices and best performance for similar activities, inside or outside the education sector. Organizations engage in benchmarking to understand the current dimensions of world-class performance and to achieve discontinuous (nonincremental) or breakthrough improvement. Benchmarks are one form of comparative data. Other forms include industry data collected by a third party (frequently industry averages), data on competitors’ performance, and comparisons with similar organizations that are in the same geographic area or that provide similar products and services in other geographic areas.

Capability
Capability refers to the organization's ability to accomplish its work processes through the knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies of its people. Capability may include the ability to build and sustain relationships with customers; to innovate and transition to new technologies; to develop new products and work processes; and to meet changing business, market, and regulatory demands.

Capacity
Capacity refers to the organization's ability to ensure sufficient staffing levels to accomplish its work processes and successfully deliver products to customers, including the ability to meet seasonal or varying demand levels.

CCSSE
The Community College Survey of Student Engagement asks students about institutional practices and student behaviors that are highly correlated with student learning and retention. CCSSE helps us to know how well we are engaging our students. It helps Alamo Colleges to focus on good educational practice and identify areas in which we can improve our programs and services for students.

CCFSSE
A survey administered to faculty, usually in the Spring, as a companion to CCSSE. The survey assesses faculty perspective regarding students' educational experiences, their teaching practices, and the ways they spend their professional time, both in and out of the classroom. CCFSSE is a product of the College of Education, Department of Educational Administration, Community College Leadership Program at the University of Texas at Austin.

Closing the Gaps
A plan directed at closing educational gaps in Texas as well as between Texas and other states. The four goals are: to close the gaps in student participation, student success, excellence and research. Closing the Gaps by 2015 was adopted in October 2000 by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board with strong support from the state's educational, business and political communities. Reports are updated annually.

Cohort
A specific group of Alamo Colleges students whose academic performance is tracked over time.

Collaborators
Key organizations or individuals who support the Alamo Colleges to achieve a common goal or performance. Typically, collaborations do not involve formal agreements or arrangements. Examples of key collaborators include volunteers, friends, some businesses, some educational institutions, and other supporters.

Completion
Strategic driver encompassing all programs, services, and activities related to attainment (graduation with degrees and certificates), student transfer to other institutions, and student/customer acceptance in or return to the workplace. Key performance indicators
related to completion include program completion, graduation, and transfer.

**Core Competencies**
Core competencies are an organization's areas of greatest expertise or those strategically important capabilities that provide an advantage in the market or service environment. Core competencies frequently are challenging for competitors or suppliers and partners to imitate, and they provide a sustainable competitive advantage. Core competencies may involve technology expertise or unique educational programs, offerings, or services that are responsive to the needs of students, stakeholders, and the market. The Alamo Colleges core competencies are 1. Organizational sustainability and agility; 2. Innovative technology to support administrative, academic, and student-support operations; 3. Partnership development and stewardship; and 4. Operational excellence.

**Culture**
Culture is that invisible glue that holds organizations together. It includes things like norms of purpose, values, and approach. It is something that is hard to codify, evaluate, measure, and manage. This “invisibility” causes many managers to treat culture as a soft topic, but it is the stuff that determines how we get things done. And how we get things done drives performance. Culture is the set of habits that allows a group of people to cooperate by assumption rather than by negotiation. Based on that definition, culture is not what we say, but what we do without asking. A healthy culture allows us to produce something with each other, not in spite of each other. That is how a group of people generates something much bigger than the sum of the individuals involved. Culture drives innovation, execution, and results. Usually, people want to know your organization's results, strategies, and issues, rather than your culture, leadership, and employees. Yet, it is the people, the leadership, and the ideas that are ultimately driving the numbers and the results.

**Customer**
An actual or potential user of our organization's programs and services.

**Customer Engagement**
Our customers' investment in or commitment to our brand, programs, and services offerings. It is based on our ongoing ability to serve their needs and build relationships so they will continue using our service. Characteristics of engaged customers include retention and loyalty, willingness to make an effort to do business with our organization, and willingness to actively advocate for and recommend our brand, programs, and services.

**Customer Satisfaction**
We contribute to ensure customer satisfaction by understanding and anticipating our customers’ desires and meeting our customers' requirements. Our customers are the ultimate judges of our performance and quality. Thus, our organization must take into account all program/service features and characteristics and all modes of customer access and support that contribute value to our customers. Such behavior leads to customer acquisition, satisfaction, preference, and loyalty; positive referrals; and, ultimately, the sustainability of our business. Customer relationship management and factors such as reducing defects and errors, meeting specifications, or reducing complaints influence value and satisfaction. To determine customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction, the following tools may be considered: surveys, formal and informal feedback, customer account histories, complaints, field reports, win/loss analysis, customer referral rates, and transaction completion rates. In addition, information may be gathered from the Web, through personal contact or a third party, or by mail. Determining customer dissatisfaction should be seen as more than reviewing low customer satisfaction scores. Dissatisfaction should be independently determined to identify root causes and enable a systematic remedy to avoid future dissatisfaction.

**Dashboard**
A dashboard is an analysis application used to convey timely and relevant data and critical information at a glance, usually with graphical elements. It lets users analyze and explore performance data across multiple dimensions and at different levels of detail to get at the root cause of problems and issues, communicate, and make decisions. Under 4DX, a dashboard is a collection of scoreboards in order to readily gauge progress on key performance metrics.

**Deployment**
The extent to which an organization applies an approach in addressing the requirements of a Baldrige Criteria item. Evaluation of deployment considers how broadly and deeply the approach is applied in relevant work units throughout the organization.

**Developmental Education**
Instructional courses designed for students deficient in the general competencies necessary for a regular postsecondary curriculum and educational setting.

**Dual Credit**
A process by which a high school student enrolls in a college course and receives academic credit for the course from both the college and the high school.
DSO
District Support Operations or the more than 40 Alamo Colleges district departments or units that support the operations of the Alamo Colleges.

Effectiveness
The term “effective” refers to how well a process or a measure addresses its intended purpose. Determining effectiveness requires (1) the evaluation of how well the approach is aligned with the organization’s needs and how well the approach is deployed or (2) the evaluation of the outcome of the measure used.

Engagement (Customer Engagement)
The term “customer engagement” refers to customers’ investment in or commitment to the organization’s brand and product offerings. It is based on the ongoing ability to serve their needs and build relationships so they will continue using the products. Characteristics of customer engagement include customer retention and loyalty, customers’ willingness to make an effort to do business with the organization, and customers’ willingness to actively advocate for and recommend the brand and product offerings. DSO units view the staff at the Colleges and around the DSO as their customers. Customer engagement is based on the DSO’s ability to serve the needs of the colleges and to build relationships. Characteristics of customer engagement include evidence of satisfaction with services, loyalty, and mutually satisfying work relationships.

Engagement (Employee Engagement)
“Employee engagement” is the extent to which employees commit, both rationally and emotionally, to something or someone in their organization, how hard they work, and how long they stay as a result of that commitment. It represents the extent of the workforce members’ emotional and intellectual commitment to accomplish the work, mission, and vision of the Alamo Colleges. Characteristics of engaged employees include high performing work environments in which people are motivated to do their utmost for the benefit of the students, one another, and the organization. We use the PACE survey to measure employee engagement.

Engagement (Student Engagement)
“Student engagement” represents our students’ investment or commitment to the Alamo Colleges program offerings. It is based on our ongoing ability to serve their needs and build relationships with them. Characteristics of engaged students include retention and loyalty, willingness to persist to graduation, and a willingness to recommend us to others. We measure this engagement through the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE).

Evaluation and Control
In an organization, strategy implementation calls for strategy evaluation and control. The evaluation and control process consists of the following steps: (1) Define parameters to be measured, (2) Define performance standards or target values for those parameters, (3) Perform measurements, (4) Compare measured results to the pre-defined standards or targets, and (5) Apply corrective action to reduce the gap between actual and desired performance. Some problems encountered in controlling activities include (A) The information required to control activities may be unavailable or available only at a high cost; (B) The frequency, intensity, and unpredictability of environmental changes may hamper control; (C) The time lag between activities and their results limits the manager’s ability to measure the effectiveness of specific activities; (D) When activities overlap, managers cannot determine the precise cost of the activities, which makes it difficult to know if their outcomes are worth the expense; (E) It is hard to develop exact performance standards for some personnel.

Fiscal Year
The period of time beginning September 1 and ending on the following August 31, both dates inclusive, which coincides with the State of Texas’ fiscal year.

FOCUS PDCA
FOCUS PDCA (Find, Organize, Clarify, Understand, Select, Plan, Do, Check, Act) is a methodology that is used to identify improvement opportunities and creates a systematic approach to implementing changes. This problem solving model was first used by one of the early quality gurus by the name of Walter Shewhard. The model was then adapted by W. Edwards Deming as the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle. The model is used to learn by doing and experimenting with improvements, examining what is learned and implementing what was learned into further improvement efforts. FOCUS PDCA is the approach chosen by the Alamo Colleges for process improvement.

Gatekeeper Course
A college-level course used to measure student progression. Alamo College gatekeeper courses are as follows: English-ENGL 1301, Reading-BIOL1408 and HIST 1301, and MATH-MATH1314, 1332, 1333, 1414 and 1442.

Goal
A formulated purpose or aim that an organization intends to achieve (e.g., “Increase success rates in developmental math courses,” “Conduct community service activities that contribute to student growth and support community needs,” “Restructure the Biology
Study Center with improved tutoring, study space, and study cohorts”). See Strategic Goals.

**Good to Great**

*Good to Great*, by author Jim Collins, is a framework that shows us how to do things to develop disciplined people, disciplined thought, and disciplined action to reach organizational greatness. Good to Great is an Alamo Colleges foundation for discipline, transformation, and success.

**Indicator**

See Key Performance Indicators.

**Innovation**

The term “innovation” refers to making meaningful change to improve products, processes, or organizational effectiveness and to create new value for stakeholders. Innovation involves the adoption of an idea, process, technology, product, or business model that is either new or new to its proposed application. The outcome of innovation is a discontinuous or breakthrough change in results, products, or processes. Successful organizational innovation is a multistep process that involves development and knowledge sharing, a decision to implement, implementation, evaluation, and learning. Although innovation is often associated with technological innovation, it is applicable to all key organizational processes that would benefit from change, whether through breakthrough improvement or a change in approach or outputs. It could include fundamental changes in organizational structure or the business model to more effectively accomplish the organization's work.

**Integrated Planning**

The coordination, alignment, and synchronization of all long-term and short-term planning activities (strategic, KPIs, target, financial, academic, personnel, facilities, etc.) with a results management system to increase communication and support the mission and goals of an institution.

**Integration**

The harmonization of plans, processes, information, resource decisions, actions, results, and analyses to support key organization-wide goals. Effective integration goes beyond alignment and is achieved when the individual components of a performance management system operate as a fully interconnected unit.

**Intelligent Risks**

Opportunities for which the potential gain outweighs the potential harm or loss to the Alamo Colleges’ sustainability. Taking intelligent risks requires a tolerance for failure and an expectation that innovation is not achieved by initiating only successful endeavors.

**IRES**

The Alamo Colleges DSO department of Institutional Research and Effectiveness Services provides data in support of district-wide decision-making, policy construction, and resource allocation.

**Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

A key performance indicator (KPI) is a type of performance measurement. An organization may use KPIs to evaluate its strategic success, or to evaluate the success of a particular activity in which it is engaged. Success may be defined in terms of making progress toward strategic objectives/goals or the repeated, periodic achievement of some level of operational goal (e.g. zero defects, 5/5 customer satisfaction, etc.) in areas deemed critical to success. Accordingly, choosing the right KPIs relies upon a good understanding of what is important to the organization. A very common way to choose KPIs is to apply a management framework such as the balanced scorecard or 4DX. KPI measures are of different types:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT TO MEASURE</th>
<th>KPI MEASURE EXAMPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INPUT</td>
<td>Resources (faculty, staff, technology, materials, etc.) used to teach remedial Math courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROCESS</td>
<td>Number of students receiving Math remediation per year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUTPUT</td>
<td>% of students who completed remediation in Math.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUTCOME</td>
<td>% of students who enrolled in college Algebra after completing remediation in Math.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Leadership Model**

The Alamo Colleges leadership model is the way that leadership is exercised formally and informally throughout the Alamo Colleges. It is the basis for key decisions and the way that they are made, communicated, and carried out. An effective leadership model includes structures and mechanisms for making decisions; ensuring two-way communication; selecting and developing leaders and manager; and reinforcing values, ethical behavior, directions and performance expectations.

**Leading and Lagging Indicators**
When developing a performance management system, it is recommended to use a combination of leading and lagging indicators. These are called “Performance Drivers” and “Outcome Measures.” Using lagging indicators without leading indicators tell you nothing about how the outcomes will be achieved, nor can you have any early warnings about being on track to achieve your strategic objectives and goals. Similarly, leading indicators without lagging indicators may enable you to focus on short-term performance, but you will not be able to confirm that broader organizational outcomes have been achieved. Leading indicators should enable you to take pre-emptive actions to improve your chances of achieving your goals. Because of cause and effect, there is a chain of leading and lagging indicators. For example, “Satisfied/Motivated Employees” is a leading indicator of “Customer Satisfaction.” Similarly, “high-performing processes” would be expected to be a leading indicator of “Cost Efficiency.” You will usually want a combination of leading and lagging indicators. For example, you are likely to want to measure “Employee Satisfaction” and could readily identify a leading indicator of this such as an index of “Leadership Capability,” or maybe “Number of days training per employee.” It is sometimes said that leading indicators will be measured more frequently than lagging indicators, but that may not be accurate. You could measure “Complaints Received” or “Customer Satisfaction” (lagging indicators) every day, and you could measure process “Error Rates,” or “On-Time Delivery” (leading indicators) every day also. One definition that might help is that leading indicators are often captured at the level of individual processes, whereas lagging indicators may be the result of changes in a number of leading indicators. So, a process cycle-time or error rate might be leading indicators, measured at the process level and Customer Satisfaction would be a lagging indicator, measured at the organizational level. If you are measuring “activity” (i.e. at a process level), it is more likely that you are using leading indicators. The closer you move to process inputs and activities, the closer you get to leading indicators of downstream, (lagging) performance. If you are measuring aggregated effects, or outcomes, at an organizational level, you are more likely to be using lagging indicators. The overall purpose of selecting metrics is to enable you to track performance towards your ultimate goals. Under 4DX, a lead measure is the measure of an action planned and taken as a means to achieving a WIG (wildly important goal). Unlike lag measures, leading measures are influenceable by the team and predictive of the goal. Good lead measures are the highest leverage activities a team can engage in to ensure execution of the WIG; therefore, lead measures are carefully tracked on the team scoreboard. A lag measure is a measure of goal or WIG achievement. Because lag measures are historical measures of performance, they are typically easy to measure but difficult to influence directly. A lag measure is expressed in terms of from X to Y by when.

**Market Penetration**
A measure of the Alamo Colleges student population relative to the service area population, ages 18-64, expressed as a percentage.

**Mission**
A statement answering the questions “What is this organization's primary purpose?” and “What are we attempting to accomplish?” It refers to the overall function of an organization. The mission might define students, stakeholders, or markets served; distinctive or core competencies; or technologies used. The Alamo Colleges mission statement is “Empowering our Diverse Communities for Success.”

**Momentum Points**
A point system allocated to a series of quantifiable student progression measures associated with institutional performance. Same as Success Points.

**MyMAP (My Monitoring Academic Progress)**
MyMAP is a comprehensive system designed to improve student success at Alamo Colleges. It is a personalized tool including a series of online self-paced learning modules to help new students transition to college. Each module contains helpful information for students via videos, audio, text, and supplemental links. One of the modules is the “Alamo Colleges Introduction to College and Pathways.” MyMAP will also help monitor students' progress until they earn a certificate or degree.

**Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory**
A survey administered to students that assess student satisfaction and priorities. The survey is a product of Noel Levitz, a higher education enrollment management consulting organization.

**Objectives**
As an important part of action plans, objectives indicate the intended student learning, activity, or program outcome stated in measurable terms. An objective is a statement of what is to be accomplished to achieve a goal. For example, “Offer in Fall 2008 a new 4-hour developmental Math course with a 3-hour lecture and a 1-hour lab,” “To offer one training course per semester per department for the English and Math faculty members in order to increase teaching effectiveness and student success.” Objectives should always include the planned activity or task, the responsible party, and the established timeframe. Objectives contribute to higher accountability.

**Operational Plan**
One of the three components of the integrated planning process. It is a short-term plan produced by a college, college unit, or district unit based on the longer-term strategic plan. Some important operational plan elements are operational analysis, key performance indicators, performance standards or targets, short-term measurable objectives, unit action plans, and performance budgets. See
Outcomes
Outcomes are the effect of the outputs. They are observable, measurable results or evidence of the educational experience or administrative activity. For example, in measuring the performance of a job-training program, while an output measure could be the number or percentage of program participants who completed the training, an outcome measure could be the number or percentage of program participants employed one year after the training. In the academic world, outcomes state what students will know, think, or be able to do after the completion of a course or academic intervention (e.g., “Be able to analyze data and solve problems”). A high-level outcome (“The student writing will be judged to be of high quality by qualified readers”) may have supporting lower-level outcomes (“Students will be able to write grammatically correct sentences.”) Course learning outcomes are not about what the course or instructor will achieve. Course learning outcomes can be measured by pre/post tests, skill demonstrations, capstone courses/projects, internships, portfolios, standardized exams, and licensure, certification, or professional exams. The measurement of specific outcomes contributes to the evaluation of objectives and the sustainability of performance budgets. The ultimate outcome at the Alamo Colleges is student and community success.

Outputs
Outputs are completed activities. They are the products and services or immediate results delivered by a program. For example, in measuring the performance of a job-training program, an output measure could be the number or percentage of program participants who completed the training. In the academic world, an output measure could be the number of students who complete and get a final grade in a course.

PACE
The Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) is a survey administered annually to all employees by Human Resources. The purpose of the survey is to assess employee satisfaction, to promote open and constructive communication, and to establish priorities for change. The instrument measures employee satisfaction in four domains: institutional structure, supervisory relationship, teamwork, and student focus.

Partners
Key organizations or individuals who work in formalized concert with us to achieve a common goal or performance. Examples of key partners include the P-16 consortium, Alamo Workforce Solutions, etc.

Peer Institutions
The Alamo Colleges systematically benchmark performance against peer institutions in the state (VLCC or Very Large Community Colleges) and the nation. Our state peers include Austin Community College, Collin County Community College District, Dallas County Community College District, El Paso Community College District, Houston Community College System, Lone Star College System, San Jacinto Community College District, South Texas College, and Tarrant County College District. At the national level, our peers include Broward Community College (Florida), Cuyahoga Community College (Ohio), Maricopa Community College District (Arizona), Miami Dade College (Florida), Northern Virginia Community College (Virginia), Tidewater Community College (Virginia), and Valencia Community College (Florida).

Performance
The output results and their outcomes obtained from processes, programs, and services that permit evaluation and comparison relative to goals, standards, past results, and other organizations. Performance can be expressed in nonfinancial and financial terms. The Baldrige Education Criteria address four types of performance: (1) program and service; (2) student- and stakeholder-focused; (3) budgetary, financial, and market; and (4) operational. “Program and service performance” refers to performance relative to measures and indicators of program and service characteristics important to students and stakeholders. Examples include the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, assessment of student learning, participation in professional development opportunities, and student placement following program completion. “Student- and stakeholder-focused performance” refers to performance relative to measures and indicators of student and stakeholder perceptions, reactions, and behaviors. Examples include admissions, retention, complaints, and survey results. Student- and stakeholder-focused performance generally relates to the organization as a whole. “Budgetary, financial, and market performance” refers to performance relative to measures of cost containment, budget utilization, and market share. Examples include instructional and general administration expenditures per student as a percentage of budget; income, expenses, reserves, endowments, and annual grants/awards; program expenditures as a percentage of budget; annual budget increases or decreases; resources redirected to education from other areas; scholarship growth; the percentage of budget for research; and the budget for public service. “Operational performance” refers to workforce, leadership, organizational, and ethical performance relative to effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability measures and indicators. Examples include cycle time, productivity, accreditation, workforce turnover, workforce cross-training rates, regulatory compliance, fiscal accountability, and community involvement. Operational performance might be measured at the organizational/senior leader level; the key work process level; and the program, school, class, or individual level.

Performance Budget
A performance budget or performance-based budget is an integrated annual performance plan and annual budget that shows the relationship between program funding levels and expected results. It indicates that a goal or a set of goals should be achieved at a given level of spending. Performance budgets are not just based on performance; they also require an understanding of what the end products (i.e., outcomes) should be in order to give a cause-effect indication of how funding will turn into positive results. This is accomplished by showing for each program how dollars will fund tasks and activities, how these activities are expected to generate certain outputs, and what outcomes should be the result. While an object class budget shows what each dollar will be spent on (e.g., salaries, benefits, office supplies, travel, utilities, equipment, etc.), a performance budget shows what each dollar will accomplish (e.g., recruit a number of students, process a grant application, inspect a worksite, review a compliance activity, etc.). Programs, however, should be able to show their budgets in both formats with matching totals.

Performance Excellence
Performance excellence refers to an integrated approach to organizational performance management that results in (1) delivery of ever-improving value to stakeholders (students, customers, and community members), contributing to organizational sustainability; (2) improvement of Alamo Colleges’ overall organizational effectiveness and capabilities; and (3) organizational and personal learning.

Performance Management
Performance management consists of a set of management and analytic processes that help optimize organizational performance. It provides a framework for organizing, automating, and analyzing methodologies, metrics, processes, and systems that drive performance. Core performance management processes include financial and operational planning, data consolidation and reporting, business modeling, analysis, and monitoring of key performance indicators linked to strategy. Planning, budgeting, analysis, and reporting can give the measurements that empower management decisions. Performance management methods and applications allow a systematic, integrated approach that links organizational strategy to core processes and activities: the transformation of strategies into actionable metrics and meaningful analysis to expose cause-and-effect relationships to give decision-makers insight about operations, results, and outcomes. Performance management enhances processes by creating better feedback loops. Frequent performance evaluation and reporting help identify and eliminate problems before they grow.

Performance Metric
A performance measure used to quantify goals/strategies/objectives/priorities and report performance progress in action items.

Performance Standard
See Target.

Policy F.6.1
An Alamo Colleges Board of Trustees policy relating to student success.

Policy B.9.1
The Alamo Colleges Board of Trustees educational philosophy policy known as the Alamo Way: Always Inspire, Always Improve.

Process
See Work Processes.

Productivity
Measures of the efficiency of resource use. Although the term is often applied to single factors, such as the workforce (labor productivity), machines, materials, energy, and capital, the concept also applies to the total resources used in producing outputs.

Program
A budgetary unit including a set of activities directed toward a common purpose or goal. A program may be any organizational aim, project, function, or policy that has an identifiable set of objectives. A program delivers products and services (outputs) or the results of those products and services (outcomes). Program cost information may be generated by tracking the cost of each program activity. An approach is to use the organization budget accounts to identify programs, and the program’s outcome and output objectives to identify the program activities. The budget structure may not always clearly define all programs (i.e., “program activities” in the budget are not always the activities that are managed as a program in practice). A program may also be a collection of programs or activities that are managed as one entity or that has a clear set of goals. When various programs (e.g., grant programs) contribute to a common goal and are interdependent, it makes sense to review them as a whole than separately. The same entity may manage multiple grants using different decision-making approaches, but it is the combination of those grants that contributes to the same goal. Some examples of programs include Adult Employment and Training Activities, Student Financial Aid, Educational and Cultural Exchanges, Facilities, Institutional Research Office, Counseling Department, Department of English, and Developmental Math.

Quality
According to the Lumina Foundation for Education, quality in higher education is defined in terms of student outcomes, particularly learning outcomes, and not by inputs or institutional characteristics. The value of degrees and credentials — both for the individual
and society as a whole — ultimately rests on the skills and knowledge they represent. High-quality degrees and credentials have well-defined and transparent learning outcomes that provide clear pathways to further education and employment. The term “achievement” has traditionally been used to describe these outcomes, but Lumina prefers the simpler term “learning.” Ultimately, learning is what students need, what degrees and credentials should represent, and what higher education should provide to everyone who seeks it.

**Recruitment**
Strategic driver involving all student recruitment/enrollment activities. Key performance indicators related to recruitment include market penetration and financial access.

**Retention**
Strategic driver involving all student retention, persistence, or re-enrollment activities. Key performance indicators related to retention include program/service assessment, student engagement, and Achieving the Dream progress.

**Results**
The outputs and outcomes achieved by an organization. Results are evaluated on the basis of current performance; performance relative to appropriate comparisons; the rate, breadth, and importance of performance improvements; and the relationship of results measures to key organizational performance requirements.

**Results Management**
One of the three components of the integrated planning process. It involves several important elements including performance analysis, organization/unit/individual results, evaluation and control systems, corrective action, management reports, and reward/acknowledgment systems.

**Scoreboard**
Under 4DX, a scoreboard is a table or any other component of a dashboard used for tracking progress on lead and lag measures for a WIG (wildly important goal). Scoreboards should be visible to the entire team and consistently and regularly updated to indicate quickly and clearly whether the team is making progress on key performance metrics.

**Scorecard**
A table that includes performance data, targets, benchmarks, and assigned scores and their visual indicators of success used for tracking progress on key performance metrics.

**Service Area**
According to the Texas Legislature, the Alamo Colleges service area includes all of Bandera, Bexar, Comal, Kendall, Kerr and Wilson Counties; all of Atascosa County excluding the portion within the Pleasanton Independent School District; and all of Guadalupe County excluding the portion within the San Marcos Consolidated Independent School District.

**SIPOC**
A Six Sigma tool used to develop a high-level understanding of the process(es) under study, including the upstream and downstream links. SIPOC stands for Suppliers, Inputs, Process, Outputs, and Customers. The Alamo Colleges SIPOC form also includes Process Owner, Customer Requirements, Opportunities for Improvement, and Measures of Success. SIPOC information feeds into unit action plans.

**SPPE**
The Alamo Colleges DSO department of Strategic Planning and Performance Excellence serves and coaches Alamo Colleges leaders on the strategic planning process, action plan development and implementation, data collection and analysis, and performance improvement through the Alamo Way.

**Strategic Goals**
Each of the five Alamo Colleges strategic objectives includes measurable, targeted 3-year and annual strategic goals of the WIG kind according to 4DX.

**Strategic Objectives**
The aims or responses that the organization articulates to address major change or improvement, competitiveness or social issues, and business advantages. Strategic objectives set the organization’s longer-term directions and guide resource allocation and redistribution. The five Alamo Colleges strategic objectives supporting our mission are Access, Completion/Success, Pathways to Success, Performance Excellence, and Organizational Communication.

**Strategic Planning**
Strategic planning is the process of establishing an organizational mission and formulating goals, strategies, objectives, and a strategic plan. It requires that goals, strategies, and action plans be aligned to the organizational mission, and facilitates the flow of
activities from goals to performance budgets. As Baldrige category number 2, strategic planning involves strategy development and strategy deployment through action plans, benchmarking, and key performance indicators. Strategic Planning addresses strategic and action planning, deployment of plans, how adequate resources are ensured to accomplish the plans, how plans are changed if circumstances require a change, and how accomplishments are measured and sustained. Category 2 stresses that learning-centered education, long-term organizational sustainability, and the competitive environment are key strategic issues that need to be integral parts of the organization's overall planning. Decisions about the organizational core competencies are an integral part of organizational sustainability and therefore are key strategic decisions. Strategic planning must focus not only on developing plans, but also on the capability to execute them.

**Strategic Advantages**
Strategic advantages are those benefits that exert a decisive influence on the Alamo Colleges' likelihood of future success. These advantages are frequently sources of current and future competitive success relative to other colleges and universities. Our strategic advantages include Alamo Colleges' reputation and community support; financial stability; demand for Alamo Colleges' academic and technical graduates.

**Strategic Challenges**
Strategic challenges are those pressures that exert a decisive influence on the likelihood of future success. The Alamo Colleges' strategic challenges include ensuring quality and effectiveness with decreased state funding; college readiness of incoming students; increased public expectation of performance; and proprietary schools cutting into Alamo Colleges market share.

**Strategy**
A description or plan of how the organization will achieve its goals. The approach, rule, or guideline an organization takes to achieve the mission, goals, or objectives in order to survive and succeed. A strategy can cover the organization as a whole or it can relate to primary matters in key functional areas.

**Student Engagement**
See Engagement.

**Success Points**
See Momentum Points.

**Success Rate**
Reported in the IRES grade distribution report, success rate is the measure of success grades relative to total enrollment expressed as a percentage (A+B+C/Total Enrollment).

**Suppliers**
Key organizations or individuals who supply us with technology, consulting, products, or services to help us accomplish our mission. Suppliers are most often vendors.

**Sustainability**
The Alamo Colleges' ability to address current educational needs and to have the agility and strategic management to prepare successfully for the future educational, market, and operating environment. Both external and internal factors need to be considered. The specific combination of factors might include sector wide and organization-specific components. Sustainability considerations might include workforce capability and capacity, resource availability, technology, knowledge, core competencies, work systems, facilities, and equipment. In addition to responding to changes in the educational, market, and operating environment, sustainability has a component related to preparedness for real-time or short-term emergencies.

**SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis**
A strategic planning tool used to identify and evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of an organization or project.

**System**
See Work Systems.

**Systematic**
The term refers to approaches that are well ordered, repeatable, and use data and information so learning is possible. Approaches are systematic if they build in the opportunity for evaluation, improvement, and sharing, thereby permitting a gain in maturity.

**TAPE (Texas Award for Performance Excellence)**
The performance excellence award administered and given by The Quality Texas Foundation, a non-profit 501(c) 3 corporation that shares knowledge about the Baldrige process and other methods to drive organizational efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability.
**Target**
A numerical point or range representing a desired or expected level of performance measure or quantitative goal against which actual performance can be compared. A target may be a projection based on comparative data (benchmarks). Targets should be tied to organizational goals and objectives.

**Task**
Specific, individually assigned activity within an action plan.

**Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB)**
An agency created by the Texas Legislature in 1965 to provide leadership and coordination of policies and procedures for the Texas higher education system. The board meets four times a year in Austin, Texas.

**Unit Profile**
A one-page form highlighting the characteristics and performance of a DSO unit. It includes the unit’s key processes, goals, key metrics and trend results, benchmarks and performance targets.

**Value**
The perceived worth of a program, service, process, asset, or function relative to cost and to possible alternatives. Organizations frequently use value considerations to determine the benefits of various options relative to their costs, such as the value of various educational offerings and service combinations to students or stakeholders. Organizations need to understand what different student and stakeholder groups value and then deliver value to each group. This frequently requires balancing value for students and other stakeholders, such as businesses, the workforce, and the community.

**Values**
Guiding principles and behaviors that embody how the Alamo Colleges and its employees are expected to operate. Values represent the ‘how’ of the mission. They are basic precepts about what is important to the organization. Values reflect and reinforce the desired culture of an organization. Values support and guide the decision making of every workforce member, helping the organization accomplish its mission and attain its vision in an appropriate manner. The Alamo Colleges values are Students First, Respect for All, Community Engaged, Collaboration, Can-Do Spirit, and Data-Informed.

**Vision Statement**
A clear and compelling description of a desired future state (i.e., “where do we want to go?”). A vision paints a picture of ideal future outcomes.

**Voice of the Customer**
The term “voice of the customer” refers to the process for capturing customer-related information. Voice-of-the-customer processes are intended to be proactive and continuously innovative to capture stated, unstated, and anticipated customer requirements, expectations, and desires. The goal is to achieve customer engagement. Listening to the voice of the customer might include gathering and integrating various types of customer data, such as survey data, focus group findings, warranty data, and complaint data that affect customers’ purchasing and engagement decisions.

**Weave (Weave Online or Weave Engaged)**
Weave is a comprehensive combination of client services and a cloud-based technology platform for managing institutional effectiveness and continuous improvement programs related to program assessment, program review, strategic planning, accreditation, and other functions. All Alamo Colleges employees can access Weave to document action plans and their progress and provide easy access to supporting data. Weave supports a culture of evidence, alignment, efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and accountability.

**WIG (Wildly Important Goal)**
A goal essential to carrying out the Alamo Colleges' mission or strategy. Failure to achieve WIGs renders all other achievements secondary.

**Work Processes**
The term “work processes” refers to the organization’s most important internal value creation processes. They constitute linked activities with the purpose of producing a program or service for students and/or stakeholders within or outside the organization. They might include product design and delivery, customer support, supply chain management, business, and support processes. Processes involve the majority of the organization's employees and produce customer and stakeholder value. The organization's key work processes frequently relate to core competencies, to the factors that determine success relative to competitors, and to the factors considered important for business growth by senior leaders. Processes rarely operate in isolation and must be considered in relation to other processes that impact them. In some situations, processes might require adherence to a specific sequence of steps,
with documentation (sometimes formal) of procedures and requirements, including well-defined measurement and control steps. In
service situations such as education, particularly when those served are directly involved in the service, processes are used in a more
general way (i.e., to spell out what must be done, possibly including a preferred or expected sequence). If a sequence is critical, the
service needs to include information to help those served understand and follow the sequence. Such service processes also require
guidance to the providers of those services on handling contingencies related to the possible actions or behaviors of those served. In
knowledge work, such as teaching, strategic planning, research, development, and analysis, processes do not necessarily imply
formal sequences of steps. Rather, processes imply general understandings regarding competent performance, such as timing,
options to be included, evaluation, and reporting. Sequences might arise as part of these understandings.

Work Systems
The term “work systems” refers to how the work of the organization is accomplished. Work systems involve the employees, the key
suppliers and partners, contractors, collaborators, and other components of the supply chain needed to produce and deliver products
and the business and support processes. The organization’s work systems coordinate the internal work processes and the external
resources necessary to develop, produce, and deliver products to customers and to succeed in the marketplace. Decisions about
work systems are strategic. These decisions involve protecting and capitalizing on core competencies and deciding what should be
procured or produced outside the organization in order to be efficient and sustainable in the marketplace.

Workforce Capability
See Capability.

Workforce Capacity
See Capacity.

Workforce Education
Refers to programs offered primarily by community and technical colleges, technical courses and programs for which semester hours
are awarded and vocational courses and programs for which continuing education units are awarded. Workforce education courses
and programs prepare students for immediate employment or job upgrade within specific occupational categories.